Mormons and Muslims—An Ongoing Encounter

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‡ MORMONS AND MUSLIMS—AN ONGOING ENCOUNTER ‡

Joseph Smith, Jr., born 23 December 1805 in Sharon, Vermont, relocated to Palmyra, New York with his family at age ten. His father, Joseph Smith Sr., and mother, Lucy Mack, had eleven children. Smith’s unique childhood in the “Burned-over District of Western New York, with all its revivalism and religious emotionalism,”¹ created an intense curiosity and love for religion. As a child and throughout his life, Smith admired, tolerated, and was influenced by other Christian and non-Christian denominations.

Smith believed firmly in the Bible, and challenged “if any man will prove to me by one passage of Holy writ, one item I believe, to be false, I will renounce it disclaim it far as I have promulg[at]ed it.” It was his faith and love for the Bible that led him to read and discover the “Epistle of James, first chapter and fifth verse, which reads: “If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.”² His naïve faith led him to a grove to pray. This action was life altering and catapulted him into a position of leadership that brought about turmoil, persecution, and eventually death.

Smith strongly believed in freedom of religion. He said, “I am the greatest advocate of the Constitution of U.S. there is there on the earth”³ and “[t] is a love of liberty which inspires my soul, civil and religious liberty—were diffused into my soul by my grandfathers.”⁴ He believed that all religions were good and stressed that, “[t]he grand fundamental principles of Mormonism are truth, friendship, and relief.”⁵ Regarding truth, Smith taught that “Mormonism is to receive truth let it come

³ Sermon delivered at Nauvoo temple grounds on Sunday October 15, 1843 by Joseph Smith written by Willard Richards.
⁴ Sermon delivered at the Nauvoo temple grounds on Sunday July 9, 1843 by Joseph Smith written by Willard Richards.
from where it may.”

Under friendship, Smith stated “[T]et me be resurrected with the saints whether to heaven or hell or any other good place—good society. [W]hat do we care if the society is good? [D]on’t care what a character is if he’s my friend.” Concerning relief, Smith claimed “[i]f it has been demonstrated that I have been willing to die for a Mormon I am bold to declare before heaven that I am just as ready to die for a presbyterian, a baptist or any other denomination.” Regardless of religion, Smith sought truth, kindled friendships, and provided relief for those in need.

Throughout his ministry, Smith’s tolerance and acceptance of other religions was apparent. Samuel Prior, a Methodist minister, attended one of Smith’s sermons. He was “‘waiting to hear that foul aspersion of other sects…that rancorous denunciation of every individual but a Mormon.’ To his amazement, instead he ‘was invited to preach, and did so.’” Sparked by the teachings of the Book of Mormon, Smith had an extreme interest in Judaism, and was particularly interested in learning Hebrew. Smith was able to hire Joshua Seixas, an instructor from Hudson Seminary, to educate Mormons in Hebraic translation. Over the course of their relationship, Smith expressed “that Seixas ‘conversed freely,’ that he was ‘an interesting man,’ cordial, intelligent, and pleasant. Smith lent his own horses and sleigh so that his instructor could visit his wife and children in nearby Hudson during the cold winter months.”

Smith’s knowledge and background, his revelations, and the Book of Mormon all played a major role in his tolerant views and acceptance of other religions. As expressed by Heber C. Kimball, “[w]e were some of us Baptists, some Methodists, some Presbyterians, some Campbellites, some

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6 Sermon delivered at the Nauvoo temple grounds on Sunday July 9, 1843 by Joseph Smith written by Willard Richards.
7 Sermon delivered at Nauvoo, Illinois on July 23, 1843 by Joseph Smith written by Willard Richards.
8 Sermon delivered at the Nauvoo temple grounds on Sunday July 9, 1843 by Joseph Smith written by Willard Richards.
9 Steven Epperson, Mormons and Jews: Early Mormon Theologies of Israel (Salt Lake City, UT: Signature Books, 1992), pp. 92-93.
10 Ibid, p. 83.
Restorationers &c.”11 Accordingly, most early converts of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints were previously members of other faiths. By following his three “fundamental principles of Mormonism,” Smith sought truth and friendship inside and outside his new faith. He believed in providing relief to all those who needed it—regardless of their religion. This Mormon melting pot was led by a man who genuinely looked at other faiths with admiration and respect.

