

Top 10 Smoking Guns

1. The Book of Abraham facsimiles are incorrectly translated. [\[details\]](#)
2. There are multiple anachronisms in the Book of Mormon. [\[details\]](#)
3. The Book of Mormon contains transcription errors from the King James Version of the Bible and other errors contradicting the translation story. [\[details\]](#)
4. An LDS prophet has denied receiving revelation or being a special witness while under oath before congress. [\[details\]](#)
5. LDS prophets have given false prophecies. [\[details\]](#)
6. LDS Apostles and prophets have been fooled by, defended, and provided apologetics for frauds and hoaxes. [\[details\]](#)
7. LDS Prophets have denounced or revoked their position on scientific theories that are now (dis)proven or embarrassing doctrine that is no longer culturally accepted/tolerated. [\[details\]](#)
8. Joseph Smith secretly and illegally practiced polygamy with married women, young teenagers, and servants in his house despite statements and claimed revelation to the contrary. [\[details\]](#)
9. All three witnesses have denied physically seeing the Golden Plates. The eight are all related and/or were part of the production of the Book of Mormon. [\[details\]](#)
10. The doctrine, canon, and rhetoric is filled with contradictions and inconsistencies. [\[details\]](#)

Details and Sources

1. The Book of Abraham facsimiles

- [Translation by Mormon and non-Mormon Egyptologists](#)
- [LDS Apologist's translation](#) employed as a religion professor by BYU and Egyptologist for the Maxwell institute.
- [The second Facsimile](#) has been incorrectly altered as found in Joseph's translation. Portions were demonstrably copied from other portions of the parchment and inserted out of place and upside down.
- There have been attempts to rebut some of these claims and [link Abraham to the facsimiles](#), but these attempts were [debunked here](#).
- The original facsimile currently in possession of the church dates to the early century AD. Much later than the 2000 BC period in which Abraham lived.

Conclusion: *Mormon and non-Mormon sources agree.* A straight translation of the facsimiles produces a translation consistent with common funeral texts. They do not reference Abraham in any way. Instead, they reference Egyptian gods Ammon'ra, Isis, Horef, Ma'at, Anubis, and others. The text is also consistent with other Books of Breathing and Books of the Dead. It should come to no surprise that this text accompanied a group of Egyptian mummies. Furthermore, attempts to claim that the facsimiles were altered from their original meaning have no

bearing. Abraham cannot be reliably tied to these facsimiles in any way, nor can the new translations be tied into the Egyptian language as it is known today.

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2. Book of Mormon Anachronisms

- **Horses:** The last known breed of Native American horses went extinct [12,500 radiocarbon years](#) before present. This is well before the dates of the Jaredites or Nephites/Lamanites. There have been some claims that the [tapir](#) was the horse referenced in the book. However, this does not hold up to the translation method as described by Joseph. A tapir is not a horse, and an all-knowing God would not have made that mistake. Horses are referenced in [2 Nephi 12:7](#), [3 Nephi 3:22](#), [Ether 9:19](#), and [Alma 18:9](#). Note: [some apologists](#) have professed that horse bones have been found in the Americas in about the right time frame. However, these bones were [carbon dated](#) to within the last two centuries. To quote the paper (emphasis mine): "In this case those conclusions are testable. In 2002 I was contacted by Dr. Stephen Jones of Brigham Young University, a researcher conducting a project on the antiquity of New World horses. He was willing to provide funds for dating the skull using accelerator mass spectrometry (AMS) in order to settle questions regarding the skull's antiquity. A single sample was removed by MPM staff from the aboral margin of the jaw near the gonion caudale. It was separated into three subsamples, one held as a voucher and the others independently submitted to different radiocarbon labs (Beta Analytic and Stafford Research Laboratories) for AMS dating. The samples were of approximately the same size and yielded results in close agreement. Beta 167209 yielded *an uncalibrated date of 110 +/- 40 BP*; Stafford *SR6189 yielded an uncalibrated date of 190 +/- 35 BP*."
- **Cattle/cows/goats:** The Book of Mormon makes several references to Nephites gathering and raising cattle. However, the last known cattle species in the Americas went extinct only a few thousand years after the horse. It's been suggested that cows are really bison, and goats are really deer; but this again contradicts the translation method assuming an all-knowing God. References: [Enos 1:21](#), [3 Nephi 3:22](#), [3 Nephi 4:4](#), [3 Nephi 6:1](#), and [Ether 9:18](#).
- **Iron/Steel:** There is no record of steel or iron having ever been smelted in the old world. Furthermore mass production of steel weaponry would have required iron and steel forges. These would have left evidence in slag, remnants of iron/steel weaponry, and the spreading of the technology as it provides a significant military and structural advantage. There is no evidence to suggest any forging of the metals existed, despite the discovery of a single iron mine between 2004 and 2007. Some apologists have suggested the word steel was used where a copper alloy was intended, or steel was another term for obsidian. Both suggestions suffer from the same redefinition problems as above, and neither copper or obsidian can rust. References to steel: [1 Nephi 4:9](#), [1 Nephi 16:18](#), [2 Nephi 5:15](#), and [Ether 7:9](#). References to iron working: [2 Nephi 5:15](#), [2 Nephi 20:34](#), [Jarom 1:8](#), [Mosiah 11:8](#), and [Ether 10:23](#). References to rusting weaponry: [Mosiah 8:11](#)
- **Barley:** There are strains of [barley](#) native to the Americas showing signs of use but not cultivation (see also [foxtail barley](#)). However, this use took place

