

Was There A Great Apostasy?

Joseph Smith taught that there was a great apostasy after the disciples of Jesus died. That during this 1,800-year period, the devil had prevailed against the one true Church of Christ and that it was completely destroyed.

Joseph Smith – “I have more to boast of than ever any man had. I am the only man that has ever been able to keep a whole church together since the days of Adam... Neither Paul, John, Peter, nor Jesus ever did it. I boast that no man ever did such work as I. The followers of Jesus ran away from Him; but the Latter-day Saints never ran away from me yet.” (History of the Church, 6:408–409)

https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study... Apostasy

We now live in a time when the gospel of Jesus Christ has been restored. But unlike the Church in times past, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints will not be overcome by general apostasy. The scriptures teach that the Church will never again be destroyed (see [Doctrine and](#)

www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/manual/preach-my-gosp... Apostasy

Lesson 1: The Message of the Restoration of the Gospel of Jesus Ch



- Without revelation through a prophet, people fall into spiritual darkness (see [Amos 8:11–12](#)).
- Prophets and apostles foretold the Great Apostasy (see [2 Thessalonians 2:1–3](#)).

Are Amos 8:11-12 and 2 Thessalonians 2:1-3 truly referring to the Great Apostasy that took place after the apostles died in the first century?

When reading the Bible, it is very important to understand the context of the passage to make sure that we are being faithful interpreters of God’s Word. A good rule in striving to do this is to read the whole chapter, or at least a couple verses before and a couple verses after to make sure we have a good understanding of the context. Let’s take this approach and study the passages of Amos and 2 Thessalonians to verify what they are talking about.

Amos 8:1-14 “This is what the Sovereign LORD showed me: a basket of ripe fruit. ² “What do you see, Amos?” he asked. “A basket of ripe fruit,” I answered. Then the LORD said to me, “**The time is ripe for my people Israel; I will spare them no longer.**”

- The first two verses of Amos 8 tell us that this is a prophecy about the Israelites and God is proclaiming His judgement against them (the time is ripe for judgement).

¹⁴ Those who swear by the sin of Samaria— who say, 'As surely as your god lives, Dan,' or, 'As surely as the god of Beersheba lives'— they will fall, never to rise again."

- The end of verse 14 sums it up and helps us understand that the Israelites were guilty of sinful idol worship in the regions of Samaria and Dan. This chapter describes what God's judgement is going to look like when it happens. God eventually used the Babylonians as his tool of judgement who came, destroyed Jerusalem and carried them off into exile. We can be certain that this passage is contextually talking about the Israelites not in any way talking about the LDS great apostacy.
- Some posit that this was a double prophecy. This still is an insufficient interpretation as it would still be in reference to God judging the Israelites for idol worship. But we know that the LDS Great Apostacy happened as a result of the apostles of Jesus being killed and false teachings creeping into the church. False idol worship was not involved at all.

2 Thessalonians 2:1 "Concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered to him, we ask you, brothers and sisters,"

- This first tells us that this is in reference to the return of Jesus.

*2 Thessalonians 2:3-4 "Don't let anyone deceive you in any way, for that day will not come until the rebellion occurs and **the man of lawlessness is revealed**, the man doomed to destruction. He will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, so that he sets himself up in God's temple, proclaiming himself to be God."*

- Christ will not return until the "rebellion" or "falling away" and the man of lawlessness/sin is revealed. Those two events are directly connected because it will be the man of lawlessness/who is leading the rebellion. That man is the anti-Christ.
- Some posit that this is Satan. However, we can be certain that this man is not Satan because in verse 9 it says that this man will be in accordance with how Satan works. The anti-Christ and Satan are going to be a tag-team.

This great rebellion/falling away will only happen AFTER the anti-Christ is revealed. That hasn't happened yet. Since the anti-Christ person has not yet been revealed, we can know that this great rebellion has not yet occurred either. Therefore, we can know for certain that this passage cannot be referring to LDS great apostacy that allegedly took place after the death of the apostles.

What Do We Read About the Gospel & Church of Jesus?

*Matthew 16:18 "And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build **my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.**"*

- A common response is that the “rock” in this verse is talking about prophets and apostles. The point of this verse is to focus on the last half which Jesus states that nothing (not even the gates of hell) will overcome and destroy his church. But Joseph Smith taught that the devil DID destroy Jesus’ church for 1,800 years and that the fullness of gospel was lost.

*Jude 1:3 “Dear friends, although I was very eager to write to you about the salvation we share, I felt compelled to write and urge you to contend for **the faith that was once for all entrusted to God’s holy people.**”*

- This verse clearly states that the faith and gospel message would only be delivered once. If the gospel message was truly delivered once and for all, then that eliminates the possibility of a restored gospel.
- Some respond by referring to the King James Bible which says in Jude 1:3 that “the faith which was **once** delivered unto the saints.” They will go onto to explain, “My Bible doesn’t say ‘once for all.’ It only says, ‘once.’ I think that means that Jesus delivered the gospel once, and then after the great apostacy, Joseph Smith delivered it once again.”

Which Version Is Right?

Loved (ones), every speedup making
 3 Ἀγαπητοί, πᾶσαν σπουδὴν ποιούμενος
 to be writing to you about the common of us salvation
 γράφειν ὑμῖν περὶ τῆς κοινῆς ἡμῶν σωτηρίας
 necessity I had to write to you encouraging
 ἀνάγκην ἔσχον γράψαι ὑμῖν παρακαλῶν
 to be struggling upon to the once for all ←
 ἐπαγωνίζεσθαι τῇ ᾧπαξ
 having been given beside to the holy (ones) to faith.
 παραδοθείση τοῖς ἁγίοις πίστει. 4

Above is a Greek Bible that has the literal English wording above each Greek word. We can see here that the literal words used are “once for all.” The King James Bible is fantastic for its time, but modern Bibles today are easier to understand.

According to God’s Word, how many times was the gospel delivered to the saints?

Do you believe that God is strong enough to protect his church and his gospel message to the saints?