

# Prophets in Mormonism – Part 16

by Marvin W. Cowan

*Doctrine and Covenants* Section 124 contains 145 verses with so much information that the last two articles in this series were about the first few verses. Now, continuing the examination of this LDS scripture, *Doctrine and Covenants* 124:18-22 says,

And again, I say unto you that it is *my will* that *my servant* **Lyman Wight** should continue in preaching for Zion, in the spirit of meekness, confessing me before the world; and I will bear him up as on eagles' wings; and *he shall beget glory and honor to himself and unto my name*. That *when he shall finish his work I may receive him unto myself*, even as I did my servant David Patton, who is with me at this time, and also my servant Edward Partridge, and also my aged servant Joseph Smith, Sen., who sitteth with Abraham at his right hand, and blessed and holy is he, for he is mine. And again, verily I say unto you, *my servant* **George Miller** *is without guile; he may be trusted* because of the *integrity of his heart*; and for the love which he has to my testimony *I, the Lord, love him*. I therefore say unto you, I seal upon his head the office of a bishopric, like unto my servant Edward Partridge, that he may receive the consecrations of mine house, that he may administer blessings upon the heads of the poor of my people, saith the Lord. Let *no man despise my servant George*, for *he shall honor me*. Let my servant George, and my servant Lyman, and my servant John Snider, and others, *build a house unto my name*, such a one as my servant Joseph shall show unto them, upon the place he shall show unto them also.

In this text “The Lord” said **Lyman Wight** is “my servant” who “shall beget glory and honor to himself and unto my name.” “When he shall finish his work I may receive him unto myself even as I did my servant David Patton.” Patton was one of the Twelve LDS Apostles and led a Mormon militia against the “Missourians” at Crooked River where he was killed. This “revelation” says Patton went to be with the Lord when he died and Lyman Wight will also join them when he dies.

So, this revelation implies that Lyman Wight would be faithful to the Lord until he died. He was ordained as an LDS Apostle to replace David Patton on April 8, 1841, less than three months after Smith received this revelation. But, Wight didn't remain faithful to the LDS Church. Instead he went to Texas in 1845 and tried to start a church contrary to what Brigham Young asked him to do, so he was excommunicated on December 3, 1848 according to Church History in the Fulness of Times, p. 305. Wight was an LDS “apostate” when he died on March 31, 1858, so did he go to be with the Lord and David Patton? Or, was the Lord mistaken about him? Or, did Joseph Smith get this revelation from some source other than the Lord?

“The Lord” also said, “My servant **George Miller** *is without guile; he may be trusted* because of the *integrity of his heart*...*I, the Lord love him*...Let no man despise my servant George, for *he shall honor me*.” When Edward Partridge died, George Miller took his place as Bishop of the LDS Church. Even though “the Lord”

said many nice things about Miller in this revelation, the *Deseret Morning News 2006 Church Almanac* says he was “dropped prior to 1847; disfellowshipped October 20, 1848.” But *History of the Church*, vol. 7, p. 618 says Orson Hyde informed the Twelve Apostles that Miller *had been disfellowshipped on November 8, 1847*. However, Andrew Jenson’s *Church Chronology* says Miller was *disfellowshipped on December 3, 1847* along with Lyman Wight. That is the same date that *Church History in the Fulness of Time* says Wight was excommunicated. Both Wight and Miller received the *same* Church discipline at the same meeting, but there seems to be confusion about whether they were excommunicated or disfellowshipped. Those are two different kinds of LDS Church discipline. There is also confusion about the *date* when Miller was disciplined by the LDS Church, but all sources agree that he left the LDS Church and was later disciplined for doing so.

Shortly after Joseph Smith’s death on June 27, 1844, Brigham Young’s relationship with Lyman Wight and George Miller became strained. On Sunday, August 18, 1844, less than two months after Smith’s death, Brigham said in a sermon,

I tell you *in the name of Jesus Christ* that if **Lyman Wight and George Miller** take a course contrary to our counsel and will not act in concert with us, *they will be damned and go to destruction*...It has been whispered about that all who go into the wilderness with Wight and Miller will get their (temple) endowments, but they cannot give an endowment in the wilderness (*History of the Church*, vol. 7, p. 255).

Wight and Miller did go against Brigham’s instructions and went to Texas to start their own church. But Miller left Texas in 1850 to join James Strang’s LDS splinter group at Beaver Island, Michigan. So, were Wight and Miller both damned to destruction as Brigham Young said or were they blessed like Joseph Smith said?

Both Joseph Smith and Brigham Young spoke in the name of the “Lord” as prophets, but what each said is the *opposite* of what the other said about the same men! Our last article showed that the Lord Jesus accurately predicted the future of Peter, Judas and others. And the Apostle Paul said of the biblical Lord, “He cannot deny Himself” (2 Timothy 2:13). That means the Lord won’t go back on His word. Therefore, “the Lord” in whose name Smith and Young spoke must be a different “Lord” since he contradicted what he had previously said.

But even if that problem is ignored, “The Lord” said that Miller was “without guile,” he could be “trusted” and “he shall honor me.” So, was Miller honoring the Lord when he went to Texas to start a church and later joined Strang’s group and then was disfellowshipped or excommunicated from the LDS Church? Or, was “the Lord” *wrong* about George Miller? Or, did Smith get his “revelation” from a different “Lord?”

We will continue our investigation of *Doctrine and Covenants* 124 next time. More can be read about LDS prophets in my book, *Mormon Claims Answered*.