in the early AD years. Well beyond the 121 BC claim of the Book of Mormon. References to *Barley*: [Alma 11:7](#), [Alma 11:5](#), [Mosiah 9:9](#), and [Mosiah 7:22](#).

- **Wheat:** Unlike barley, there is [no evidence](#) to support the claim of a pre-Columbian strain of wheat. References to *Wheat*: [Mosiah 9:9](#).
- **Wheeled Vehicles:** To quote the curator of Ethnography at the American Museum of Natural History, "we see that the prevailing mode of land transport in the New World was by human carrier. The wheel was unknown in pre-Columbian times". As with steel, the military and structural advantages would have prevented this achievement from being kept a secret for thousands of years. It would have spread like wildfire through the native populations as it did through their [European, Indian, and Asian](#) counterparts. References: [Alma 18:9-10](#), [12](#), [Alma 20:6](#), and [3 Nephi 3:22](#)
- **Silk:** Silk comes from an Asian moth, which is unavailable in the Americas until post Columbian arrival. The claim that the material was not silk, but just called silk due to other similarities, suffers from the same definition problems as have already been mentioned. References: [1 Nephi 13:7-8](#) [Alma 1:29](#), [Alma 4:6](#), [Ether 9:17](#), and [Ether 10:24](#)

Conclusion: These items do not belong in a pre-Columbian book on Native Americans. Apologists have tried to redefine the dictionary to fit our current understanding; however, redefinition is not a plausible option. The translation method as described by Joseph and his scribes do not support this claim. To believe the translation and the apologetic remarks implies God does not know the names of his own animals, which appears to contradict LDS theology (see 3x for more on the translation process). [Additional reading, sources](#) and [informational viewing on how steel, wheat, and barley can affect a civilization](#).

See [comments here](#) for more information on why the "substitutes hypothesis" is without merit.

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3a. Book of Mormon translation errors

- **Accidental inclusion of French:** *Adieu*. The book was translated into English by strict divine revelation yet we see French wording. The suggestion that this word filled a need not present in English is unfounded. Both Farewell (used frequently in the book) and Goodbye (English) would have sufficed. Reference: [Jacob 7:27](#)
- **Accidental inclusion of Greek:** *Satyr*. The Greek word or phonic interpretation of Satyr could not have been available on the brass plates; is better translated as "wild goat", "monkey", or "dancing devil" (as it appears in other bibles); and was not used before 1300's Greece. This is a clear case of plagiarism from the existing King James Version of the Bible (KJV). Reference: [Isaiah 34:14](#) compared to [2 Nephi 23:21](#)
- **Accidental inclusion of Latin:** *Lucifer*. Lucifer, or the name given to the Morning star was a [Roman invention](#).

