

Mormon Prophecy Behind Glenn Beck

[Excerpts]

November 1, 2010

In one of his first appearances on Fox News, Glenn Beck sent a coded message to the nation's six million Mormons -- or at least those Mormons who believe in what the Latter-day Saints call "the White Horse Prophecy."

"We are at the place where the Constitution hangs in the balance," Beck told Bill O'Reilly on November 14, 2008, just after President Obama's election. "I feel the Constitution is hanging in the balance right now, hanging by a thread unless the good Americans wake up."

The Constitution is hanging by a thread.

Most Americans would have heard this as just another bit of overblown commentary and thought nothing more of it. But to those familiar with the White Horse Prophecy, it was an unmistakable signal.

The phrase is often attributed to the Prophet Joseph Smith, founder of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, or Mormon Church. Smith is believed to have said in 1840 that when the Constitution hangs by a thread, elders of the Mormon Church will step in on the proverbial white horse -- to save the country.

"When the Constitution of the United States hangs, as it were, upon a single thread, they will have to call for the 'Mormon' Elders to save it from utter destruction; and they will step forth and do it," Brigham Young, Smith's successor as head of the church, wrote in 1855.

Was it just a coincidence in wording, or was Beck, a 1999 Mormon convert, speaking in coded language about the need to fulfill the Mormon prophecy? A conversation on Beck's radio show ten days earlier would seem to rule out coincidence. Beck was interviewing Senator Orrin Hatch of Utah, also a Mormon, when he said: "I heard Barack Obama talk about the Constitution and I thought, we are at the point or we are very near the point where our Constitution is hanging by a thread."

"Well, let me tell you something," Hatch responded. "I believe the Constitution is hanging by a thread."

Days after Beck's Fox show started in January 2009, he had Hatch on, and again prompted him: "I believe our Constitution hangs by a thread."

Large numbers of Mormons watch Beck, but likely an even larger number of his viewers and radio listeners are evangelical Protestants who have no idea that Beck is preaching to them an obscure prophecy of the Latter-day Saints -- a faith many conservative Christians malign as a cult. In addition to the coded allusions to the White Horse Prophecy, he often brings Mormon theology into his broadcasts (he touts the thinking of late church president Ezra Taft Benson and he frequently promotes the work Mormon conspiracy theorist Cleon Skousen) but without identifying them with the LDS church.

[\(Dana Milbank, Adapted from Milbank's book, "Tears of a Clown," published October 5, 2010.\)](#)