

Hold On: Joseph Smith, the Prophetic Expert on Earthquakes, the U.S. Civil War and Other Supposedly Related God-Given Punishments? Gimme a Quake, Er, I Mean Break . . .

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Date: August 24, 2011 04:22AM

It's been said that the definition of the term "expert" can be derived by breaking the word into two parts:

First, "x" (meaning "an unknown quantity"); and

Second, "spurt" (meaning "a drip under pressure")

When it came to Mormonism's inventor Joseph Smith "prophesying" earthquakes, etc., etc., in alleged connection with the U.S. Civil War, he was, indeed, "an unknown drip under pressure."

Given the recent 5.8 –magnitude earthquake along the East Coast of the United States, let's check out the earthquake predictions of Joseph Smith, to see if any of his invented prophesies on the matter of colliding tectonic plates actually came to pass.

FROM THE MUMBLE–JUMBLE MOUTH OF THE "PROPHET" JOSEPH SMITH: HAIL, FAMINE AND EARTHQUAKE IN THE NEAR TERM

In a 4 January 1833 letter to N.E. Seaton, Smith prophesied the following about how heaven–sent bouts of hail, famine and earthquakes would destroy the wicked in the United States of America in a matter of “not many years” (that would be 198 years ago when Smith so uttered his “prophetic” prediction) :

“And now I am prepared to say by the authority of Jesus Christ, that not many years shall pass away before the United States shall present such a scene of bloodshed as has not a parallel in the history of our nation; pestilence, hail, famine, and earthquake will sweep the wicked of this generation from off the face of the land, to open and prepare the way for the return of the lost tribes of Israel from the north country.

"The people of the Lord, those who have complied with the requirements of the new covenant, have already commenced gathering together to Zion, which is in the state of Missouri; therefore I declare unto you the warning which the Lord has commanded to declare unto this generation, remembering that the eyes of my Maker are upon me, and that to him I am accountable for every word I say, wishing nothing worse to my fellow-men than their eternal salvation; therefore, "'Fear God, and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment is come.'" Repent ye, repent ye, and embrace the everlasting covenant and flee to Zion, before the overflowing scourge overtake you, for there are those now living upon the earth whose eyes shall not be closed in death until they see all these things, which I have spoken, fulfilled."

Hmmmm. How to put this politely?: "Such a widespread destruction of the wicked of that generation never occurred."

(Joseph Smith, letter to N.E. Seaton, 4 January 1833, in "History of the Church," Vol. 1, pp. 315–16; see also, "Failed Prophecies of Joseph Smith," under "Prophecy #6: Pestilence, Hail, Famine & Earthquake to Destroy the Wicked," at: <http://www.irr.org/mit/js-failed-prophecies.html>; and Jerald and Sandra Tanner, "False Prophecy," Chapter 14, in "Changing World of Mormonism," pp. 427–28, at: <http://www.utlm.org/onlinebooks/changech14.htm>)

MORE FROM THE MUMBLE-JUMBLE MOUTH OF THE "PROPHET" JOSEPH SMITH: A U.S. CIVIL WAR; ASSOCIATED PLANETARY WARFARE ENGULFING ALL NATIONS; A SLAVE REBELLION; THE MOURNING AND PUNISHMENT OF THE EARTH'S DIVINELY-TARGETED INHABITANTS; FAMINE; PLAGUE; THUNDER; LIGHTNING: THE COMPLETE END OF ALL NATIONS--AND, YES, EARTHQUAKES

Joker Joe laid it all on the line in the Mormon Church's "Doctrine & Covenants," Section 87. Seat belts buckled; prepare to be chuckled:

"Verily, thus saith the Lord concerning the wars that will shortly come to pass, beginning at the rebellion of South Carolina, which will eventually terminate in the death and misery of many souls;

"And the time will come that war will be poured out upon all nations, beginning at this place.