- The Book of Mormon has gone through more than 15 editions for the Mainstream LDS version and another 3 revisions by the RLDS. Over 2000 changes were made to the LDS version alone. Let's put aside the benign grammatical and spelling changes, as they can be attributed to publishing errors. However, there were other significant ones that can't be as easily dismissed. For example, Joseph Smith was changed from "Author and Proprietor" to "translator" (Note: this is claimed to be a copyright requirement. Possibly dishonest, but perhaps benign.), all references to Jesus being God the eternal father were replaced with "son of" God the eternal father, the removal of most "and it came to pass," fillers, and the name Mosiah and Benjamin being used incorrectly ([Mosiah 21:28](#), [Ether 4:1](#)) to name a few.

3b. Other errors and plagiarized mistakes in the King James version of the Bible (KJV)

- [2 Nephi 12:16](#), "...and upon all the ships of the sea, and upon all the ships of Tarshish, and upon all pleasant *pictures*" - *ships* was originally mistranslated as *pictures* in the KJV.
- [2 Nephi 19:1](#), "...and afterwards did more grievously afflict by the way of the Red Sea beyond Jordan in Galilee of the nations". - *honor* was originally mistranslated as *did more grievously afflict* in the KJV.
- It should also be mentioned that in 2 Nephi 19:1, KJV's "sea" was changed to the "red sea" in the Book of Mormon; however, the red sea is located over 250 miles from the sea of Galilee on the southern border of Palestine making this addition a flaw in the Book of Mormon.
- [2 Nephi 21:3](#), "And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord..." - *delight* was originally mistranslated as *quick* in the KJV.
- [2 Nephi 16:2](#), "Above it stood the seraphims" - *seraphim* was originally incorrectly conjugated as *seraphims*. Note: the Book of Mormon was changed was made in the latest version to correctly conjugate the word, but you can see the KJV misuse of the word from the 1830s through the 1981.

3x. Special Note on the professed translation method

- Russell M Nelson in a 1992 address to mission presidents, corroborated by the Maxwell institute's quote of David Whitmer, [explained the translation](#) process as follows: "*Joseph Smith would put the seer stone into a hat, and put his face in the hat, drawing it closely around his face to exclude the light; and in the darkness the spiritual light would shine. A piece of something resembling parchment would appear, and on that appeared the writing. One character at a time would appear, and under it was the interpretation in English. Brother Joseph would read off the English to Oliver Cowdery, who was his principal scribe, and when it was written down and repeated to Brother Joseph to see if it was correct, then it would disappear, and another character with the interpretation would appear. Thus the Book of Mormon was translated by the gift and power of God, and not by any power of man.*"
- Martin Harris corroborated Whitmer's claim [when he described the process](#) as, "*By aid of the seer stone, sentences would appear and were read by the*

Prophet and written by martin, and when finished he would say, "Written," and if correctly written, that sentence would disappear and another appear in it's place, but if not written correctly it remained until corrected, so that the translation was just as it was engraven on the plates, precisely in the language then used." (Feb 6th, 1982, pg 86)

Conclusion: If Joseph was truly checking every word or every Egyptian character with the seer's stone then there is no excuse for errors of logic, incorrect terminology, inconsistent naming, or anachronous statements. To claim that the translation is wrong is to claim that the men are at best liars or at worst frauds. There is no room for human error in their statement. It's claimed that every word literally came from God. Yet, there are anachronistic words, out of place wording, and plagiarized errors that have persisted for the last 150 years. This is beyond the thousands of other changes over the years. There is no excuse for this if the translation story is true; however, it makes perfect sense for a book that written by man.

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4. Denying prophetic revelation and position as a special witness

Sitting LDS prophet Joseph F Smith has testified before congress that he does not, or had not, received revelation. [The full dialog is found here](#). He further testified that he would expect any such revelations in the same form as any good Methodist could expect to receive. It should be noted that some people, especially [the apologists at fair](#), have tried to defend the statement as a *lie for the Lord*. Stating that Joseph wouldn't have told the truth because "it was casting pearls before swine", and that the questioners were antagonistic. This begs the famous quote, "Are you lying then or are you lying now" as an admitted liar under oath can't be considered credible.

Side-point of note found in the same transcript: Joseph F Smith also admitted the next president is the senior apostle at the time of the prior president's death. From page 92 of the transcript, "And then, again, the senior apostle, through custom of the church since the death of Joseph Smith, has been recognized on the death of the president as the legitimate successor to the president."

