

# *THEY LIE IN WAIT TO DECEIVE*

by Robert L. & Rosemary Brown

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“That we henceforth be no more  
children tossed to and fro, and carried  
about with every wind of doctrine  
by the sleight of men and

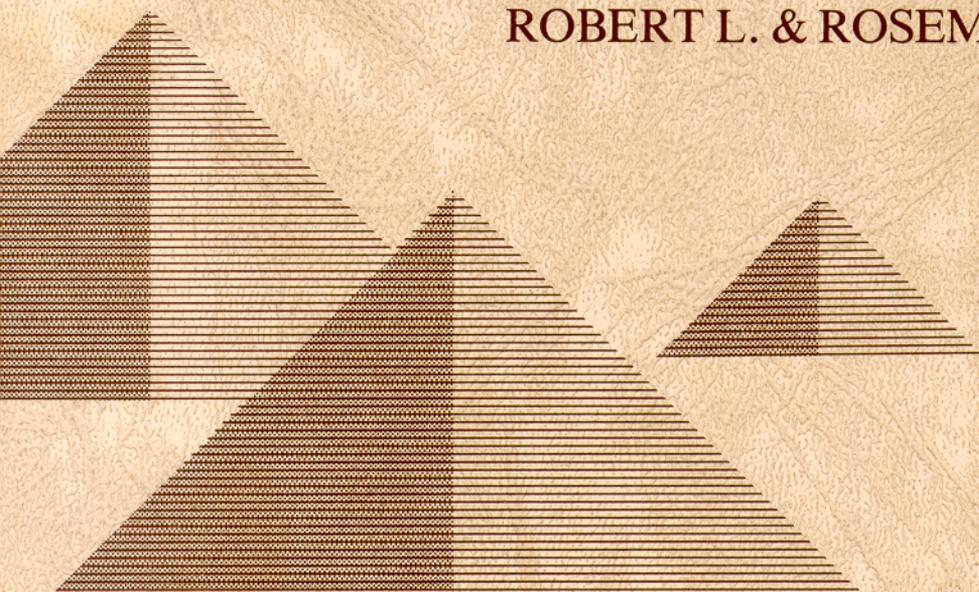
cunning craftiness  
whereby . . .

# THEY LIE IN WAIT TO DECEIVE”

(Eph. 4:14)

VOLUME I

ROBERT L. & ROSEMARY BROWN



The amazing story how  
“Dr.” or “Prof.” Dee Jay Nelson, Jerald and  
Sandra Tanner, and other anti-Mormons  
work to obstruct and distort the truth

# THEY LIE IN WAIT TO DECEIVE

“A Study of Anti-Mormon Deception”

**Volume I**

**By Robert L. and Rosemary Brown**

Editor: Barbara Ellsworth  
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# CONTENTS