"For behold, the Southern States shall be divided against the Northern States, and the Southern States will call on other nations, even the nation of Great Britain, as it is called, and they shall also call upon other nations, in order to defend themselves against other nations; and then war shall be poured out upon all nations.

"And it shall come to pass, after many days, slaves shall rise up against their masters, who shall be marshaled and disciplined for war.

"And it shall come to pass also that the remnants who are left of the land will marshal themselves, and shall become exceedingly angry, and shall vex the Gentiles with a sore vexation.

"And thus, with the sword and by bloodshed the inhabitants of the earth shall mourn; and with famine, and plague, and earthquake, and the thunder of heaven, and the fierce and vivid lightning also, shall the inhabitants of the earth be made to feel the wrath, and indignation, and chastening hand of an Almighty God, until the consumption decreed hath made a full end of all nations;

"That the cry of the saints, and of the blood of the saints, shall cease to come up into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth, from the earth, to be avenged of their enemies.

"Wherefore, stand ye in holy places, and be not moved, until the day of the Lord come; for behold, it cometh quickly, saith the Lord. Amen."

(Joseph Smith, in "Doctrine & Covenants," Section 87, vs. 1-8, revelation said by Smith to have been received by him on 25 December 1832)

Wow. That's quite a mouthful--and, unfortunately for Mormonism's Planet Earth fortune tellers, it's pretty much been proven to be quite false. And what little that has borne up over time didn't take much imagination to guess.

EARTH TO JOE ON THOSE IMAGINARY EARTHQUAKES

Contrary to Smith's "prophecy," the U.S. Civil War did not trigger a world-wide spasm (along with everything else Smith falsely "prophesied") of sin-based seismology.

Taking the span of the U.S. Civil War from 1860 to 1865, there were but two "historic earthquakes" worldwide--and they both occurred in the final year of the war: the first on 17 August 1865 in Memphis, Tennessee, measuring 5.0; and the second on 8 September 1865, in the Santa Cruz Mountains of California, measuring 6.5. Trouble is, neither one really even counts since they both happened after the U.S. Civil War was over, which ended in April 1865.

("Historic World Earthquakes: Sorted by Date," U.S. Geological Survey, at: <http://earthquake.usgs.gov/earthquakes/world/historical.php/>)

Please try again later, "Prophet" Smith.

What do you bet that if Smith was living today, he would also falsely prophesy that Arizona would be hit by a punishing spate of evilness-engendered earthquakes--despite the fact that the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), in reviewing Arizona's actual earthquake history, has determined that during the recorded history of the state, none of its earthquakes have killed anyone, injured anyone or been of greater magnitude than moderate intensity? On this, the USGS reports its findings thusly:

"No earthquake in recorded history has caused deaths or injuries in Arizona. In the past century or more, 14 tremors of intensity V to VII have centered within its borders, of which 12 were reported after Arizona entered the Union in February 1912. All of these shocks, however, were moderate in intensity, with one intensity VII, one VI-VII, four VI, and eight V."

("Arizona: Earthquake History," at: <http://earthquake.usgs.gov/earthquakes/states/arizona/history.php>)

Please don't tell any of this to Mormons. To them and their false prophets, facts can be inconvenient things.

But back to Smith's blown prophesy on the U.S. Civil War.

JOSEPH SMITH LOSES THE HISTORICAL BATTLE OVER HIS CIVIL WAR "PROPHECY"

The holes in Smith's Civil War "prophecy" are big enough to shoot big, fat cannonballs through.

Put on your history caps as we find out why. As one critical assessment of Smith's false Civil War prediction details the actual history, while taking this Mormon myth apart:

"It seems that the LDS may regard this [D&C 87] as the crown jewel of Mormon prophetic insight. And justifiably it would be so, if valid. . . .

"[Mormon apologist] Lindsey notes that this passage was frequently used in LDS presentations prior to the Civil War, and fully printed in 1851. A supplemental prophecy in 1843 by Smith was made adding that 'the commencement of the difficulties which will cause much bloodshed previous to the coming of the Son of Man will be in South Carolina. It may probably arise through the slave question.'

