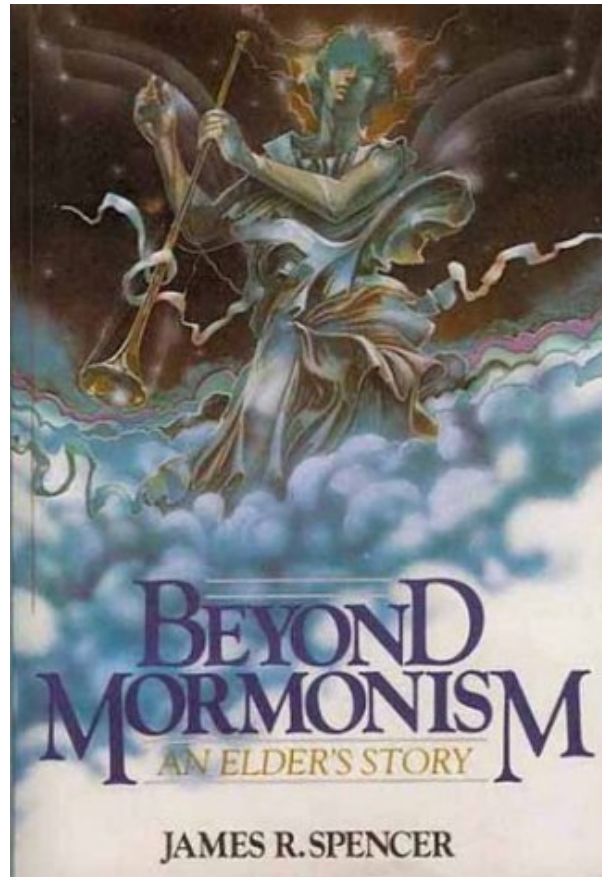
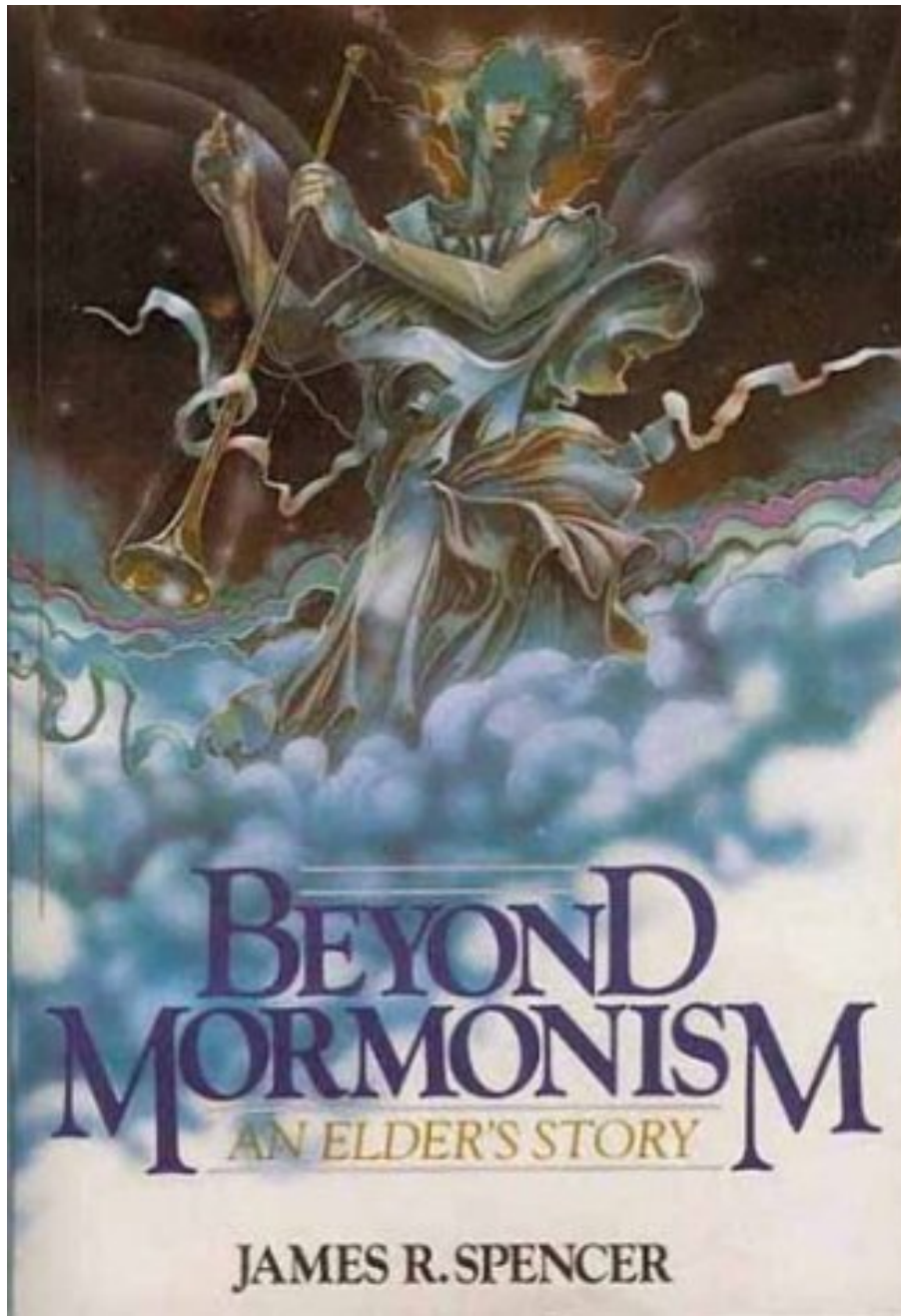


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About the Author

James R. Spencer is a former Mormon Elder who left the Church of Jesus Christ in 1974 and eventually became a pastor of an Evangelical church. He has published eight books on the cults, the occult, and secularism.

