

Guest op-ed: Will Northern Utah Mormons vote for Korihor? Oct. 29, 2020

By Warner Woodworth https://www.standard.net/opinion/guest-commentary/guest-op-ed-will-northern-utah-mormons-vote-for-korihor/article_5d1d6dcd-1e0e-5a6e-8e3c89dbe65e37c9.html

Weber County always has interesting political races and this year's presidential election is more energized than usual in Northern Utah. Whether Donald Trump will knock out Joe Biden is questionable. Statewide, the race is Trump at 51%. Biden is at 40%. I hear a few Latter-day Saints referencing Trump with the name of an ancient Book of Mormon personality, Korihor. Are there similarities? I see several.

The context for my view is that of being a committed member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, having served in seven bishoprics and high councils, taught LDS seminary full time for years and been a missionary several times. And I keep getting inquiries about Utah support for Donald Trump, so let me cite a couple of ideas.

I've been a registered Republican and professor at Brigham Young University in Provo, yet cannot accept Mr. Trump and his many evils as we approach the Nov. 3 presidential election. Some Utah friends pretend to be dismayed by his policies, language and corruption but still plan to vote for him. Not happy warriors, they will support Trump because he fits their imaginary values.

Over this last weekend, Trump announced he's now a "real" Christian, leaving the Protestant Church he was dragged to by parents 65 years ago and seldom attended since. In order to gain more Evangelical voters against the Democrat Biden, he's switched religious lanes. Will becoming a "nondenominational Christian" nine days ahead help him secure a win this time?

In my view, Mr. Trump has few values consistent with LDS beliefs. Instead, he is more closely akin to the evil figure in the Book of Mormon known as Korihor, an opposition figure to Christian ethics who swayed many believers in ancient times. Mormon scripture records that Korihor emphasized that which is visible and tangible, like money, sex and power, not ethics or character.

Trump and his co-religionist, Korihor, think that decent values and morality are psychological abnormalities, products of "derangement" and a "frenzied mind." (Alma 30:16.) Assuming that there is no God and since religion is a farce, Korihor and his descendant, Mr. Trump, conclude people can live as they please without fear of eternal consequences.

Korihor argued that "ye cannot know of things which ye do not see" (Alma 30:15-18). In other words, there's no real shame unless one is caught. And when caught, engage in denial. Always. There's neither crime nor sin, unfairness nor fairness, and no eternal consequence of actions. The powerful ought to "enjoy their rights and privileges," and "make use of that which is their own" (Alma 30:17) as they take wealth from the masses while paying no taxes.

Korihor is accused of what may be Trump's greatest sin, being "possessed of a "lying spirit" (Alma 30:42), revealed in 21,000 documented lies from Mr. Trump so far. In contrast to Christian humility and simplicity, Trump values ego and control. In similar fashion, we read in Alma 30:17 of Korihor that "every man fared in this life according to the management of the creature; therefore every man prospered according to his genius, and that every man conquered according to his strength; and whatsoever a man did was no crime." Sound familiar?

After being caught for his crimes, Korihor is told the devil had power over him (Alma 30:42). In reading these words, I think of Trump's attacks on women, fellow politicians and our military dead who he described as "losers" and "suckers."

Back to Trump's new religious conversion. Last year, I predicted that if the 2020 election became problematic for him, Trump would see the "light" and join a more Holy Spirit-based faith to secure victory. I declared that he would do anything to win, whether it's holding a Bible for a photo op, becoming a monk or declaring he's now really converted to an Evangelical God. I'm no prophet, but this clearly happened over the weekend.

Yes, it's brazen. But maybe his advisors told him about "deathbed repentance," so he's giving it a try. I wonder in the coming days if Northern Utah voters will openly point out the deception of this fake conversion or buy in. I'll be interested in learning which of my Utah LDS friends will support the newly converted Donald Trump who's finally gained a "testimony."

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