"Lindsey anticipates certain objections to this prophecy:

"Was Joseph's prophecy just a case of noting existing tensions and making obvious extrapolations? Hardly! While there had been tensions between the South and the North, including talk of secession, hardly anyone seriously thought that civil war would erupt. Americans had great faith in their nation and in democracy. In fact, there were members of the Church who were so shaken by the 'ridiculous' nature of Joseph's civil war prophecy that they left the Church, rejecting him as a false prophet. Even if Joseph were trying to make something out of trends and currents he saw in society, the many specific details of his prophecy suggest that more than reason and guesswork were needed to be so accurate.'

"[First], . . . what of extrapolation—making as an explanation? Lindsey does not provide any evidence that 'hardly anyone seriously thought that civil war would erupt' (which would be justified, by example, by sufficient quotations from sources dated in the early 1800s to the effect, 'This will not result in war . . .') and does not offer detail on those who left the Church. But the evidence would suggest rather that indeed, such extrapolations could and would have easily been made by Smith or any other astute individual.

"James McPherson in 'Battle Cry of Freedom' offers a summary of conditions prior to the Civil War that contributed to it and exacerbated tensions. Even prior to Smith's prophecy, it would not have been difficult to foresee a war coming. McPherson notes

that there were a number of expected dividing lines as the country grew in the period from 1800–1850 (rich/poor, Catholic/Protestant, rural/urban), but the 'greatest danger to American survival' at this stage was the question of slavery. Why? Because slavery was associated with competing ideals that just happened to also have geographic associations.

“The generation that fought the Revolution made slavery illegal north of the Mason–Dixon line (except in Missouri). South of that line, the slave trade became 'essential' to the economy and culture; north of that line it was not. North of the line, the Second Great Awakening spurred revival and slavery became recognized as a moral evil under the impetus of a refusal to accept perceived Calvinist predestination and a recognition of the equality of peoples; south of the line, slaveholders denied they were sinners and instead taught that slavery was needed for economic good and to keep black people from degenerating into barbarity.

“So serious was the division that McPherson writes that the slavery issue 'would probably have caused an eventual showdown between North and South in any circumstances.' Exacerbating the rivalry were several other social factors: for example, in the 1840s the wealthiest 5% of the population in the cities owned 70% of the taxable property—and most cities were in the North (and the North was draining wealth from the South, having many more votes in Congress). In the countryside the top 5% of free adult males owned 53% of the wealth and the bottom half owned 1%.

“One may well ask, in defense of Smith, why a war did not occur sooner if all of this is true. In reply we might note that there was much to keep the rivals occupied and unified. The two sides still had the same language, the same government, the same legal system, and the same overall religion and heritage. A war with Mexico in the mid-1840s encouraged a putting aside of differences, at least practically speaking. The advent of the Industrial Revolution, the expanding frontier, immigration (which sometimes directed hatred other ways) and wavering economic conditions meant that most had better things to do than to dislike their neighbor.

“Nevertheless it was not hard to see the storm brewing on the horizon. Books like Weld's 'American Slavery as It Is' (made up mostly of advertisements and articles from southern newspapers) and Stowe's 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' fueled the flame. New York anti-slavery leader William Seward said in the 1840s, that slavery had produced in the South 'an exhausted soil, old and decaying towns, wretchedly-neglected roads' and 'an absence of enterprise and improvement.'

“The institution was so contrary to what he argued were desirable values that he predicted a conflict that would result in the destruction of slavery. And Mormons might consider that one reason why Joseph Smith and the Saints were driven out of their locales in Missouri, in 1838–39, was because they were suspected of being favorable to abolition of slavery.

“ . . . [L]et's have a look now at th[e] details.

“--The war would begin with the rebellion of South Carolina.