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The story of a former Mormon Elder coming to faith in Jesus Christ. When he found Christ, his wife threw him out of their home and sought divorce. Read how God resolved the situation.

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- Dimensions: 8.25" h x 5.50" w x .50" l,
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Most helpful customer reviews

157 of 184 people found the following review helpful.

An honest testimony of reality

By Kathleen K. Melonakos

My assessment is that Spencer's book is a well written, moving story of a sincere person's search for God. His story demonstrates that he had the courage and intellectual honesty to follow where his hunger and thirst for righteousness led him. Like me, Spencer's prayers to find God were answered, but his experiences led him out of the LDS church and into a Christian life.

As a youth, Spencer longed for something more worthy and respectable than his life of bar hopping and one night stands. Hence, he was willing to listen to the Mormon missionaries. He describes just what the missionaries told him, and some of the techniques they use, all the while offering social acceptance and a warm place to belong. Spencer is incensed (rightfully so, in my opinion) that the missionaries never told him in the first six discussions,(after which they pressured a decision to join) that Mormons believe in polytheism. That is, every LDS male is eligible, if they perfect themselves enough by performing Mormon rituals and such, to become a god. When Spencer heard it, he instinctively felt it was wrong. Also he felt uncomfortable with the occult-type practices in the temple ceremony.

His discomfort launched him into a thorough investigation into the origins of the church, particularly whether Joseph Smith was a prophet. He committed the unpardonable sin (in Mormon eyes) of trying to make sense out of the Journal of Discourses, which is a collection of prophecies and sermons given by early church leaders. Many of these teachings are so bizarre, and so conflict with Bible teachings, Book of Mormon teachings, Doctrine and Covenant teachings and even current church doctrines, that Spencer labeled the whole thing "the Mormon maze."

It is my experience that if one wants to remain an active Mormon, one should never look too deeply into the origins of the church. Indeed, current church leaders actively discourage looking into "the mysteries," by which they mean records like the Journal of Discourses. But if you want a good summary of some of the troubling teachings of Joseph Smith and Brigham Young, see Spencer's Chapter 14. He gives you a good sampling.

Also if you are investigating the truth of the LDS church, really look into the story of the Pearl of Great Price (Mormon scripture). If Joseph Smith was a true prophet, why did he say that he "translated" Egyptian papyri into the Book of Abraham, etc, when all modern Egyptologists agree that the papyri from which he "translated" these books are merely funerary documents very common in ancient Egypt that have nothing to do with Abraham, Joseph or any of it? If Joseph Smith was a true prophet, why did at least 44 of his prophecies fail to come true (some of which are in the Doctrine in Covenants)?

(For more information, see chapters 25, 26, 27 of Hugh Nibley's daughter's book *Leaving the Saints*, and *By His Own Hand : A New Look at the Joseph Smith Papyri* by Michael Marquart).

41 of 46 people found the following review helpful.

Another ex-Mormon

By D. Norton

I was raised in the Mormon church, and left when I turned 18 and could get away with it (had to leave home, too). This book details what my 18-year old mind thought was wrong, and couldn't quite nail down. A thoughtful, well-written and easy to read book, full of facts, some rather scary...

23 of 25 people found the following review helpful.

Very respectful book and very consistent with other ex-Mormon testimonies

By Fred W. Anson (aka "Mr. IT")

So much has already been said about this fine book that I'll keep this short. I read this book when it first came out. At the time I thought it was very good. It was also unique in that it was the first ex-Mormon testimony that I knew of that had been published to a broad, mass-market audience.

I was especially impressed with the author's respectful yet honest tone. At the time most ex-Mormon testimonies tended to be rather shrill and somewhat demeaning.

This book was different and I really appreciated that since my brother is Mormon as are many friends. From my Mormon relationships I knew that the picture that was often painted of them and their culture was unfairly skewed to the negative.

Yes, their theology and doctrine is heretical. Yes, their leadership is oppressive. Yes their thinking can be inconsistent, illogical, and irrational. However, their hearts, desires, and passions are well placed and sincere. Well this isn't always the case, they rarely do what they do out of malice or guile. Mormons believe and practice their faith with the best of intentions and motivations - they just happen to be climbing a ladder that's leaning against the wrong wall.

Since this book was published many, many, many other fine testimony books have also been released. A few that I have either read or heard good things about include:

Secret Ceremonies: A Mormon Woman's Intimate Diary of Marriage and Beyond

Out of Mormonism: A Womans True Story

Out of the Shadows: A rape victim examines her life in and out of Mormonism

Evangelicals should note that not all Mormon testimonies end in a Born-Again experience. However, they are ALL of great value if nothing more than the reader can gain some insight, understanding, and empathy for their Mormon friends through them.

I've also found some superb Mormon Recovery websites (just google on "Mormons in Transition" and you'll find them) and the following books which have been of great benefit while maintaining a respectful tone:

The Pattern of The Double-Bind in Mormonism

I Love Mormons: A New Way to Share Christ with Latter-day Saints

Speaking the Truth in Love to Mormons

What's going on in there? The Verbatim Text of the Mormon Temple Rituals Annotated and Explained by a Former Temple Worker

I hope that this short review and book list will help you find which book on Mormonism is of most value to you and your family.

See all 41 customer reviews...

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