PREFACE.....	i
DEDICATION.....	ii
INTRODUCTION.....	iv
CHAPTER ONE — DEE JAY NELSON: DEGREE CREDENTIALS.....	1
CHAPTER TWO — DEE JAY NELSON: CREDENTIALS AS A MATHEMATICIAN .....	44
CHAPTER THREE — DEE JAY NELSON: CREDENTIALS AS A PROFESSOR .....	57
CHAPTER FOUR — DEE JAY NELSON: CREDENTIALS AS AN AUTHOR .....	62
CHAPTER FIVE — “REED J. NEUBERGER” AND KING FAROUK .....	87
• PART I — DEE JAY NELSON AS REED J. NEUBERGER .....	88
• PART II — DEE JAY NELSON CLAIMS GIFTS AND EMPLOYMENT FROM KING FAROUK .....	96
CHAPTER SIX — IDENTIFICATION OF NELSON’S RESURRECTION FIGURE .....	101
CHAPTER SEVEN — NELSON’S “COMMISSION” TO TRANSLATE THE JOSEPH SMITH PAPYRI.....	106
CHAPTER EIGHT — SUMMARY OF DEE JAY NELSON’S LECTURE (FEBRUARY 22, 1980, MESA, ARIZONA).....	117
CHAPTER NINE — ERRORS AND DISTORTIONS BY DEE JAY NELSON AND JERALD AND SANDRA TANNER.....	155
CHAPTER TEN — THE TRUTH ABOUT THE BOOK OF ABRAHAM .....	165
CHAPTER ELEVEN — CONCLUSION — BY JOSEPH C. MUREN, CONVERT TO THE LDS CHURCH.....	176
APPENDIX SECTION.....	182
• NELSON’S LECTURE TRANSCRIPT .....	183
• NELSON’S PRESS RELEASE INFORMATION.....	208
• NELSON’S BOOK ON PYRAMID POWER (EXTRACTS).....	219
• NEWSPAPER ARTICLE CHECKING DEE JAY NELSON’S CREDENTIALS .....	223
• NEWSPAPER ARTICLE BY DR. CYRUS H. GORDON .....	225
• LETTER BY THOMAS STUART FERGUSON.....	227
• MAGAZINE ARTICLE FROM “FAMILY CIRCLE MAGAZINE”.....	229
• LETTER FROM DR. HUGH NIBLEY .....	233
• ARTICLE BY DR. NIBLEY.....	235
• NEWSPAPER ARTICLE BY COL. JOSEPH P. O’RILEY .....	246
• LETTER FROM J. MALEK.....	248
• NEWSPAPER ARTICLE BY CONCERNED CHRISTIANS, INC. OF MESA, ARIZONA .....	249
• NEWSPAPER ARTICLE: “A MORMON REPLIES TO CONCERNED CHRISTIANS” .....	253
• NEWSPAPER ARTICLE: “ASK HIS MUMMY”, MESA TRIBUNE, MESA, ARIZONA, FEBRUARY 24, 1980 .....	264
• PHOTO OF DEE JAY NELSON’S PHONY DEGREE, BUSINESS CARD AND HIS PAPIER-MACHE MUMMY .....	266
• ADDENDUM INTRODUCTION .....	267
• INDEX .....	284

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## PREFACE

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The purpose of this book is to expose many of the untruths and deliberate misrepresentations of a major segment of the anti-Mormon movement.

Mormons and non-Mormons alike need to be aware of the tactics used by the adversary . . . “That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness whereby they lie in wait to deceive.” (Eph. 4:14) This book contains a thorough investigation of the fraudulent credentials and claims of “Dr.” and “Prof.” Dee Jay Nelson, “World Renowned Egyptologist” — this century’s most outspoken foe of the Book of Abraham (and thus Joseph Smith) which is regarded as scripture by the LDS Church. Nelson has long been held as the No. 1 witness against the Book of Abraham according to Jerald and Sandra Tanner, Walter Martin, and other leaders in the anti-Mormon movement. Because of this investigation, the deception between Dee Jay Nelson, Jerald and Sandra Tanner, and others concerning the Book of Abraham is now a matter of record.

When the missionaries of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons) preach the gospel, they rely heavily on prayer. **They ask their investigators to pray continually to their Heavenly Father to verify that what they are being taught is true.** Because of the rapid growth of the LDS Church, alarmed ministers and propagandists now preach that prayer is not a reliable guide to truth, that Mormon missionaries should not be allowed into your home, that you should not read Mormon literature, etc., etc. Instead of prayer, these ministers and propagandists would leave honest people who are searching for truth vulnerable to the deception that is rampant among anti-Mormon lecturers and in anti-Mormon literature.

After reading this book, you will realize why these detractors would rather that you didn’t use prayer in your search for truth — doctrine such as theirs, based on false ideas and deception, will never receive confirmation from the Lord. **May we leave our testimonies with you that we know you are a child of God; He loves you, and He will hear and answer your prayers. That you may not be deceived is our prayer and the end to which this book was written.**

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ROBERT L. BROWN  
ROSEMARY BROWN  
BARBARA ELLSWORTH  
GAIL A. GIBSON

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## DEDICATIONS

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I would like to thank my wife, Rosemary, for her inspiration and encouragement in this work. Thanks also to countless friends who cheered for us and gave us their support — to LaVon Finlinson for her moral support, to Helen Schlie for her encouragement, to Grace Soper for managing our store in our absence, to David Jones for the proof-reading, to Gail Gibson for the art work, to Curtis P. and Michelle M. Bond for providing the index, and to Barbara Ellsworth for the editing and putting it all together. And most of all, thanks to the Lord for His inspiration and guidance. With His help, our contacts replied promptly, and information was gathered quickly and efficiently.

**I would like to make it clear that I did all the research on my own and I am not a spokesman for the LDS church, nor was I “commissioned” by them to do this work.** I did it because I wanted to defend the LDS church through which my life has been so richly blessed.

