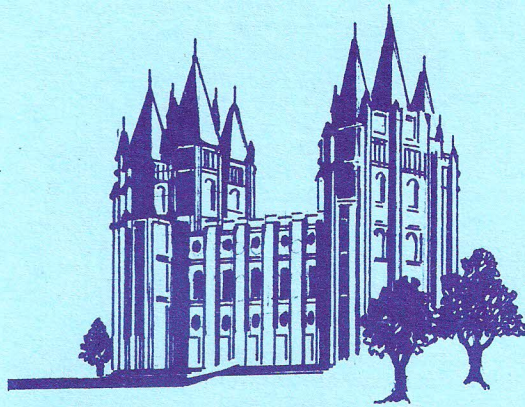


“... And Ye Shall  
Be As God”



## THE MORMONS' STRANGE SALVATION

When Joseph Smith Jr. preached at the funeral of follower King Follett, he said that people had to learn how to become Gods as all the Gods before them had done.<sup>1</sup> That sermon, more than anything else Smith taught, set the course of Mormon doctrine.

In the *Book of Mormon*, Smith reflected the theology of his Christian neighbors. He held that there was only one God - Father, Son and Holy Spirit<sup>2</sup>; that at death one entered either eternal torment in hell or happiness in heaven<sup>3</sup>; and that a spiritual birth in the soul wrought through trusting in the atonement of Christ was necessary for eternal salvation<sup>4</sup> (See the PFO tract, *Divine Truths in The Book of Mormon*).

However, over the next 10 years, Smith developed a much different view of God and salvation. Drawn not from the authoritative Mormon Scriptures - the Bible, *The Book of Mormon*, *Doctrine and Covenants* and *The Pearl of Great Price* - but mainly from his oral teachings, this theology is taught today by the Mormon Church in Utah, known officially as the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

### Getting to Be God

Building on Smith's final theological developments, the Utah Mormons teach that the Father, Son and Holy Ghost are three separate Gods. The first two of these have flesh-and-bone bodies, while the Holy Ghost has a body of spirit, which is more refined matter<sup>5</sup>. These three localized deities keep in touch with the world through an omnipresent substance called the Holy Spirit, a kind of communication system, not to be confused with the Holy Ghost<sup>6</sup>.

The Father, whose name is Elohim, once lived as a mortal