Joseph Smith’s dealings with those of other religions set a precedent that has continued to resonate through the Mormon Church and among its leaders. Although Smith’s encounters with Muslims were limited, modern church leaders have fostered healthy relationships with the Muslim people both in the United States and abroad. The purpose of this paper is to demonstrate that friendships can be established between fundamentally different religions; that the LDS Church has in fact made efforts to bridge the gap between themselves and Islam; that Muslims, too, are willing to bridge the gap; and that Mormon-Muslim relations are generally positive.

Over the last few decades, the LDS Church has reached out to the Muslim world in order to more fully understand Islam. “Latter-day Saint interest in the lands and people of the Near East is deep seated” observes one LDS scholar.12 LDS doctrine infers that the Arab people (most of whom are Muslim) are literal descendants of the biblical prophet Abraham, and are therefore entitled to the promises made to him by God.13 Lineage and genealogy have always been important aspects of Mormonism; therefore, peoples with similar ancestral lines are looked upon with admiration, despite perceived or actual differences in theological beliefs.14

11 Journal of Heber C. Kimball, Saturday May 31, 1834.
13 Ibid.
In October 1981, a conference was held at Brigham Young University (BYU) in Provo, Utah entitled “Islam: Spiritual Foundations and Modern Manifestations.” The conference “included some of the ablest exponents and finest interpreters of Islam’s relationships with Christianity.” Through these proceedings, Mormons and Muslims were able to articulate important similarities and differences between their two religions. Neither group at the conference had the intention of converting one another, nor did anyone feel the need to agree on theological differences. The meeting simply drew the two unique groups together in understanding. This mutual understanding generally led to tolerance and friendship.

Several specific subjects of the conference are worth noting. Despite all of the good found in Islam, it was apparent that both Mormons and Muslims agree that there is backwardness—a digression that has slowly evolved among radical factions. How this came about and how Islam could be restored were two issues that led to healthy debate. The 1981 conference addressed this perceived backwardness of some followers of Islam, and the problems caused by radical Muslims due to their deepening hatred toward western culture and society—especially toward the United States of America. The attacks in Washington D.C. and New York City on September 11, 2001 are epic examples. Mormon reactions to these events differed from those of nation at large. Mormons across the country opened their churches to Muslims who feared their mosques were no longer safe for worship.

What caused some of Islam’s radical backwardness? Were the problems internal or external? Daniel C. Peterson, professor of Islamic and Arabic Studies at BYU, argues that “Islamic civilization was once the greatest of its day and among the greatest in human history. The seeds of its decay were sown internally, and the steps that must be taken to restore it to its historic place in world culture must be taken by the Muslims themselves.” On the other hand, Haji Alamsjah Ratu Perwiranegara cites other

15 Palmer, Mormons and Muslims, p. 3.
16 David Haldane, “U.S. Muslims share friendship, similar values with Mormons,” Los Angeles Times, April, 2 2008.
17 Palmer, Mormons and Muslims, p. 41.
opinions about the decay of Islam through the voices of various Muslims. For example, Sayyid Jamaluddin al-Afghani (1839-1897) believed that the backwardness was external. He believed that "if the Muslims longed for the rebirth of the glory of Islam, they must first free themselves or their countries from Western domination."\(^{18}\) Mustafa Kemal (1881-1938), pointing to the controversy and opposition within some factions of Islam, believed that the Muslim world needed to follow the West and adopt its civilization and culture.\(^{19}\) Sir Muhammad Iqbal (1876-1938) infused al-Afghni and Kemal’s ideas with the notion that Islam must adopt technology and science from the West, but reject other aspects of Westernization. This view is accepted by many Muslim-Americans who live in a western society. Iqbal realized the importance of keeping up with the West through modernization, while at the same time keeping Islam pure.\(^{20}\) Perwiranegara concluded that most Muslims (at least in Indonesia) believed that the backwardness of Islam was due to oppression and colonization from the West, an external cause, in contrast to Peterson’s internal theory.

