

# Jacob 2

Wednesday, March 4, 2020





# The Past

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“I have made a ceaseless effort not to ridicule, not to bewail, not to scorn human actions, but to understand them.” – Baruch Spinoza

“We build institutes to teach 1) the history of the church, 2) the doctrine of the church, and 3) the practices of the church.” – Gordon B. Hinckley

We should not seek to receive revelation that is contrary to what the Lord has revealed through His prophets. The Lord has revealed through His prophet that the practice of plural marriage has ceased in the Church. Anyone who advocates the practice of plural marriage today is not a servant of the Lord.

*(Foundations of the Restoration Teacher lesson manual, p. 92)*

# Why? Four key verses that give multiple reasons

Why would God command this?

D&C 132:63 “1) multiply and replenish the earth, 2) fulfil the promise, 3) for their exaltation, 4) that they may bear the souls of men, 5) that God may be glorified.”

Abrahamic test – D&C 132:51 “I did it, saith the Lord, to prove you all, as I did Abraham.” **For both men and women.**

Raise up seed – Jacob 2:30 “for if I will, saith the Lord, raise up seed unto me, I will command my people; otherwise they shall hearken unto these things (monogamy).” (see also: D&C 132:30-31 “wherein he glorifieth himself.”)

# What were they thinking?

1. The importance of following the prophet.
2. The end was near... raising up seed fit into this narrative.
3. Dynastic/Adoptive Ties – this was taught everywhere in the history.
4. The more wives and children, the more glory, exaltation (see #3).

At its core, polygamy asked the Saints to put their faith in the Restoration to the ultimate test. Was Joseph really a prophet, or not? Did prophetic authority persist? Could God truly speak by divine, unmistakable revelation to each individual?

Not only must they abandon the false doctrines of the sectarians, but they must appear to renounce cherished principles of monogamy which were viewed as the well-spring of civilization.

# Brigham Young's 1847 explanation



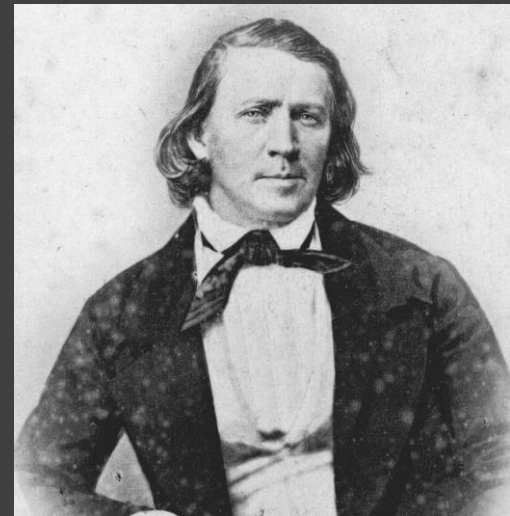
I will show you a rule by which you may comprehend the exhaltation of the faithful. I will use myself as A figure, & say that I am ruling over 10 sons or subjects ownly & soon each one of them would have 10 men sealed to them & they would be ruler over them & that would make me ruler over 10 Presidents or Kings whereas I was ruler over 10 subjects ownly or in other words I ruled over one Kingdom but now I rule over 10. Then let each one get 10 more. Then I would be ruler over 100 Kingdoms & so on continued to all eternity & the more honor & glory that I could bestow upon my sons the more it would add to my exhaltations.

*(Wilford Woodruff's Journal 3:136)*

# Adoption Theology

“I have gathered a number of families around me by the law of adoption and seal of the covenant according to the order of the priesthood,” he said, “and others have done likewise, it being the means of salvation left to bring us back to God.”

He then explained that adoption would not be necessary if the keys of the priesthood had been handed down from father to son through all generations because “all would have been legal heirs instead of being heirs according to the promise.” Adoption was the means of reconnecting the chain of the **priesthood**. (Mackley, 116. See also: *Wilford Woodruff's Journal*, 3:130, February 16, 1847).





