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EARLY MORMON IMPRINTS IN SOUTH AFRICA

David J. Whittaker

The appearance in Cape Town, South Africa, on 8 June 1853 of *Some of the Principal Doctrines or Belief of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints* marks the printed beginnings of the Mormon missionary effort in that area of the world. Its author, Jesse Haven, was the first president of the South African Mission of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Called during a special missionary conference in Salt Lake City on 28–29 August 1852, Elder Haven and his companions, Leonard I. Smith and William Holmes Walker, made their way to Cape Town via Liverpool, England, arriving on 18 April 1853. One month later (on 23 May) the trio officially organized the Church “in the Cape of Good Hope.” On the day they organized the Church in South Africa, Jesse Haven was appointed mission president. The first branch was organized at Mowbray on 16 August, and a second branch was established at Newland on 7 September. Within six months they had baptized at least forty-five persons into the Church, and by the time the missionaries left in December 1855, they had organized six branches and baptized about 175 people.¹

Not much is known about the details of Jesse Haven’s early life. He was born 28 March 1814 in Holliston, Massachusetts. He was baptized on 13 April 1838 and was ordained an elder by Brigham Young on 10 January 1839. After gathering to Nauvoo in the 1840s he was called on several missions for the Church, was married to his first wife, and was ordained one of the presidents of the 14th Quorum of Seventies in Nauvoo. He appears to have been a schoolteacher by profession. After serving another mission to the eastern states, he returned to Utah in 1850 and was living in the Salt Lake Valley in 1852 when he was called on this mission to South Africa.

Jesse Haven was a moody person, often to the point of melancholy, and his diaries are filled with his poetry, which often served as

David J. Whittaker, a part-time teacher of Church history at Brigham Young University, is the Book Review Editor of *BYU Studies*.

¹A convenient overview of the history of Mormonism in South Africa is given in Farrell Ray Monson, “History of the South African Mission of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1853–1970” (M.A. thesis, Brigham Young University, 1971). For a more recent study, see Lawrence E. Cummins, “The Saints in South Africa,” *Ensign* 3 (March 1973): 4–10. Much of what I have to say here is summarized from my as-yet-unpublished essay, “Jesse Haven and the Defense of Mormonism in South Africa, 1853–1855.”

a vehicle for the release of these feelings.²

Between the time Elder Haven arrived in Cape Town and when he left in mid-December 1855, he was responsible for publishing eleven items—the major portion of the sixteen works printed by the Church in South Africa before 1865.

Once in South Africa, the trio advertised their presence in a local newspaper and visited the officials of Cape Town. Within a week mobs and several anti-Mormon newspaper articles threatened to undermine their initial efforts. To counter these attacks the missionaries distributed tracts they had brought with them from England and attempted to get printed in the local papers specific replies to their critics' arguments. When they ran out of pamphlets and after the local papers refused to print their articles, Elder Haven wrote and printed his own tracts. He had taken the lead in writing the articles for the local papers, and when these were refused, he expanded several of these rejected pieces into pamphlets.

The first pamphlet, reprinted on pages 410–416, was prepared on 11 May 1853 for a local paper, but when it was rejected, Elder Haven expanded the piece into a small pamphlet on 18 May. At the same time he was writing a reply to a newspaper attack on the Mormon doctrine of plural marriage. As with the earlier work, the newspapers refused to print his reply, so he expanded it into a pamphlet which he titled *Celestial [sic] Marriage, and the Plurality of Wives!* . . . He wrote most of the material between 25 and 27 May, examined the proofsheets between 13 and 15 June, and received the finished copies about 17 June 1853. Jesse Haven came to South Africa as the husband of two wives, and even though his marriages troubled him while he was on this mission, he was a consistent defender of plural marriage. Since the pamphlet was an answer to slanderous reports relating to the doctrine, its orientation was defensive. Several items in the work were mentioned in his first tract, and almost three pages were taken directly from Orson Pratt's 29 August

²There are five volumes of Haven journals (covering 1852–1892) and a folder of Haven papers in the Historical Department, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah (hereafter referred to as Church Archives). Also available is *Life Incidents and Travels of Elder William Holmes Walker and His Association with Joseph Smith the Prophet* (n.p.: Published by Elizabeth Jane Walker Piepgrass, 1943; reprinted by the John Walker Family Organization, 1971). Also in the Church Archives there are files on the South African Mission, Records of Mission Funds, and a Record of Members. There are numerous letters published in the *LDS Millennial Star* from Jesse Haven and his missionary companions. Some biographical information on Jesse Haven is in Andrew Jenson, *Latter-day Saint Biographical Encyclopedia* (Salt Lake City: Published by the author, 1936), 4:378–79.