Omar Kader, a scholar with a unique perspective due to his Muslim upbringing and Mormon conversion, poses an interesting question: “Is the current return to Islamic fundamentalism a return to cultural authenticity more than it is a rejection of the modern West?” Kader believes that Muslims blame the backwardness of Islam on the West because their experience with Westerners has been poor at best. The first Westerners to live in many Muslim communities were construction workers. “They bring beer, brothels, and bars,” notes Kader.\(^{21}\) With such limited exposure, it is no wonder why Muslim perceptions of the West are negatively skewed.

No conclusion has been established that the backwardness of Islam was caused internally or externally. What this demonstrates is that the backwardness of Islam, largely due to a radical movement,
is damaging the reputation of an otherwise peaceful religion. Often, through conversation and dialogue, two groups of inherently different people can solve problems, break stereotypes, overlook the negative, and focus on the positive. The objective of the 1981 conference and other gatherings of its kind has been to educate people in general about Islam, so that rash judgments are not imposed on the religion as a whole, for the acts of so few.

During the twenty-nine years since the “Islam: Spiritual Foundations and Modern Manifestations Conference” at BYU, Mormons and Muslims have had other opportunities to work together, pray together, and deepen their understanding of one another. In August 2002, for example, less than a year after September 11, BYU held a conference entitled “Muslims and Latter-day Saints: Building Bridges.” Garry R. Flake, former director of Humanitarian Emergency Response for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, posed a common question: “Does the Church assist Muslims?” He explained that not only does the Church help Muslims, but it works extensively with different Islamic organizations. Reminiscent of the 1981 conference, Mormons and Muslims were better able to understand one another by strengthening relationships and building bridges.22

In October 2010, Muslims in several different areas of California included their Mormon friends in the iftar, or fast-breaking ceremony. In order to understand this Muslim tradition, it is important to know about the five pillars of Islam—Testimony, Prayer, Almsgiving, Fasting, and Hajj (pilgrimage to Mecca). Each pillar represents a fundamental principle of Islam that is observed by true Muslims. For example, Testimony, or knowing that there is no god but Allah, is demonstrated daily by the Muslim people. At certain times each day, Muslims roll out their rugs, face the holy city of Mecca, and pray to Allah.

Despite the cautions presented by BYU professor Arnold Green about comparing Mormons and Muslims, there are similarities worthy of discussion. Green warned, for example, that Joseph Smith should not be considered the American Muhammad or that Mormonism is the Islam of America. To do so “is to draw an analogy that obscures and minimizes the very important differences that exist.” Green continued, “while two out of every three points of comparison are either untrue or oversimplified, the very analogy itself is an oversimplification.” He goes on to explain that the various sects found in Islam

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23 Steve Gilliland and Dr. Hathout, Senior Advisor to the Muslim Public Affairs Council, looking at the Qur’an. Photograph courtesy of Steve Gilliland.
are as different as the various denominations among Christians.\textsuperscript{24} That being said, and realizing the vast differences between Islamic traditions, there are similarities worth mentioning.

“The principle of \textit{zakat}, or almsgiving, is designed to care for the poor, to foster empathy and compassion in the community of believers, and to provide for the building and maintenance of mosques and other Islamic institutions.”\textsuperscript{25} Mormons also believe in helping the poor, and are strongly encouraged to give monthly to those in need through fast offerings. LDS members also give ten percent of their income for the building up of the Church.

The Islamic fast is done during the month of \textit{Ramadan}, at which time no food or drink is consumed between sunrise and sunset. \textit{Ramadan} is the ninth month of the Islamic lunar calendar, and therefore is not associated with a specific traditional calendar month.\textsuperscript{26} Fasting is also an integral part of Mormonism, where each month members are to abstain from eating or drinking for two meals or twenty-four hours. This usually occurs on the first Sunday of the month.

\textit{Hajj}, the fifth and final pillar of Islam, is a journey to Mecca, the holiest Islamic city (followed by Medina, then Jerusalem) by those who are capable. Those who return from this sacred journey are privileged to bear the title \textit{Haji}.\textsuperscript{27} Although Mormons are not required to visit a specific city or place in the world, they are supposed to visit their sacred temples as often as possible, which may be comparable to a visit to Mecca depending on where in the world one is located.