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ROBERT L. BROWN  
JULY 1981

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For there are many yet on earth among all sects, parties and denominations who are **blinded by the subtle craftiness of men, whereby they lie in wait to deceive**, and who are only kept from the truth because they know not where to find it.

Therefore, **that we should waste and wear out our lives in bringing to light all the hidden things of darkness, wherein we know them; . . . . .**

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Doctrine and Covenants 123: 12, 13

## INTRODUCTION

# WHO IS DEE JAY NELSON?

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On January 31, 1980, Concerned Christians of Mesa, Inc., (Mesa, Arizona), sent a letter to all ministers in this area inviting them to attend two seminars to hear Egyptologist Dee Jay Nelson lecture on the subject of "Mormonism" and "The Book of Abraham."

This man, for a number of years, was busily engaged in perpetrating a fraud against the Book of Abraham in Christian Churches throughout the United States. His story is even mentioned in foreign lands. He brought an impressive list of credentials to lend authenticity to his lectures: "Professor of Egyptology," "PhD," "World's Leading Authority on Egyptology," etc., etc. With anti-Mormon speakers, he very quickly became the No. 1 authority on the Book of Abraham, and his denunciation of the book is extensively quoted in nearly all anti-Mormon books.

## WHAT IS THE BOOK OF ABRAHAM?

The Book of Abraham is part of one of the Standard Works of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, commonly known as Mormons. It was translated from Egyptian papyri by Joseph Smith and is regarded as sacred scripture by members of the Church.

The book contains the writings of Abraham while he was in Egypt. As in all writings of the prophets, it contains information of much importance. Some of the things Abraham wrote about were: lineage and rights to the priesthood; the Lord's promised blessings to Abraham's seed (children); planets and their relationship to time; the degrees of intelligence among spirits; Abraham's knowledge of his pre-earth (spiritual) life; the physical creation in which all life was placed on earth; the purpose of earth life, and many other important things.

## WHERE DID THE BOOK OF ABRAHAM COME FROM?

The celebrated French traveler, Antonio Sebolo, entered the catacombs in Egypt June 7, 1831, and obtained eleven mummies. he became sick in 1832, and before he died, willed the mummies to a Mr. Michael Chandler. Mr. Chandler had them sent to New York in 1833. the coffins had not previously been opened, nor the mummies taken out. Upon opening the coffins, Mr. Chandler discovered important Egyptian writings on two of the bodies. There were two rolls of papyrus, plus two or three other small pieces with astronomical calculations, epitaphs, and some undescribed writings.

Mr. Chandler heard that Joseph Smith could translate ancient writings — referring to the translation of the Book of Mormon, so he took the papyrus collection to Kirtland, Ohio, where they were purchased by the Smith family. Joseph Smith, the Prophet, then translated them into what is now known as the Book of Abraham which became part of a book called “The Pearl of Great Price.”

## **PAPYRI DISAPPEARS**

Upon Joseph and Emma Smiths’ deaths, the papyri collection was disbursed among many people. Some papyri was traced to the Chicago museum (the newspapers of that time reported that the mummies had been received). Later there was a terrible fire in Chicago and the mummies and papyri are thought to have burned in that fire.

## **THE REDISCOVERY OF SOME OF THE JOSPEH SMITH PAPYRUS**

A few badly tattered pieces of papyrus, part of the collection held by Joseph Smith, were discovered in 1967 at the Metropolitan Museum in New York City. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was given the pieces of papyrus on Nov. 27, 1967. These were identified two weeks later, in the January 1968 issue of the Improvement Era (church magazine), **not** as the Book of Abraham papyrus roll, but as a piece of funerary document of the **Book of the Dead** commonly buried with Egyptian mummies.

## **WERE THESE PAPYRI THE LOST BOOK OF ABRAHAM?**

**NO!** Anti-Mormons have expended time, energy and money trying to make people think they are one and the same. **THEY COMPLETELY IGNORE THE FACT THAT THE PAPYRI IN THE POSSESSION OF THE CHURCH REPRESENT ONLY A FRACTION OF THE ORIGINAL JOSEPH SMITH COLLECTION AND THAT THE BOOK OF ABRAHAM PAPYRI WAS NOT AMONG THE FRAGMENTS FOUND.**

When the church received the papyri from the Metropolitan Museum, it put them on public display, circulated excellent reproductions, and welcomed scholars to examine them. The translations made by Egyptologists at that time were accepted without hesitation or reservation and no one was commissioned to make an official translation, as the public have been led to believe.