Conclusion: Joseph F Smith admitted three key facts. He 1) denies prophetic revelation in his leadership of the church, 2) denies that his revelations are special or different from revelations to non-members, and 3) admits that the prophet wasn't chosen by revelation to the 12. [The full transcript can be found here](#)

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5. False prophecies

- [D&C 45: 64 - 74](#) - The lord told the people to buy land and create a place of safety and refuge, a place where the wicked could not go, where they would not be battled. They did so. The result was the extermination order and expulsion from Missouri.

- [D&C 84: 114](#) - Joseph claimed Boston and New York would be destroyed if they reject the Gospel. Many have rejected the Gospel, especially in Joseph's day. To date, neither city has been destroyed.
- History of the Church, v1 p315 - Joseph claimed the wicked would be wiped from the earth before. He bound it by stating "there are those now living upon the earth whose eyes shall not be closed in death until they see all these things, which I have spoken, fulfilled". It's my understanding that everyone alive in the 1830s has since died and that Jesus has not returned to the earth.
- [D&C 104:1](#) - The united order would be everlasting and immutable and unchangeable to benefit the church until Jesus comes. We know the united order failed. The church claims this was due to wickedness of the people. However, immutable and unchangeable had no qualifier.
- [D&C 105:13-15](#) - Joseph claimed the saints would win the Missouri conflict due to the Lord's help. [D&C 105:14-15 states](#), "The Lord says regarding Missouri: 'I will fight your battles ... the destroyer I have sent forth to destroy and lay waste mine enemies; and not many years hence they shall not be left to pollute mine heritage, and to blaspheme my name upon the lands which I have consecrated for the gathering together of my saints'." - they were later expelled from Missouri.
- History of Church, v2, p 182 - Second coming prophecy. "[T]he coming of the Lord, which is nigh - even fifty-six years should wind up the scene." - The lord did not come. The scene was not wrapped up.
- [1901 Lorenzo Snow prophecy](#). Many of those living would go to Jackson county to see the Savior. This has not happened 115 years later.
- [D&C 111:4](#) - Joseph claimed he would receive Salem, Mass' "wealth pertaining to gold and silver". - He never did. Neither did his successors.
- The Mormon Hierarchy: Origins of Power - D Michael Quinn. p, 634 - "I now prophecy that before ten years shall roll around, the queens of the earth shall come and pay their respects to this society" - No queens came. The relief society was instead dissolved.
- History of the Church, v5, p 336 - Second coming prophecy. "There are those of the rising generation who shall not taste death till Christ comes." - Obviously this didn't happen, and Bruce McConkie redefined "rising generation" to include children of anyone born in the year the prophecy was given. He then estimated it could be at the end of the last millennium. It's a poor redefinition to claim a generation is the children of the current generation; regardless, both dates were missed.
- History of the Church, v.6 p. 116 - Joseph claimed, "I prophesied, by virtue of the holy Priesthood vested in me, and in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ," that congress would be broken up if they ignored his petition. They ignored it. The petition was ignored, and they were not broken up. A parallel to this can be found in the [FLDS church](#) today.
- The Mormon Hierarchy: Origins of Power, D. Michael Quinn, p. 644 - "Smith prophesies that his unborn child will be called David, and will be 'church president and king over Israel'. David never became the president of the LDS or RLDS church. While he did [join and proselyte](#) for the RLDS church, but [his brother was called](#) as the 2nd president.

- Side-point of note: With the exception below, I have tried to ignore most of the heavily debated, vague, or argued prophecies. This is especially true for vague prophecies or prophecies originating from local media/rumors as they are notorious for being unfalsifiable, self-fulfilling, or tautologies. For our theological readers, I'd like to include a quote from Matthew 7: 15-16 "*15. Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. 16. Ye shall know them by their fruits*"
- Joseph prophesied in the name of the lord that Hiram and Oliver would sell the copyright to the Book of Mormon in Canada. This is found in the history of the church (1930). [Source](#). [\(see also\)](#) "Brother Hyrum said it had been suggested to him that some of the brethren might go to Toronto, Canada and sell the copy-right of the Book of Mormon for considerable money; and he persuaded Joseph to inquire of the Lord about it. Joseph concluded to do so. He had not yet given up the stone. Joseph looked into the hat in which he placed the stone, and received a revelation that some of the brethren should go to Toronto, Canada, and that they would sell the copy-Wright of the Book of Mormon. Hiram page and Oliver Cowdery went to Toronto on this mission, but they failed entirely to sell the copy-right, returning without any money."
- Note: On the above, Whitmer's book stated that Joseph later claimed the devil beguiled him or the revelation came from Joseph himself. He said that through revelation - in the same manner of looking into his peep stone - "Some revelations are from God, Some revelations are from men, and some revelations are from the devil." Yet, it can't be ignored that these revelations and a translation of the Book of Mormon all through the same method. Also note that there is some dispute in the text. Apologists claim [the actual text](#) gave an out by qualifying the sale on whether the recipients would listen to the spirit. I've left this in place due to the officially accepted history of the church link, but it's with reservations.