\textit{Iftar} deals with the fourth pillar of Islam, the fast. The Islamic Society of Orange County and the Islamic Center of Temecula Valley invited local Mormons to attend a feast following the long fast during the month of \textit{Ramadan}. These feasts took place in California mosques, where traditional Muslim

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\bibitem{26} Barbara Evans Openshaw, “Mormons, Muslims break the fast in Southern California,” \textit{Mormon Times}, October 10, 2010.
\bibitem{27} Palmer, \textit{Mormons and Muslims}, p. 67.
\end{thebibliography}
cuisine was served after evening prayers, which LDS visitors were invited to observe. Local leaders, both Mormon and Muslim, were allotted time to address the congregation. A local Mormon leader, David Price, spoke of the importance of fasting. The religious director of the Islamic Society of Orange County, Dr. Muzammil Siddiqi, observed that fasting leads to revelation. Both groups were edified, and another opportunity for Mormons and Muslims to get to know each other on a personal level became a reality. “Southern California Latter-day Saints participated in at least ten different interfaith iftars throughout the area”\(^{28}\) in an event organized by Steve Gilliland, director of Muslim relations for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Public Affairs Council of Southern California, and Warren Inouye, director of Muslim relations in the Orange County area.\(^{29}\)

Mormons and Muslims, despite their differences, agree that a partnership can do much good. While visiting BYU, attending the Oquirrh Mountain Temple open house and Salt Lake City’s Welfare Square and LDS Humanitarian Center, Hussam Ayloush, executive director of the Southern California Chapter of the Council on American-Islamic Relations, expressed his desire to “solidify a partnership

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\(^{28}\) Openshaw, “Mormons, Muslims break the fast in Southern California.”  
\(^{29}\) Ibid.  
\(^{30}\) Steve and Judy Gilliland and a Muslim family at a Ramadan Dinner. Photograph courtesy of Steve Gilliland
for good between the members of the two religions.” Steve and Judy Gilliland of the LDS Public Affairs Council would agree. Since Ayloush’s tour, the Gilliland’s have escorted other Muslim leaders around Salt Lake City. In September 2010, Catholic and Muslim leaders toured Temple Square, Deseret Industries, a dry pack cannery, and met with prominent LDS leaders such as President Thomas S. Monson. These transparent moves—allowing non-members to view, participate, and interact in ways typically enjoyed by LDS members—built trust, confidence, and cultural awareness. People of different walks of life are less likely to falsely or ignorantly judge others when they understand another perspective.

As recently as December 4, 2010, the Islamic Center for Southern California’s youth and the Los Angeles and Inglewood LDS Church stake youth came together to provide service to their community. Gathering at the 68th Street Elementary School, nearly two hundred Mormon and Muslim youth assembled five hundred backpacks with school supplies. Others helped by face-painting and providing

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33 President Thomas S. Monson, Saghir Aslam, wife Bushra, and Steve Gilliland in Los Angeles, California. Photograph courtesy of Steve Gilliland.
34 Steve Gilliland, Personal Interview, November 30, 2010.
balloons for the elementary school students. Throughout the day, students visited booths sponsored by various agencies that serve the community of southern California. At each booth, the children learned something, after which they had a card punched. With a completed card, students received a backpack that was assembled by the Mormon and Muslim youth.35

After the backpacks were assembled, and while some of the volunteers passed them out to the school children, the Mormon and Muslim youths played “Human Bingo,” a get-acquainted mixer. They then had a discussion about similarities in belief and practices among the Latter-day Saints and those who follow Islam. They all left feeling good about what they had accomplished and the people they had met that day.36

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36 Ibid.
37 Photograph courtesy of Steve Gilliland.
Other Mormon-Muslim encounters engage a wider audience than do local conferences, service projects, religious gatherings, or local tours. The Islamic Republic of Pakistan endured heavy monsoon rainfall during the months of July and August, 2010. The overabundance of water caused massive flooding that affected large populations in areas such as Baluchistan, Federally Administered Tribal Areas, Gilgit-Baltistan, Khyber Pakthunkhwa, Pakistan-Administered Kashmir, Punjab, and Sindh (see the map below). This was the worst flooding Pakistan has experienced. According to the Report on Assessment Visit by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and Latter-day Saint Charities (LDSC), one third of the population of Pakistan was affected by the floods. More than 1,900 people died from causes directly related to flooding and over twenty million people were affected indirectly. Over 1.2 million houses were destroyed, leaving an estimated eight million people homeless. The United Nations estimates were similar, reporting that eight million people were in need of urgent assistance. Millions of acres of crops were destroyed and huge losses of livestock reported. Millions of Pakistani people were without food or clean water. Severe suffering continues in Pakistan today.39