1852 discourse which had announced the doctrine for the first time publicly.³

His third tract, *On the First Principles of the Gospel*, was produced primarily because the missionaries were running short of printed literature by August 1853. Published in the form of a letter to his brother, the Reverend John Haven, he began composing this tract in March 1853, but the final manuscript was not completed until 6–7 September 1853—hence the September date in the pamphlet. Copies of the pamphlet were in his hands by 15 September and distribution began immediately. This work proved to be his most popular. Addressed to his brother, who was an active pastor in the Congregational Church in Charlton, Massachusetts, this tract sought to examine the “gospel” which true ministers should preach when they use the Bible as their standard. His longest work (fourteen pages), it outlined the “first” principles of faith in Jesus Christ as the Savior of mankind, repentance of sins, baptism by water and the Holy Ghost. It then suggested the signs and gifts that follow those who believe. Using the New Testament as his text, he sought to show his brother that only among the Latter-day Saints could the true church and true gospel be found. In January 1855 this tract was translated into Dutch, and a second English printing appeared in November 1855.⁴

By the end of September 1853, President Haven had prepared another work for the printer. Entitled *A Warning to All*, this two-page tract is perhaps the rarest of the early Mormon imprints in South Africa. While the names of Haven, Smith, and Walker appear at the end, Haven’s journal and correspondence make it clear that he composed it. Printed twice in English and once in Dutch, the tract was an

³Jesse Haven had been at the August 1852 conference when Orson Pratt gave this sermon, and his journal records his regular habit of reading Elder Pratt’s works. The quoted material corresponds to that in *Journal of Discourses* (1853), 1:58–59, which deals primarily with the relationship of Adam and Eve. In his later report to the First Presidency (see fn. 15) Elder Haven reported: “As there was a great stir about the ‘Plurality of Wives,’ etc, and much persecution and ridicule brought upon us on account of the people not having any understanding of the subject; I wrote a small tract on the same . . . got 1000 copies printed. This tract done good. It turned the minds of the people.” Copies are at Church Archives and at Harvard. The copy at Harvard has a cover that was added to it by one of the LDS Circulating Tract Societies in England.

⁴In his report to the First Presidency, 14 January 1856, he wrote, “As we had not many tracts on the First Principles of the Gospel, and what few we brought with us, were already distributed, I got 1000 copies printed of a letter that I wrote to my brother on these principles, in the State of Massachusetts. This tract sold so well among the people I had it afterwards translated into the Dutch language [30 January 1855], and 1000 copies printed in that language. Afterwards I had 1000 more printed in English [13 November 1855].” He wrote in his journal on 11 March 1853: “Today I finished a lengthy letter that I have been writing to my brother on the first principles of the gospel. My brother is a Congregational Minister, in the State of Massachusetts.” Although Elder Haven told the First Presidency he could get only one printer to do his work, the 1853 copy of his *On the First Principles* in the Church Archives gives the printer as Van de Sandt de Villius and Tier. I presume that W. Foelscher printed the others. The dates in brackets are the dates the other printings came off the press. The dates are based on the entries in Haven’s journals. No copies of his Dutch tracts are known to exist.

announcement of warning to persons in South Africa to repent and be baptized into the restored Church. It defended the character of Joseph Smith and warned all who read it that most of what the local press was saying about Mormonism was not to be trusted.⁵

In 1855, President Haven had three other works printed. On 31 March, he obtained from his printer the Dutch translation of excerpts of Lorenzo Snow's *Voice of Joseph*.⁶ The last two appeared on the eve of his departure from South Africa. On 30 May he began distributing a broadside of William Clayton's poem "Resurrection Day,"⁷ and on 4 December, his *Epistle to the Saints in Cape of Good Hope Mission* was off the press.⁸ Eight days later he boarded the ship *Cleopatra* and several days later sailed for London.