Conclusion: Joseph has prophesied many times in the name of the Lord. Many are provably wrong. From a religious perspective, he's a false prophet. From a secular perspective, he's a man who gets many things wrong. For those who argue that he was occasionally right, even a broken clock is right twice a day. [Find the source for the quotes above, and more falsifiable revelations here](#)

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6. Defending Frauds

- [Kinderhook plates](#) - Joseph is purported as "translating" the hoax and claiming they were of ancient origin. It was later discovered that they were not. See also the [1904 - 1905 Improvement Manual](#) which touts these (and Joseph's partial translation) as proof that Native Americans wrote on metal plates. It was removed when they were discovered to be a forgery. This also proclaims The Cincinnati Gold Plate, The Newark Hebrew Tablet, and The Pittsfield Hebrew Parchment as evidence. All were proven false.

- [Mark Hoffman](#) sold many frauds to the church. A master forger, he convinced the first presidency to buy (often with personal funds or bartered artifacts) and hide the negative articles. The frauds ranged from letters describing Joseph's necromancy, to forged "reformed Egyptian" papyri, to a purported blessing that showed the RLDS had the keys to the church authority. The LDS church and/or its leadership scrambled to buy the forgeries for hundreds of thousands of dollars and hide them in the church vault. A vault they never opened as they bought forgeries of journals and letters that were already in their possession. These were hidden until Hoffman "leaked" their existence to the press and the church was forced into revealing them.
- The church started damage control once the letters were revealed to the press. In an attempt to downplay the revelations. Dallin Oaks, ([1985 CES Doctrine and Covenants Symposium, BYU, Aug. 16, 1985](#)) argued that a salamander showing Joseph where to find the plates was actually Moroni. "The word salamander might also refer to a mythical being thought to be able to live in fire and a 'being that is able to live in fire is a good approximation of the description Joseph Smith gave of the Angel Moroni'". The apologetics were never revoked, corrected, or apologized for after the fraud was discovered.
- D&C 77 claims the earth is 7000 years old, but [here is a living tree](#) that has a 9500 year old root system.

Conclusion: The leadership is not immune to hoaxes and has provided spiritual explanations and defenses for frauds. This should make anyone question such statements as "When the Prophet speaks, ... the debate is over" [spoken in general conference \(p108\)](#) or [republished in the ensign](#). What right do they have to call for unconditional obedience if they are so unreliable?

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7. Revelations more compatible with culture of the time than the culture and science of today

- Joseph F Smith said, "There is a great deal said about our plural marriage... It is a principle that pertains to eternal life, in other words, to endless lives, or eternal increase. It is a law of the Gospel pertaining to the celestial kingdom, applicable to all gospel dispensations, when commanded and not otherwise, and neither acceptable to God or binding on man unless given by commandment, not only so given in this dispensation, but particularly adapted to the conditions and necessities thereof, and to the circumstances, responsibilities, and personal, as well as vicarious duties of the people of God in this age of the world" [JD 20:26](#). In the same volume, he stated the following: *"Some people have supposed that the doctrine of plural marriage was a sort of superfluity, or nonessential to the salvation of mankind. In other words, some of the Saints have said, and believe that a man with one wife, sealed to him by the authority of the Priesthood for time and eternity, will receive an exaltation as great and glorious, if he is faithful, as he possibly could with more than one. I want here to enter my protest against this idea, for*

I know it is false". Gordon B Hinckley, in an interview with Larry King, stated, "I condemn it, yes, as a practice, because I think it is not doctrinal." [source](#).