"That this point was fulfilled is indisputable, but was it prescient? Critics point to an event in 1832 that may have influenced Smith's thinking. Lindsey writes:

“South Carolina had advocated the doctrine of “nullification,” arguing that a state could nullify federal laws or taxes that they ruled to be unconstitutional. If there was federal resistance, then South Carolina said they could leave the Union.’

“Lindsey counters this by saying that 'there was no reasonable expectation of war at that time, or even in 1851 when the prophecy was more widely publicized' and asks whether 'anyone [can] offer evidence from writings of American statesmen or scholars in 1832, 1843, or 1851 that make such predictions?'

“One wonders whether we should have expected so much from statesmen or scholars in the first place. Statesmanship and scholarship, done in accord with the tendencies of those institutions, would refrain from such bold words for fear of inflaming passions, and such sentiments would have been especially inappropriate during the 1840s with the war against Mexico.

“Yet the steps from 'rivalry' to 'war' are not large ones. McPherson notes a Georgia newspaper in 1846 that favored slavery in California and New Mexico because it would 'secure to the South the balance of power in the Confederacy, and, for all coming time . . . give to her the control in the operations of the Government.' That's a polite way of saying we'd rather take over than war.

“Another Southerner said of actions designed to limit slavery, and perceived as insulting southern honor, 'Death is preferable to acknowledged inferiority.' James Hammond of South Carolina said that the admission of so many free states would allow the North to 'ride over us rough shod' in Congress and 'reduce us to the condition of Haiti.' The only safety, he said, we in 'equality of power' lest 'we

deliberately consign our children, not our posterity, but our children to the flames.'

“And if Lindsey wants a 'directer' prediction, here's one from John Calhoun, made in 1847: If the North insisted, he said, on enacting the Wilmot Proviso (which put restrictions on slavery), the result would be 'political revolution, anarchy, civil war.' . . .

“It is also worthwhile to look at the text of what South Carolina produced at this time:

“And it is further ordained, that it shall not be lawful for any of the constituted authorities, whether of this State or of the United States, to enforce the payment of duties imposed by the said acts within the limits of this State; but it shall be the duty of the legislature to adopt such measures and pass such acts as may be necessary to give full effect to this ordinance, and to prevent the enforcement and arrest the operation of the said acts and parts of acts of the Congress of the United States within the limits of this State, from and after the first day of February next, and the duties of all other constituted authorities, and of all persons residing or being within the limits of this State, and they are hereby required and enjoined to obey and give effect to this ordinance, and such acts and measures of the legislature as may be passed or adopted in obedience thereto.

“And we, the people of South Carolina, to the end that it may be fully understood by the government of the United States, and the people of the co-States, that we are determined to maintain this our ordinance and declaration, at every hazard, do further declare that we will not submit to the application of force on the part of the federal government, to reduce this State to obedience, but that we will consider the passage, by Congress, of any act authorizing the employment of a military or naval force against the State of South Carolina, her constitutional authorities or citizens; or any act abolishing or closing the ports of this State, or any of them, or otherwise obstructing the free ingress and egress of vessels to and from the said ports, or any other act on the part of the federal government, to coerce the State, shut up her ports, destroy or harass her commerce or to enforce the acts hereby declared to be null and void, otherwise than through the civil tribunals of the country, as inconsistent with the longer continuance of South Carolina in the Union; and that the people of this State will henceforth hold themselves absolved from all further obligation to maintain or preserve their political connection with the people of the other States; and will forthwith proceed to organize a separate government, and do all other acts and things which sovereign and independent States may of right do.'

“South Carolina could hardly openly say 'war' but it is clear from the language that the state was quite willing to take the step if needed. Here is a point from a state history of South Carolina . . . :

“By the time of the American Revolution, South Carolina was one of the richest colonies in America. Its merchants and planters formed a strong governing class, contributing many leaders to the fight for independence. More Revolutionary War battles and skirmishes were fought in South Carolina than any other state, including major engagements at Sullivan's Island, Camden, King's Mountain, and Cowpens. South Carolina ratified the United States Constitution on May 23, 1788, becoming the eighth state to enter the union.’