There were five other items published before 1865. One of Haven's missionary companions, William Holmes Walker, was responsible for three of them, and William Fotheringham and his missionary associates printed a broadside of Doctrine and Covenants 87 in December 1861 in both English and Dutch.⁹

⁵The first English printing was written 30 September and 1 and 2 October 1853; on 4 October Jesse Haven took it to the printer in Cape Town; on 6 October he examined and corrected the proofsheets; and on 8 October he obtained 1000 copies of this edition. The Dutch translation was the work of Thomas Weatherhead, a convert (baptized 24 July 1853), who began the work in June 1854 and finished it by the middle of July. On 24 July, Jesse Haven wrote S. W. Richards that the small tract he had written "is now translated into the Dutch language, and already for the press, and I expect to get it printed this week" (*Millennial Star* 16 [23 September 1854]: 604). President Haven recorded in his journal the same day, "While in [Cape] Town, I took the translation in Dutch of the 'Warning to All' to the printer and ordered 1000 to be printed." On 3 August 1854 he picked up the finished product.

The second English printing was ordered by Jesse Haven on 30 January 1855. He obtained the 500 copies of this printing on 8 February 1855 (see his journal for these dates; see also his journal 16 May 1854, wherein he defends the contents of *A Warning to All* against attacks by a Reverend Belson, a minister in the Church of England).

⁶On 16 April 1855 Jesse Haven wrote to Franklin D. Richards: "I have got translated and printed in the Dutch language, 1000 copies from the 'Voice of Joseph,' to the paragraph on the 6th page, where it speaks of the organization of the Church. The paragraph ends as follows—'And although they were the feeble things of the earth, they became mighty by the Holy Spirit.' It cost twelve shillings to get it translated and £3 8 s. to get 1000 copies printed." (*Millennial Star* 17 [8 September 1855]: 572.) He later summarized his work with the Dutch-speaking peoples of South Africa: "Many tracts have been circulated, and some preaching has been done among the Dutch in Cape Colony, but only a few have yet received the Gospel" (*Millennial Star* 18 [22 March 1856]: 189).

Lorenzo Snow's *Voice of Joseph* was first printed in French in 1850. The next year it appeared in Italian, and in 1852 Lorenzo Snow published a revised edition (from the Italian) at Malta in English. The contents and use of both printings are mentioned in Lorenzo Snow's *The Italian Mission* (London, 1851), pp. 13, 25. There was another English printing in November 1852.

⁷William Clayton's poem first appeared in the *Deseret News*, 24 January 1852, p. 21, and was reprinted in the *Millennial Star* 15 (22 January 1853): 63. In 1856 it was included in *Sacred Hymns and Spiritual Songs for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 11th ed. (Liverpool, 1856), p. 390. It appears in our current hymnal under the title "When First the Glorious Light of Truth," Hymn 198.

⁸While no copies of this "epistle" are known to exist, the text was copied into his journal on 26 November 1855. Briefly, it thanks both members and nonmembers who have rendered him assistance and support during his mission and further encourages the members to support their priesthood leaders and, when possible, to gather to Zion. Jesse Haven took the manuscript to the printer on 27 November, examined the proofsheets on 29 November, and obtained the final copies by 4 December (see his journal for these dates).

⁹A copy of this rare item (in English) is in Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah (see also letter of William Fotheringham to [G. Q.] Cannon, dated Port Elizabeth, 15 February 1862, in *Millennial Star* 24 [19 April 1862]: 251–52).

Walker's first publication was a broadside reply to an anonymous article that appeared in the *Port Elizabeth Mercury*, 20 October 1855. Although unable to get his reply printed in the *Mercury*, William Walker did get it printed in the *Port Elizabeth Telegraph*; this newspaper also printed five hundred copies of it in the form of a broadside addressed "To the Intelligent Public." It appeared about 26 October 1855.¹⁰ About one month later he authored a seven-page pamphlet with the same title, *To the Intelligent Public*, the first copies of which appeared just as he was leaving South Africa with Elders Haven and Smith.¹¹ This pamphlet contained a discussion of the meaning of the "Rock" (revelation) upon which the Church was to be built and the offices that through revelation are to govern and lead the Church established by Christ. Its major thrust was the need for continuing revelation in Christ's Church.