- Furthermore, on polygamy, as Gordon B Hinckley stated in the [Nov 1998 Ensign](#). *"This Church has nothing whatever to do with those practicing polygamy. They are not members of this Church.... If any of our members are found to be practicing plural marriage, they are excommunicated, the most serious penalty the Church can impose. Not only are those so involved in direct violation of the civil law, they are in violation of the law of this Church"*. Ignoring for a moment that the FLDS in question is a break-off sect from the 1900s who claim to be practicing the true Mormonism, this flies in contradiction to a quote from Brigham Young. *"Now, where a man in this Church says, "I don't want but one wife, I will live my religion with one," he will perhaps be saved in the celestial kingdom; but when he gets there he will not find himself in possession of any wife at all. He has had a talent that he has hid up. He will come forward and say, "Here is that which thou gavest me, I have not wasted it, and here is the one talent," and he will not enjoy it, but it will be taken and given to those who have improved the talents they received, and he will find himself without any wife, and he will remain single for ever and ever."* - [JD 16:167, Brigham Young, August 31, 1873](#)
- Evolution has been [categorically denied as a hoax and fraud](#) by earlier leadership. Yet, [as it's a demonstrable fact](#), the church has changed their rhetoric to a "doesn't matter" argument. To quote a 1997 talk by Gordon B Hinckley, "People ask me every now and again if I believe in evolution. I tell them I am not concerned with organic evolution. I do not worry about it. I passed through that argument long ago", and "Studied all about it. Didn't worry me then. Doesn't worry me now". [source](#). This is misdirection away from false claims of the past. Additional comments [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#).
- Priesthood for blacks? Joseph had originally ordained several black members and even a [black seventy](#), Elijah [Abel](#). Brigham came along and denied the same 70 [access to his endowments due to race](#). He also ushered in over 80 years of racial rhetoric to last until the civil rights movement. "You see some classes of the human family that are BLACK, UNCOOUTH, UNCOMELY, DISAGREEABLE and LOW in their habits, WILD, and seemingly DEPRIVED OF NEARLY ALL THE BLESSINGS OF THE INTELLIGENCE that is generally bestowed upon mankind." from Brigham Young became "No man who makes disparaging remarks concerning those of another race can consider himself a true disciple of Christ. Nor can he consider himself to be in harmony with the teachings of the church of Christ." - Gordon B Hinckley. Even today, we can see where a [BYU professor](#) is thrown under the proverbial bus, by his church, for pointing out the discrimination was doctrinal rather than cultural. See also [this timeline](#) for inconsistencies in the reasons behind, cultural parallels, shifting doctrine, and pretending current church position makes the prior 150 years irrelevant.
- Joseph Smith said, "Ordinances instituted in the heavens before the foundation of the world, in the priesthood, for the salvation of men, are not to be altered or changed." [source](#) Yet, the temple has been significantly changed over the years. The initiatory, the penalties, signs, true order of prayer and actions at the veil have been changed or stricken for convenience. The early church had even claimed this type of change as the cause of the apostasy. More on this

[here \(highly recommended listening\)](#) and [here](#). See also: the [temple survey](#) of 1998. This was put out just prior to a set of major changes in 1990. [See also](#). [Update: additional changes in July 2013 - "True order of prayer" changed to "Order of prayer", various costume changes, and the introduction of pre-mortal michael]

- Among those changes was the addition and removal of the [Adam/God theory Brigham instituted](#). Prior to Brigham's death, Adam was God and Jesus was immortal [Adam's first born son](#). This was removed after his death. Bruce R McConkie even came out to call it as [the sixth of seven deadly heresies](#). See also [Rodney Turner's](#) master thesis on the topic (1953). [See here](#) for a partial timeline of the doctrine.
- For 170 years, the church taught that all Native Americans were the descendants of the Book of Mormon Lamanites. They even went so far to create such programs as ["Adopt a Lamanite"/"Lamanite Adoption"](#) and ["Mission to the Lamanites"](#). In 2006, the introduction to the Book of Mormon was changed to state that the Lamanites are "among" the ancestors of the Native Americans. This was on the heels of [DNA testing](#) that showed Native Americans came from Asia and not the Middle East. Note that there are some references to [Haplogroup X](#). This is a marker shared by some European populations; however, the strain is traced back to 120,000 - 36,000 BC. Far too early for the book of Mormon peoples. See this to [show a 98.1% chance](#) that Jews were not in the Native American population.
- There are other, albeit minor, re-interpretations as well. For example, [Gathering to Zion](#) was once a literal command in Joseph's day, prompting several revelations and relocations. This has changed to be figurative, and saints are commanded to stay put. Likewise, [speaking in tongues](#) was originally the Pentecostal version rather than the "learn languages using researched methods at the MTC" version we see today.