“Given this history, which of the Southern states would you suppose would thumb a nose at the Union first?

“Finally, note this item about the response of then-President Jackson to South Carolina: 'The first force bill, passed in response to South Carolina's ordinance of nullification , empowered President Jackson to use the army and navy, if necessary, to enforce the laws of Congress, specifically the tariff measures to which South Carolina had objected so violently ’

“[It therefore must be] conclude[d] that the selection of South Carolina as the instigator of the war did not require any special insight. The history and nature of the state made it a logical and intuitive choice. Beyond this it may be objected that even the rebellion of South Carolina could hardly be made into a threat against the entire Union, but as we have shown, the temper for such a rebellion was already firmly in place and would not be difficult to surmise.

“--'It would cause the death and misery of many souls.’

"Once a prophecy of war is granted, 'death and misery' tend to follow! Lindsey points to 400,000 deaths, and rightly so, yet this prediction would be fulfilled even if only 50,000 had died. As such I cannot see that this point would require any special insight, for it is vastly confirmed by the history of war in general.

“--'The Southern States would be divided against the Northern States.’

"As noted above, this sort of polarization was to be expected.

“--'The Southern States would call upon other nations for assistance, even upon the nation of Great Britain.'

The South did call upon Britain and other nations, but would this have required any special insight to determine? I cannot say so. There would be no more natural ally to appeal to than Britain, with its great navy, common language, and trade partnership with the South.

“--'Great Britain would call upon other nations for assistance.'

"At this point Lindsey becomes a little vague. 'Great Britain, as I recall, also encouraged France to assist the South.' I do not see how this would equate with Britain 'calling upon' other nations. (This was like America 'calling on' France in the Revolutionary War at best).

“Some LDS apologists relate this to World Wars I or II. Christian apologists object, but in fairness, one might note that Christian apologists (myself no longer included) often state that Ezekiel's Tyre prophecy was finally and fully fulfilled only a few hundreds years ago. On the other hand, it is stronger to point out that chronologically the prophecy suggests that this will happen before a slave uprising.

“--'War would eventually be poured out upon all nations.'

"Lindsey finds this also fulfilled in the World Wars, and in the scale of wars and destruction since the time of the Civil War. Is this a prophetic insight? Perhaps, but it is in tune with the insights offered in Revelation, with which Smith was presumably familiar. We cannot admit or discount that any accuracy, perceived or otherwise, was the result of a prophetic insight.

“--'. . . [A]fter many days' slaves would rise up against their masters.'

"Lindsey relates this to perhaps '[u]prisings of repressed peoples in many Communist nations and other authoritarian states.' noting that such uprisings seldom took place in

the Civil War era. One would have to accept a rather broad definition of what constitutes a 'slave' and a 'master' and argue that it could be applied to the political realm. As such I find this application questionable at best.

“--The remainder of the prophecy is seen by Lindsey and most Mormon apologists as yet to be fulfilled.

“In sum, [there is] little here to suggest that Joseph Smith was gifted with any unusual prophetic insight here, although with much of this prophecy in the 'yet fulfilled' category it is not possible to be categorically too harsh without compromising certain orthodox prophetic positions. The few points that are fulfilled with certainty would be easily drawn from the politics and society of the day.”

(“A Critical Evaluation of the Prophecies of Joseph Smith,” under “The Civil War Prophecy,” at: <http://www.tektonics.org/gk/josproph.html>)

Now, Jerald and Sandra Tanner's turn to take Smith's Civil War “prophecy” apart, piece by unprophetic piece:

“The Mormon people believe that this revelation proves Joseph Smith was a prophet. Larry Jonas, on the other hand, shows that Joseph Smith could easily have received the idea for this revelation from the views of his time:

“On July 14, 1832, Congress passed a tariff act which South Carolina thought was so bad, she declared the tariff null and void. President Andrew Jackson alerted the nation's troops. At the time Smith made his prophecy, the nation expected a war between North and South to begin at the rebellion of South Carolina. This can be confirmed in a U.S. history book. Better yet, let [it be] confirm[ed] . . . from a Latter-day Saints Church publication, 'Evening and Morning Star,' . . . the issue which came out for January 1833. The news of South Carolina's rebellion was known before January 1833. It was known before December 25, 1832, but it was not available in time for the December issue. It takes quite a while for news to be set up even today in our dailies. We would expect it to wait for a month to come out in a monthly. The example contains the information available to the church before the paper hit the street. The example and the prophecy are strangely similar... Both consider the pending war a sign of the end—which it was not. In fact, the war expected in 1832 did not come to pass. .

. . .

“Far from being evidences of Smith's divine calling, the most famous prophecies which he made are evidences that he can copy views of his time.’ (Larry Jonas, 'Mormon Claims Examined,' p. 52).

“One further fact that supports the argument that Joseph Smith borrowed from the 'views of his time' is that there is another article printed in the January 1833 issue of the original paper, 'The Evening and the Morning Star,' which has the title 'Rebellion in South Carolina.' Interestingly enough, Joseph Smith's revelation has the words 'beginning at the rebellion of South Carolina' in the first verse. In this article we read as follows: 'In addition to the above tribulations, South Carolina has rebelled . . . Gen. Jackson has ordered several companies of Artillery to Charleston, and issued a Proclamation, urging submission and declaring such moves as that of S. Carolina Treason.' ('The Evening and the Morning Star,' Vol. 1, Issue 8).

“Joseph Smith was familiar with the fact that South Carolina had rebelled at the time he gave the revelation. just before the revelation concerning the Civil War is recorded in Joseph Smith's history, the following statement is attributed to him: ' . . . [T]he United States, amid all her pomp and greatness, was threatened with dissolution. The people of South Carolina, in convention assembled (in November), passed ordinances, declaring their state a free and independent nation ' ('History of the Church,' Vol. 1, p. 301).

“Thus we see that the statement in Joseph Smith's revelation that the wars would begin at the rebellion of South Carolina was undoubtedly inspired by the fact that South Carolina had already rebelled before the revelation was given. This rebellion did not end in war, but the Civil War did start some years later over trouble in South Carolina.

“The fact that Joseph Smith predicted a civil war is not too remarkable. Many people believed there would be a civil war before it actually took place. The December 1840 issue of the 'Millennial Star,' Volume 1, p. 216, quoted an article from the 'New York Herald.' In this article a civil war was predicted: 'We begin to fear this unhappy country is on the eve of a bloody civil war, a final dismemberment of the Union. . . . '

“It is interesting to note that verse 3 of Joseph Smith's revelation concerning the Civil War did not come to pass. In verse 3 we read: ' . . . [T]he Southern States will call on other nations, even the nation of Great Britain, as it is called, and they shall call upon other nations in order to defend themselves against other nations; and then war shall

be poured out upon all nations.' War was certainly not poured out on all nations at that time as Joseph Smith predicted. . . .

"Verse 5 of Joseph Smith's prophecy concerning the Civil War is rather unclear: 'And it shall come to pass also that the remnants who are left of the land will marshal themselves, and shall become exceedingly angry, and shall vex the Gentiles with a sore vexation.' Apostle Orson Pratt explained that the 'remnants' mentioned are the Indians:

"To add to the sufferings and great calamities of the nation, they will be greatly distressed by the aborigines, who "will marshal themselves and become exceeding angry" and vex them "with a sore vexation." We are inclined to believe that this will not take place until millions of the nation have already perished in their own revolutionary battles. To what extent the Indians will have power over the nation is not stated in this revelation '(Orson Pratt, 'The Seer,' p. 242).