The item reprinted at the end of this article is the first pamphlet Mormons printed in South Africa. Jesse Haven, like many of his contemporaries in other places of the world, found that the press was an important weapon in the missionary arsenal.¹² Like other early Mormon tracts, this one tried to introduce the message of Mormonism to non-Mormons by briefly summarizing its main doctrines. Clearly an extension of the earlier "Articles of Faith," this work gives us a type of window into the beliefs and understanding of the early missionaries.¹³ While not to be considered an "official" declaration or even a complete statement of creed, it does compactly summarize in thirty-three paragraphs the "principal" doctrines of Mormonism through one man's eyes in the 1850s.

Elder Haven had written the pamphlet on 18 and 19 May 1853. He had delivered his manuscript to the printer, W. Foelscher, early in June, examined the proofsheets on 7 June, and received the first one hundred copies of the finished work on 8 June. He tried to borrow money to pay for the cost of printing it, but when this failed he

¹⁰A copy of this broadside is in the Church Archives. William Walker wrote in his diary on 26 October 1855: "I wrote a reply to some false statements about the Latter-day Saints, published in the *Port Elizabeth Mercury*, which the editor would not publish. We succeeded in getting it published in the *Port Elizabeth Telegraph*. Also 500 copies struck off in the form of a circular." A copy of this circular was undoubtedly the source of the printing in the *Millennial Star* 18 (15 March 1856): 172-73.

¹¹In the introduction of his seven-page tract, William Walker clearly suggests that this work was a follow-up to his circular. His diary notes that on 17 November he began writing it, and that between this date and 27 November, when he boarded ship for London, he finished writing this work and had ordered 500 copies printed. But upon receiving the proofsheets (twice) he found too many errors and was only able to make the final arrangements for printing before he sailed. He was to have received 25 copies just before he sailed. A photocopy of this tract, also printed by the *Telegraph*, is in the Church Archives.

¹²For the larger picture see David J. Whittaker, "Early Mormon Pamphleteering," *Journal of Mormon History* 4 (1977): 35-49.

¹³The "quest" for and development of the "Articles of Faith" is beyond the scope of this short note, but while Haven's list is one of the longest in early Mormon literature, it is only one of many.

solicited donations.¹⁴ With these donations and some money collected from the sale of the pamphlet itself, he was able to meet the cost of having it published. President Haven provided more details on its composition in a letter he wrote to the First Presidency of the Church on 14 January 1856:

I had 1,000 copies printed. Nearly one half of it I took from the belief given by Joseph Smith, found in the "Times and Seasons," Vol. 3, p. 709 [1 March 1842]; the remainder was my own composition; mostly on principles that have been made public since the death of the Prophet.¹⁵

The last two pages reprinted Eliza R. Snow's "Stanza on the Presentation of the Book of Mormon to Queen Victoria," an item composed in 1841. Here Haven is clearly addressing the poem to the English-speaking British population in South Africa. He probably obtained the poem from an early issue of the *Times and Seasons*.¹⁶

¹⁴See Haven's journal for these dates; see also the dates of 26 May and 1 June 1853.

¹⁵This report was copied into his journal on this date. Jesse Haven summarized his publishing activities in a letter to F. D. Richards, 25 February 1856, in *Millennial Star* 18 (22 March 1856): 190.

¹⁶This poem had been printed, first in the *Times and Seasons* 5 (1 January 1844): 398-99, after which it appeared in the *Nauvoo Neighbor* 1 (17 January 1844): 1, and the *Millennial Star* 4 (April 1844): 184-85. I am grateful to Maureen Ursenbach Beecher for these references, any one of which could have been Haven's source.