Conclusion: The LDS church has a history of following cultural norms, even when they oppress or suppress some part of the population. The church will then reverse the stance as a majority of society rejects the antiquated ideas and beliefs. This implies the church is taking their lead from the local culture rather than receiving direction from an all-knowing God.

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8. Joseph's Polygamy

- Joseph married women who were [concurrently married](#) to their faithful [husbands](#).
- Joseph also took [14 year olds](#) to his bed. Note that the median age for a woman's first marriage was [around 21 in the 1830s](#). The tradition of taking exceptionally young brides was also not as common as many would like to believe.
- Joseph also married his own servants (not slaves), including [sisters entrusted in his care](#).

- On her death bed, [Sylvia Lyon](#) confirmed her polygamous marriage involved sexual interactions. She had told her daughter that Joseph Smith was the true father. Other wives testified under oath or in interviews of similar sexual experiences with Joseph.
- While secretly and [illegally](#) practicing polygamy, Joseph Smith released a [public statement later incorporated into the D&C as section 101 \(1835 version\), and later as 109 \(1844 version\)](#). The statement read, "inasmuch as this church of Christ has been reproached with the crime of fornication, and polygamy: we declare that we believe, that one man should have one wife; and one woman, but one husband, except in case of death, when either is at liberty to marry again".
- However, Joseph is on record as having married many women and proposing to others. [In this example](#) we see him asking the girl to burn the proposition letter, so it is impossible to know how many he proposed to.
- Joseph destroyed the printing press, the [Nauvoo Expositor](#), with an unlawful order because it was going to reveal his polygamous relationships publicly. It was this unlawful order that resulted in his arrest and Carthage imprisonment.
- Side-point of Note: It's been suggested that Joseph has no children from polygamous wives. As shown above, Sylvia's disagrees. Likewise, BYU testing only checks for a specific DNA marker that's passed along the [strict paternal line](#). So any female progeny or her children would not have the marker.
- An info graphic on Joseph's wives can be [found here](#). Sources for the same are [found here](#).
- [Apologetic rebuttal](#) to the sexual polyandry which admits Joseph was sleeping with his polygamous wives. [Here is a legal essay](#) detailing how single women could enter into contracts, buy and sell real estate, or accumulate personal property, sue and be sued, write wills, serve as guardians, and act as executors of estates. In fact, once married, a woman lost autonomy and found herself under the authority of her husband (called [coverture](#)). This effectively debunks the belief that women were married in name only for some perceived social benefit.

[Read more here for other stories and a further list of wives](#) and [from Emma's perspective here](#). Listen to a well-researched podcast on the material [here](#)

Conclusion: Joseph Smith was a polygamist and introduced no shortage of pain to the woman he brought into his marriage. In the end, this was a driving factor in his death and would prove to be a thorn for the church and members alike. For years it would be touted as a requirement for exaltation, that no unhallowed hand could remove. The federal government would eventually halt it after lengthy legal battles that progressed all the way to the supreme court. 90 years after the fact, the practice is no longer considered doctrinal (see above)

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9a. All three witnesses to the Golden Plates have denied physically seeing them.

- [David Whitmer](#) watered down his story multiple times and eventually stated that it was more of a spiritual impression than physical interaction. It's also worth noting that he tried to claim successor-ship after Joseph's death and eventually started his own branch. He had financial motives not to directly disavow the book for himself and his children. see also
- [Oliver Cowdery](#) stated publicly that he was ashamed of his Mormon connections and is claimed to have disavowed the Book of Mormon in the Times and Seasons. After failing in business, destitute Oliver went back to the mainstream church who took him and provided for him. He died with the church, also having a financial motivation not to deny the book at this death.
- [Martin Harris](#) had repeatedly and publicly stated that he saw the plates with his "spiritual eyes" or "in a state of entrancement". One record in 1853 states he physically handled the plates for over an hour and a half, but this was again recanted at the end of his life where he said he saw the plates "in a state of entrancement".
- Note that all three of these men ended up [following James J Strang](#) with his claim of [finding Brass Plates](#).