"The fact that Joseph Smith believed the wicked of his generation would be completely destroyed is obvious from a letter he wrote N. E. Seaton, on January 4, 1833. In this letter he stated:

"And now I am prepared to say by the authority of Jesus Christ, that not many years shall pass away before the United States shall present such a scene of bloodshed as has not a parallel in the history of our nation; pestilence, hail, famine, and earthquake will sweep the wicked of this generation from off the face of the land, to open and prepare the way for the return of the lost tribes of Israel from the north country ... flee to Zion, before the overflowing scourge overtake you, for there are those now living upon the earth whose eyes shall not be closed in death until they see all these things, which I have spoken, fulfilled ('History of the Church,' Vol. 1, pp. 315-16).

"Both Joseph Smith and Brigham Young predicted that the U.S. government would be broken up.

"[Concerning suppressed material on the U.S. Civil War], Joseph Smith's revelation concerning the Civil War was never published during his lifetime, and although it is included in the handwritten manuscript of the 'History of the Church,' it was suppressed the first two times that Joseph Smith's history was printed (see also, 'Times and Seasons,' Vol. 5, p. 688; and 'Millennial Star,' Vol. 14, pp. 296, 305).

"It is obvious that this was a deliberate omission on the part of the Mormon historians, for over 300 words were deleted without any indication!

“Mormon historian B. H. Roberts informs us that the revelation was not printed until 1851 (seven years after Joseph Smith's death). Brigham Young and other Mormon leaders apparently did not have much confidence in this revelation at first because they waited 19 years before they published it.

“In the 'History of the Church,' Volume 5, p. 324, we find another reference to the 1832 prophecy attributed to Joseph Smith: 'I prophesy, in the name of the Lord God, that the commencement of the difficulties which will cause much bloodshed previous to the coming of the Son of Man will be in South Carolina. It may probably arise through the slave question. This a voice declared to me while I was praying earnestly on the subject, December 25th, 1832.'

“. . . [R]esearch in[to] the diary of Joseph Smith . . . found that this statement does appear under the date of April 2, 1843, although there have been a few changes in wording. A careful examination of this portion of Joseph Smith's diary, however, reveals that some very important material has been suppressed. Before we can understand the significance of this matter we must turn back in Joseph Smith's diary to the date of March 11, 1843, where we find the following:

“A dream, then related, Night before last I dreamed that an old man came to me and said there was a mob force coming upon him, and he was likely to loose his life, that I was Lieut General and had the command of a large force, and I was also a patriot and disposed to protect the innocent & — [word unclear] finding & wanted I should assist him. I told him I wanted some written documents to show the facts that they are the aggressors, & I would raise a force sufficient for his protection, that I would call out the Legion. He turned to go from me, but turned again and said to me. "I have any amount of men at my command and will put them under your command.'

“This dream, with some modifications, appears in the 'History of the Church,' Volume 5, p. 301.

“Now, when we move ahead to the date of April 2, 1843, in the diary of Joseph Smith, we find that just before Joseph Smith gives his second account of the prophecy concerning South Carolina, there is an interpretation of the dream which reads as follows:

“Related the dream written on page 3—Book B Interpretation by O. Hyde—old man. —government of these United States, who will be invaded by a foreign [sic] foe, probably England. U. S. Government will call on Gen. Smith to defend probably all this

western territory and offer him any amount of men he shall desire & put them under his command.'

"This important interpretation of the dream should appear in the 'History of the Church,' Volume 5, p. 324, just before the words 'I prophesy.' The reader will find, however, that the interpretation has been completely omitted. The reason that it was suppressed is obvious: Joseph Smith was dead by the time the Civil War started, and therefore the interpretation could not be fulfilled.

"In his first account of the prophecy on the Civil War, 'Doctrine and Covenants' 87:3, Joseph Smith had predicted that England would come into the war and that the war would spread until it 'shall be poured out upon all nations.' The war did not spread to 'all nations' as Smith had predicted, and the U.S. government certainly did not call upon Joseph Smith to protect it from England or any other country. . . . Joseph Smith was lieutenant general of the Nauvoo Legion, and he did ask the U. S. Government for '100,000 men to extend protection to persons wishing to settle Oregon and other portions of the territory' ('History of the Church,' Vol. 6, p. 282). This request, however, was denied.