One man who examined the papyrus was Dee Jay Nelson . . . this man set himself up as an authority on things Egyptian, claiming he had two PhD degrees and many other impressive credentials so that he might be effective in discrediting the Book of Abraham.

## THE PURPOSE OF THIS BOOK

The purpose of this book is to acquaint you with the facts concerning Dee Jay Nelson and the Book of Abraham.

As will be proven in this book, Nelson completely misrepresented his credentials. In fact he has none. Among other things, he is a high school and college drop out. And, he does not have the education, reputation, or credibility or evaluate the Book of Abraham in any scientific or academic sense.

In Nelson's two-hour taped lecture on Feb. 22, 1980, at the Central Christian Church in Mesa, Arizona, ninety-six statements were found to be false or misleading. As more and more evidence accumulated, it became clear to this author that Dee Jay Nelson's deception was simply a profit-making venture and should be exposed.

### NELSON INVITES ALL TO CHECK HIS CREDENTIALS

In his lecture of February 22, 1980, in Mesa, Dee Jay Nelson extended an invitation to check him out. SO WE DID! Nelson said:

"Now, before I begin the lecture, I want to say something about my credentials. Since I have been in the Valley, there has been much said against me in that respect. I am going to supply you with some addresses and if those of you who are pro-Mormon would like to get out pencil and paper and jot down, you can check my credentials. I make my living as an Egyptologist. I'm paid for it. I'm either an Egyptologist or I'm fooling a lot of people . . . Well, I think that will be enough on that topic, but if you doubt that I have my degree, and my degree is in Anthropology, not Egyptology, you remember then, write these people that I mentioned and you will find out the truth of the matter!"

My wife and I wish to thank Mr. Nelson for that invitation to check him out. We were probably the first to ever do so. This work is the result of that invitation.

### OUR STORY BEGAN WITH AN ANTI-MORMON LECTURE

On Saturday, February 16, 1980, a friend called my wife, Rosemary, and told her about a lecture to be given by a renowned Egyptologist by the name of Dr. Dee Jay Nelson. She thought we might be interested in attending because of our interest in missionary work. When my wife and I served a Stake Mission together in Mesa, Arizona, we found that we were much more effective when we were informed about the actions of the anti-Mormon society which was very active in the area.

A newspaper clipping that appeared in the Mesa Tribune advertising Dee Jay Nelson's lecture is shown below:

A-18 The Tribune, Mesa, AZ Saturday, February 18, 1980



**Speaking in Mesa**

Two lectures will be given in Mesa by Egyptologist Dee Jay Nelson, under the sponsorship of Concerned Christians Inc. On Tuesday, he will speak at Church of the Redeemer, 117 N. Stapley Drive, on the Book of Abraham, and on Friday, at Central Christian Church, 224 N. Dobson, on the Book of Mormon. Nelson is a former Mormon who was commissioned by that church to translate the rediscovered Joseph Smith papyri. He is lecturer on Egyptology in the New Horizons Program of Rocky Mountain College, Billings, Mont.

**Egyptology talk will be Tuesday**

A lecture by Egyptologist Dee Jay Nelson at Church of the Redeemer, 117 N. Stapley Drive, will be at 7 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 18, instead of Sunday as indicated in Saturday's Tribune.

Nelson also will speak at 7 p.m. Friday, Feb. 22 at Central Christian Church, 224 N. Dobson.

The lectures are sponsored by Concerned Christians, Inc.

We obtained a copy of a letter from the Concerned Christians, Inc., that was sent to all ministers in this area. The letter was signed by Jim Robertson, Chairman. Concerned Christians is a non-profit organization, with members from various denominations (always headed by apostate Mormons) who claim they are reaching out in love to those lost in Mormonism. This is the letter:

CONCERNED CHRISTIANS, INC.  
P. O. Box 18  
Mesa, Arizona 85201

January 31, 1980

Dear Fellow Christians:

Concerned Christians, Inc., has been instrumental in bringing renowned Egyptologist Dr. Dee Jay Nelson to the Valley for a two-day seminar.