Conclusion: The three witnesses have denied their physical testimony at some point of their life. In the end, those who had become financially dependant on their connection to the book and/or the church did revoke their earlier statement. They also have a history of following con-men claiming to have found metal plates in a hillside (Joseph if you're a strangite, or James if you're LDS). [Additional reading here](#), and [here](#), and [here](#). [Quick summary here](#). [Detailed compilation here](#).

9b. The eight are all related or were part of the production of the Book of Mormon.

- All [eight witnesses](#) were members of either the Smith or Whitmer family. Hiram Page having married into the Whitmer line.
- Side-point of interest: There's a 9th witness, [Mary Whitmer](#), who also claimed to have been shown the plates by Moroni.
- There is no known document with the signature of the 8 witnesses. [The only existing document is admittedly penned entirely by Oliver Cowdery](#), even the signatures of those who he claimed witnessed it.

Conclusion: Most of the witnesses ended up leaving the church. Of the three, they either returned to the church after financial destitution or started their own branch of the religion. Of the 8, some left, some stayed, but all were related to someone who was benefiting from the book before and after Joseph's death. Primarily this involved David Whitmer and his splinter group, Smith's children and the RLDS group, or the mainstream Brighmite branch.

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10. The doctrine, canon, and rhetoric is filled with contradictions and inconsistencies.

- [Jacob 2:23](#) vs [D&C 132](#) - In Jacob we see a ban on Polygamy except to raise up seed, making a special remark that David and Solomon were practicing an abomination. In [D&C 132:39](#), a scripture Joseph purportedly added to support his now known polygamous habits, we see the claim that David and Solomon now did not sin. For your reference, here is each: [Jacob 2:23](#) - "Behold, David and Solomon truly had many wives and concubines, which thing was abominable before me, saith the Lord.", [D&C 132:39](#) - "David's wives and concubines were given unto him of me, by the hand of Nathan, my servant, and others of the prophets who had the keys of this power; and in none of these things did he sin against me save in the case of Uriah and his wife;" - Solomon is referred to in the previous verses.
- Along this line, it was claimed Polygamy was to raise up seed unto the lord. Yet, we know of only one potential case where Joseph had a child via his polygamous wife. He also married women who were currently married and capable of becoming pregnant with their current husband. Even [Brigham Young](#) was having an average of 1 child per woman where the national average was 5 children per woman. Furthermore, there was not a shortage of men. In fact, [there were more men than women in Nauvoo](#) and [in polygamous Utah](#). This claim does not hold up to scrutiny.
- [Multiple first vision accounts](#) - there were between 4 and 6 first vision stories that varied greatly. From seeing an angel, to seeing God, to being overwhelmed by Satan, to seeing God and Christ, to being persecuted. The story grew as Joseph told it.
- Inconsistent stories on what prompted Joseph to first seek God. Joseph Smith History - 1:10. Joseph considers all churches to be false. Compare with 1:18 - Joseph says that he had never considered all churches to be false.
- Alma [34:36](#) "And this I know, because the Lord hath said he dwelleth not in unholy temples, but in the hearts of the righteous doth he dwell" - compare with [D&C 130:3](#) "...the idea that the Father and the Son dwell in a man's heart is an old sectarian notion, and is false"
- [Moroni 10:4](#), (request a sign to know it's true) - compare this with [Alma 32:17-21](#) (if you have faith, you do not need a sign to believe).
- [D&C 58:21](#) (Laws of God will not cause you to break the law of the land) - Official manifesto 1 - Laws of the land require us to give up the law of God.
- [Mormon 8:32](#) (false churches claim money will save you) - Compare with [D&C 64:23](#) (pay tithing to prevent being burned at the last day)

Conclusion: I've only touched lightly here as there are many more examples; but it's untenable for a perfect God to contradict himself. Therefore, one of these two statements must be wrong, and if they're wrong; what else is? More examples can be found [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#), to name a few.

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