SOME OF THE PRINCIPAL DOCTRINES

OR BELIEF OF THE

CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST,

OF

LATTER DAY SAINTS

BY

JESSE HAVEN,

ONE OF THE PRESIDENTS OF THE

SEVENTIES OF SAID CHURCH,

AND

PRESIDENT OF THE MISSION,

AT THE

CAPE OF GOOD HOPE.



Cape Town.

PRINTED BY W. FOELSCHER, No. 2, CHURCH-STREET.

SOME OF THE PRINCIPAL DOCTRINES, &c.

"We beleive in God the Eternal Father, and in His Son Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Ghost."

We believe that God is a distinct personage, having body and parts like man, for we read that God said "Let us make man in our own image, after our likeness."

We believe the personage of God, can no more than the person of man, be in two separate and distinct places at the self same instant of time.

We believe the personage of God is filled with the Holy Ghost, and this Holy Ghost or Spirit of God, is diffused through all space, and by this spirit, God is every where present beholding the works of his hands.

"We believe that men will be punished for their own sins, and not for Adam's transgression."

We believe Christ atoned for the original sin of Adam, therefore little children that die, without one exception, will be saved.

"We believe that through the atonement of Christ all mankind may be saved by obedience to the laws and ordinances of the Gospel.

"We believe that these ordinances are; 1st. Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; 2nd. Repentance, 3rd. Baptism by immersion for the remission of Sins; 4th. Laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost.

"We believe that a man must be called of God by "prophecy, and by laying on of hands" by those who are in authority to preach the gospel and administer in the ordinances thereof.

"We believe in the same organization that existed in the primitive Church, viz. Apostles, Prophets, Pastors, Teachers, Evangelist, &c.

"We believe in the gifts of tongues, prophecy, revelation, visions, healing, interpretation of tongues, &c.

"We believe the Bible to be the Word of God as far as it is translated correctly," and a history of the House of Israel.

"We believe the Book of Mormon to be the Word of God," and a history of a branch of one of the Tribes of Israel, viz: the Tribe of Joseph, it also contains a short history of a people called "Jaredites."

"We believe all that God has revealed, all that he does now reveal, and we believe that He will yet reveal many great and important things pertaining to the Kingdom of God.

"We believe in the literal gathering of Israel, and in the restoration of the Ten Tribes. That Zion will be built upon the American continent. That Christ will reign personally upon the earth, and that the earth will be renewed and receive its paradisiac glory."

We believe in the baptism for the dead, a doctrine spoken of by Paul but not explained. This doctrine when rightly and fully understood, appears one of the most glorious doctrines revealed for the salvation of the human family.

We believe in future rewards and punishments, and that mankind will be rewarded according to their works or deeds done in the body. Paul speaks of three different glories, viz. "One glory of the Sun, and another glory of the Moon, and another glory of the Stars," to one of these glories all of the human family will go, except those who commit the unpardonable sin; for them there is no kingdom of glory, but they will become the sons of Perdition, and will have no forgiveness in this world nor in that which is to come. All the human family, except these sons of Perdition, by the death and resurrection of Christ, will be redeemed in the own due time of the Lord from the power of the devil, and be brought into one of the above glories. Paul speaks of being "caught up to the third heaven," showing distinctly that there are three different degrees of glory.

We believe that those who obtain the glory of the Sun, will enjoy the presence of God and His Son Jesus Christ.

We believe that those who will be like the glory of the Moon, will enjoy the "presence of the Son, but not the fulness of the Father."

We believe those who will be like the glory of the Stars, will not enjoy the presence of the Father neither of the Son, but will receive the "Holy Spirit through the ministration" of the other glories, and will also be administered too by Angels. These will not come forth in the first resurrection, but will be shut up in prison through the millennial reign of Christ and His Saints upon the earth, after which, they will be brought forth to inherit a glory they have lived for.

We believe God has raised up a Prophet to whom He has revealed the fullness of the everlasting gospel, and as the forerunner of the second coming of Christ upon the earth.

We believe the Lord is now sending forth His servants for the last time to prune His vineyard,—calling upon all to repent and be baptized for the remission of sins.

We believe as soon as a person receives and obeys the gospel, it is his duty, as soon as circumstances will permit, to gather out from amongst the wicked, and go to the place the Lord has appointed for the gathering of His people in the last days.