In 1967 an Egyptian papyri was found in the New York Metropolitan Museum of Art and was purported to be the long lost Book of Abraham quoted in the Pearl of Great Price and prominently used throughout the L.D.S. Church. Joseph Smith, founder of the Mormon Church claimed to have translated the Book of Abraham from this papyri. Dr. Nelson was commissioned by the Mormon Church to translate and confirm that this was indeed the Book of Abraham. As a result of this translation, Dr. Nelson resigned from the Mormon Church and now conducts these seminars to explain what he discovered.

The purpose in arranging this two-day seminar is to educate Christians in the Valley on the dangers of the rapidly growing Mormon movement. Mormon missionaries that now number over 29,000, and are present in your neighborhood and throughout the world, are seeking out members from all denominations. Most people do not realize that this movement is a cult. They use the Bible to win converts, but once a member they rely on the Book of Mormon, the Doctrines and Covenants and the Pearl of Great Price. This lecture series will reveal the fallacies found in the Book of Mormon and the Pearl of Great Price. It will prove that Joseph Smith was a false prophet as described in Duet. 18:22.

We urge you to join with the other churches in the Valley and appeal to your congregation from your pulpit and in your church bulletin to attend. These two seminars are on February 19th at the Church of the Redeemer, 717 North Stapley Drive, and on February 22nd at Central Christian Church, 315 North Hobson, both in Mesa. Both services will start at 7:00 p.m.

A freewill offering will be taken during the lectures to help pay the travel expenses incurred by Dr. Nelson.

Sincerely, in Christ,

*Jim Robertson*  
 Jim Robertson, Chairman,  
 Concerned Christians, Inc.

The first lecture was on February 19, 1980, at the Church of the Redeemer. We sat near the back and estimated the audience to be between 550 and 600 people. When the collection plate was passed, we estimated about \$1,500 was donated. It was during this lecture that Nelson told how he first heard of the Joseph Smith Papyri, and how he went to Brigham Young University to see Dr. Hugh Nibley. After chatting with Dr. Nibley for a while, Nibley took Nelson to see the display of the papyri and arranged for him to receive a color reproduction of them. This author called Dr. Nibley and he said that the entire visit lasted only about twenty minutes and that it was the only time the two men ever met face to face. Dr. Nibley also said that if I had come to him he would have extended the same courtesy to me and would have given me a picture of the papyri. This is a simple matter of professional courtesy as the display and reproductions were available to the public. Nelson then claimed that Nibley gave him a letter of introduction to President N. Eldon Tanner of the First Presidency of the LDS Church. Nelson said that he spoke to President Tanner about fifteen minutes and then President Tanner said: "I think you are the man to do the job; you are the one to translate the papyri." Nelson said, "We made a deal." "If I would just translate the hieroglyphics into their modern English equivalent, that the Church would publish the work."

## THAT ISN'T THE WAY THE CHURCH OPERATES

When Nelson made these statements, I knew that something was wrong! I have been in the Church long enough to know that no General Authority of the Church would make a decision like that by himself, especially that fast. I am sure that he would counsel with some of the other Authorities and most likely, would take the

matter before the entire Quorum of the Twelve (Apostles) for a decision. I also felt that if the Authorities were looking for someone to translate, they would look among the qualified experts in that field.

I thought about this several times that night. The next morning, I decided to call President Tanner to determine whether that were true. I dialed the Church Office Building and spoke with President Tanner. I told him who I was, about Dee Jay Nelson and the lecture that he gave, and then mentioned that Nelson claimed that he was commissioned to translate the Joseph Smith Papyri by him (Pres. Tanner). President Tanner stated that it was **not** true, so I asked him if he would send me a telegram to that effect.

The next day, I received the following telegram from him — “IN REPLY TO YOUR INQUIRY, I SAY THAT I HAVE NEVER AUTHORIZED D.J. NELSON TO TRANSLATE THE PEARL OF GREAT PRICE POPYRUS. SIGNED: N. ELDON TANNER.”



## IT APPEARS SOME INVESTIGATION WOULD BE IN ORDER

This reply was good enough for me and I was determined to check Nelson out to the best of my ability. I wasn't sure just where to start. Among other things I taped Nelson's lecture of February 22, 1980, and his interview on the Mike Dixon Talk Show. The contents of the rest of the book are the results of my research into the credentials of Dee Jay Nelson. It would probably be amusing except for the fact that Nelson has deceived so many. In Nelson's investigation, we also uncovered deception by Jerald and Sandra Tanner.