38 Ibid.
Pakistan is a diverse country that includes seven different ethnic groups: Punjabi, Sindhi, Pashtun, Baloch, Juhajir, Saraiki, and Hazara. Although Pakistan is ninety-five percent Muslim, a small minority of Christians, Hindus, and others make up the remaining five percent. With such a high concentration of Muslims, “Christians are still persecuted in Pakistan.”

Because of such persecution, relief efforts by Western Christian nations are a unique challenge. Nonetheless, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints made its presence known through generous donations of food and water, blankets, clothing, basic medicines, antibiotics, water purification tablets, tents and shelter supplies, and money. Many of the supplies were purchased and distributed by partners of the LDS Church, through church funding, for this particular crisis. Such partners included Saba Trust, Islamic Relief USA, International Medical Corps, International Relief & Development (IRD), and The Pakistan National Disaster Management Association (NDMA). The LDS Church had also been in contact with other organizations such as the Society for Welfare, Education, & Transportation (SWET), CARE, UNHCR.

Ibid.

Nathan D. Leishman. Personal Interview, October 10, 2010.
(the UN Relief Agency), House of Charity, Begum Saeeda Soomro Foundation - Pakistan (BSSF), and the Red Cross.

Working with other agencies allowed the LDS Church easier access into Pakistan. Nathan D. Leishman, Manager of Humanitarian Emergency Response for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and Latter-day Saint Charities, had been involved with these types of disasters for the past ten years, and realizes how important these relationships are in helping people around the world. Saba Trust, in particular, has been instrumental in working with the LDS Church. Through this agency, church donations reached the people most affected by the horrendous floods in a timely manner. Saghir Aslam, founder of Saba Trust, has been an advocate for the LDS Church in Pakistan. He believes the LDS Church is a great organization and that it should be trusted. He is grateful for their presence and help in Pakistan during such a tumultuous time and is even tolerant of its religious presence. Although

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42 Photograph courtesy of Nathan D. Leishman.
43 Nathan D. Leishman, Personal Interview, October 10, 2010.
44 For more information about Saba Trust, visit http://sabatrust.com.
Saghir Aslam may not advocate formal proselytizing in Pakistan, his relationship with the LDS Church is one of understanding and tolerance.45

Another agency that has been particularly simple for the LDS Church to work with was Islamic Relief USA.47 Leishman commented, “Islamic Relief is one of our greatest partners in Pakistan.”48 This international charity was founded in 1984 and has helped people in need all over the world. “In 1997, its humanitarian aid consultant, Diana Sufian, contacted LDS Charities to see if LDSC would help establish a medical library in Palestine,”49 knowing that the LDS Church had an extensive and very successful humanitarian program.50 Being the first non-Muslim organization to work with Islamic Relief USA, the LDS Church has since been a part of many humanitarian efforts that have created a bond that continues today.51

45 Nathan D. Leishman, Personal Interview, October 10, 2010.
46 Saghir Aslam with Saba Trust and Nathan D. Leishman with the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Photograph courtesy of Nathan D. Leishman.
47 For more information about Islamic Relief USA, visit http://www.islamicreliefusa.org.
48 Nathan D. Leishman, Personal Interview, October 10, 2010.
49 “Islamic Relief USA and LDS Charities help needy,” Humanitarian Update (Summer 2003), p. 3.
50 Steve Gilliland, Personal Interview, November 30, 2010.
51 “Islamic Relief USA and LDS Charities help needy,” Humanitarian Update (Summer 2003).
Shortly after the floods, Ambassador Husain Haqqani approached Islamic Relief USA asking them to reach out to Christian organizations in the Western world for help in Pakistan. Islamic Relief USA reported that they were already working with The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Islamic Relief USA then urged Haqqani to travel to Utah to thank LDS leaders for their efforts thus far and to petition for even more help. Shortly after, Haqqani visited Salt Lake City.⁵²