We believe the judgments of God, such as war, famine, pestilence &c. are soon to be poured out upon the nations of the earth. Therefore the Lord is now saying by His Servants, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues."

We believe woman is naturally more virtuous, pure, and religiously disposed than man, therefore, more woman than men, will receive and obey the gospel in the last days, and be gathered to Zion.

We believed there has been a law revealed, by which a man in Zion, and in Zion *only*, or at the place the Lord has commanded His people to gather, can have more than one wife; and this law is under the strictest regulations.

We believe this law is not given to gratify the lusts of men but given for the exaltation of both men and women,—giving to every woman the privilege of filling up the measure of her creation, and lawfully, and honorably and virtuously obeying the first and great command, “Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth.”

We believe on the account of the wars that are soon to be amongst the nations of the earth, that the wicked will slay the wicked,—men will be killed off, and the women will flee to Zion for safety; then this prophecy will be fulfilled, “And in that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, we will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel; only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach.” Isa.—4th.—1st. Does a woman take the name of a man unless she is married to him?

We believe in marrying for time and for all eternity; and this ordinance must be attended too in this life, if it is not, husband and wife will be deprived of each other in the life to come. “For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the Angels of God in Heaven,” that is, “they remain separately and singly, without exaltation, in their saved condition, to all eternity,” and “are appointed angels in heaven, which angels are ministering servants, to minister for those who are worthy of a far more, and an exceeding, and an eternal weight of glory.”

“We claim the privilege of worshiping Almighty God according to the dictates of our own conscience, and allow all men the same privilege let them worship how, where, or what they may.

“We believe in being subject to Kings,” Queens, “Presidents, Rulers, Magistrates” and all who are in authority over us. “and in obeying, honoring and sustaining the law.”

“We believe in being honest, true, chaste, benevolent, virtuous, and in doing good to *all men*.”

“We believe in seeking after truth, and are willing to receive and embrace it, from any and every one that has truth to impart.

STANZA ON THE PRESENTATION
 OF THE
 BOOK OF MORMON TO QUEEN VICTORIA
 BY MISS E. R. SNOW.



Before leaving London, ~~Elder Lorenzo~~ Snow presented to Her Majesty Queen Victoria, and His Royal Highness Prince Albert, through the politeness of Sir Henry Wheatley, two neatly bound copies of the BOOK OF MORMON, which had been donated by President Brigham Young, and left in the care of Elder Snow for the purpose, which circumstance suggested the following lines:—

Of all the monarchs of the earth,
 That wear the robes of royalty,
 She has inherited, by birth,
 The broadest wreath of majesty.

From her wide territorial wing,
 The sun does not withdraw its light;
 While earth's diurnal motions bring
 To other nations day and night.

All earthly thrones are tottering things,
 Where lights and shadows intervene;
 And regal honour often brings
 The scaffold or the guillotine.

But still her sceptre is approved;
 All nations deck the wreath she wears;
 Yet, like the youth whom Jesus loved,
 One thing is lacking, even there.

But lo! a prize possessing more
 Of worth, than gems with honor rife—
 A herald of salvation bore
 To her the words of endless life.

That gift, however fools deride,
Is worthy of her royal care :
She'd better lay her crown aside,
Than spurn the light reflected there .

O would she now her influence bend—
The influence of royalty,
Messiah's Kingdom to extend,
And Zion's "nursing mother" be.

Thus, with the glory of her name
Inscribed on Zion's lofty spire,
She'd win a wreath of endless fame,
To last when other wreaths expire.

Though over millions called to reign,
Herself a powerful nation's boast,
't would be her everlasting gain
To serve the King, the Lord of Hosts.

For there are crowns and thrones on high,
And kingdoms there to be conferr'd
There honours wait that never die ;
There fame's immortal trump is heard.

Truth echoes— 't is Jehovah's word ;
Let Kings and Queens and Princess hear :
In distant isles the sound is heard ;
Ye heavens rejoice ! O earth, give ear !

The time, the time is now at hand
To give a glorious period birth ;
The SON OF GOD will take command,
And rule the nations of the earth.