". . . [T]he interpretation of the dream that was suppressed undermines the prophecy on the Civil War. It should be noted also that the part omitted should have appeared in the middle of a portion of Joseph Smith's history (Vol. 5, pp. 323–24) which was later canonized as a revelation in the 'Doctrine and Covenants,' Section 130. In other words, Section 130 contains the abbreviated material from the 'History of the Church.' The portion that was suppressed should appear between verses 11 and 12.

(Jerald and Sandra Tanner, "Failed Prophecy," Chapter 14, under headings "The Civil War" and "Suppressed Material on Civil War," in "Changing World of Mormonism," pp. 424–29, at: <http://www.utlm.org/onlinebooks/changech14.htm>)

Finally, this deconstruction of the Mormon Civil War "prophecy" invention:

". . . [I]t is quite clear from historical records that unrest was already brewing regarding slavery in Joseph Smith's time. Joseph Smith made his South Carolina 'revelation' (D&C 87) on December 25, 1832.

". . . [T]he nullification convention held in November 1832 by South Carolina may have had an influence on Joseph Smith's prediction In November 1832 a South Carolina

delegation defiantly nullified the federal 1828 and 1832 tariffs. South Carolina immediately prepared for a military showdown with the federal government. South Carolina regiments were organized and volunteers were gathered together to fight the federal government. The issue was temporarily diffused with the compromise of 1833, but the tension was only postponed. ('Secret and Sacred, The Diaries of James Hummond, a Southern Slaveholder,' edited by Carol Bleser, Oxford University Press, 1988).

“So history speaks to us quite clearly. Joseph Smith's so-called 'revelation' was made on the heels of one of the biggest signs to the country that a civil war was evident. A State within the Union had nullified federal law and even prepared its people for war against the Union. . . . Mormons [do not] consider this information when reviewing 'Doctrine and Covenants' 87?

“Yes, Joseph Smith predicted that the Northern and Southern states were going to be at war and the rebellion would begin in South Carolina. But this is not at all surprising when one looks at the facts. At the exact same time that South Carolina was preparing for war against the federal government in 1832, Joseph Smith made his prediction.”

(from “altreligion.org,” answer to “A War Against the Critics of Joseph Smith's Civil War Prophecy,” at: <http://www.lds-mormon.com/civilwar.shtml>)

CONCLUSION: SHAKE, RATTLE AND ROLLED

When it comes to “prophesying” everything from the U.S. Civil War to supposed U.S. Civil War-connected planetary earthquakes and more, Joseph Smith fell into one helluva self-dug hole--out of which neither he or his Mormon Church have ever been able to climb with any degree of believability.

Here's a new name for Mormonism; "Seismictology."

Edited 22 time(s). Last edit at 08/24/2011 03:05PM by steve benson.

Re: Hold On: Joseph Smith, the Prophetic Expert on Earthquakes, the U.S. Civil War and Other

Posted by: . ()
Date: August 24, 2011 12:33PM

Supposedly Related God-Given Punishments? Gimme a Quake, Er, I Mean Break . .
. (n/t)

Re: Hold On: Joseph Smith, the Prophetic Expert on Earthquakes, the U.S. Civil War and Other
Supposedly Related God-Given Punishments? Gimme a Quake, Er, I Mean Break . . .

Posted by: **weaverone** ()

Date: August 24, 2011 01:31PM

Great post, Steve!

Re: Hold On: Joseph Smith, the Prophetic Expert on Earthquakes, the U.S. Civil War and Other
Supposedly Related God-Given Punishments? Gimme a Quake, Er, I Mean Break . . .

Posted by: **voweaver** ()

Date: August 24, 2011 01:55PM

TRAGIC photos of East Coast earthquake damage:

<http://www.buzzfeed.com/mjs538/stunning-photos-of-damage-caused-by-the-east-coast>

~VOW