Although organizations such as Saba Trust, Islamic Relief USA, and the LDS Church were working together to help the people of Pakistan, the same cannot be said about other groups that typically help with these types of calamities. “Even though this is a bigger disaster than the Haiti Earthquake and the Indonesia tsunami, aid has been slow to reach many affected by the floods.”⁵³ Several factors have undermined the true position Pakistani people faced. Fewer deaths occurred in Pakistan during the flooding than accompanied other natural disasters within the 21st century. Because flooding tends to be more gradual than earthquakes or tsunamis, the urgent need for help did not resonate as quickly, even though “in some areas the flood stretched thirty miles wide” and recovery was “expected to take years.”⁵⁴ Also, Pakistan’s political instability created an unsafe environment in which to work. The Taliban, for example, threatened to kill relief workers from the Western world.⁵⁵ The lack of humanitarian response had therefore given more responsibility to the joint efforts of the Mormon and Islamic relief organizations. Below is a disaster comparison chart that illustrates the vast differences between the 2010 floods in Pakistan with other natural disasters (some of which Mormons and Muslims also worked on together). While the death rates in Pakistan are much lower than those of the other

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⁵² Nathan D. Leishman, Personal Interview, October 10, 2010.
⁵⁴ Ibid.
⁵⁵ Nathan D. Leishman, Personal Interview, October 10, 2010.
natural disasters, it can be argued that where there are more survivors, more help is needed. This was the case in Pakistan.

**DISASTER COMPARISON**

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<tr>
<td><strong>Population Affected</strong></td>
<td>20,251,550</td>
<td>3,500,000</td>
<td>3,200,000</td>
<td>4,800,000</td>
<td>2,273,723</td>
<td>500,000</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Area Affected (Sq Km)</strong></td>
<td>132,000</td>
<td>30,000</td>
<td>13,226</td>
<td>440,000</td>
<td>N.A.</td>
<td>N.A.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Deaths</strong></td>
<td>1,961</td>
<td>73,338</td>
<td>230,000</td>
<td>69,100</td>
<td>280,000</td>
<td>1,836</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Injured</strong></td>
<td>2,865</td>
<td>128,309</td>
<td>300,000</td>
<td>374,000</td>
<td>125,000</td>
<td>N.A.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Homes Damaged or Destroyed</strong></td>
<td>1,884,708</td>
<td>600,152</td>
<td>250,000</td>
<td>450,000</td>
<td>N.A.</td>
<td>200,000</td>
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The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints had a profound effect on the people of Pakistan. Their generosity influenced far more than just those directly involved in the flooding.

Although the gap between Mormons and Muslims is diminishing, greater efforts from both faiths need to continue in order to do away with any divide. Mormonism’s first prophet, Joseph Smith, set a precedent for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, leaders and members alike. This precedent calls for religious tolerance, to accept all truths from others, to become friends, and to lend a hand to those in need. Many Muslim leaders share these feelings. Despite isolated issues of prejudice, hatred, and misunderstanding, Muslims and Mormons have an excellent relationship that continues to grow strong as both faiths work hand in hand, as demonstrated in areas such as Pakistan, and continue to learn from one another through inclusion, participation, and dialogue. Theological differences should not affect friendships. President Gordon B. Hinckley of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints from 1995–2008, stated:

We want to be good neighbors; we want to be good friends. We feel we can differ theologically with people without being disagreeable in any sense. We hope they feel the same way toward us. We have many friends and many associations with people who are not of our faith, with whom we deal constantly, and we have a wonderful relationship. It disturbs me when I hear about any antagonisms...I don’t think they are necessary. I hope that we can overcome them...Be friendly. Be understanding. Be tolerant. Be considerate. Be respectful of the opinions and feelings of other people. Recognize their virtues; don’t look for their faults. Look for their strengths and their virtues, and you will find strength and virtues that will be helpful in your own life.57

With an ongoing encounter between Mormons and Muslims, adherence to this advice, and the precedent set by Joseph Smith, walls of misunderstanding will be torn down and in their place will be built the bridges of cultural awareness.

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Leishman, Nathan D. Personal Interview, October 10, 2010.