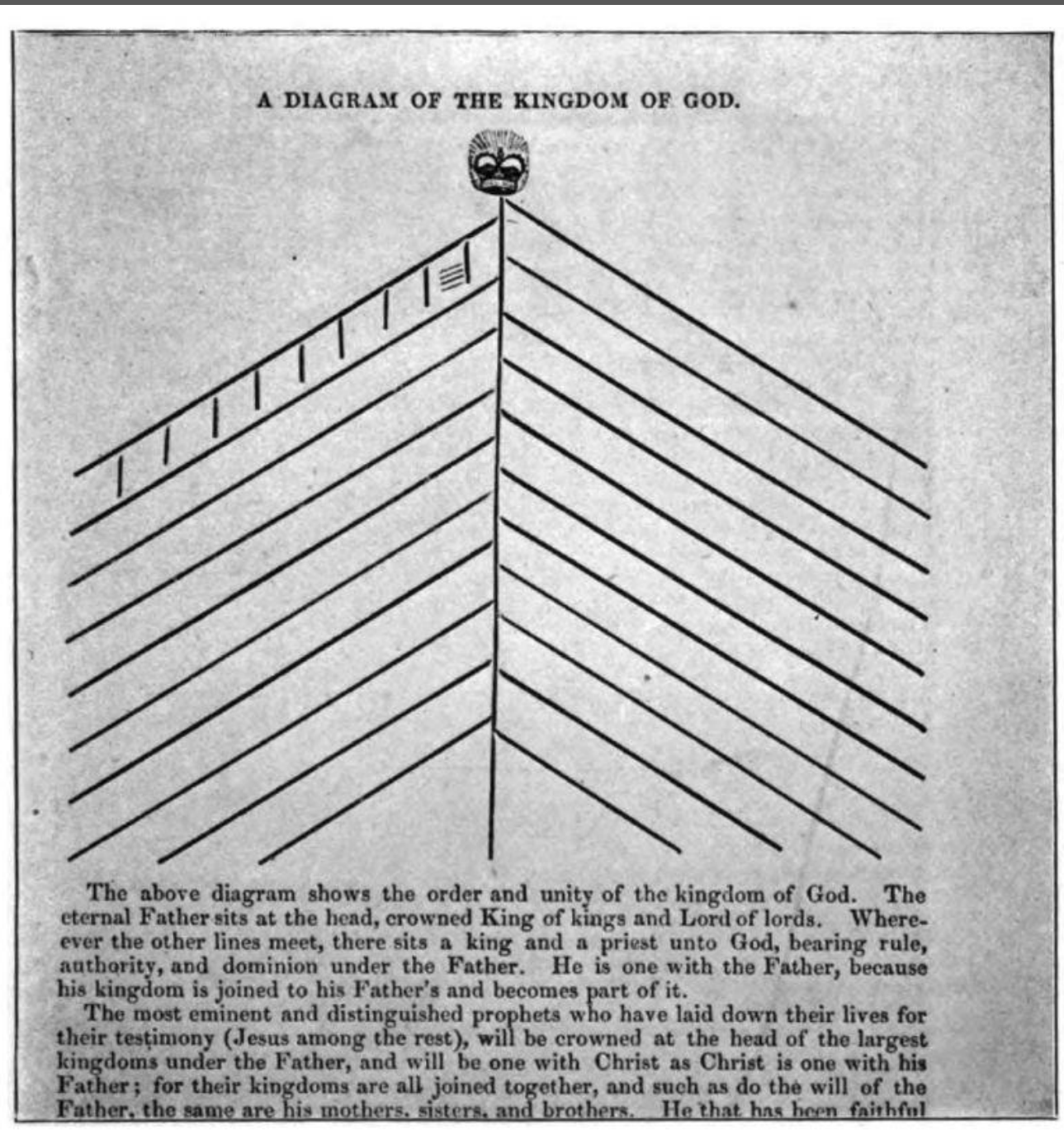
# Adoption Theology

President Young said the priesthood had been on the earth at different times. When the Priesthood had not been on earth, men will have to be sealed to each other until we go on to Father Adam. Men will have to be sealed to men so as to link the chain from beginning to end and all children (born before their parents received their endowments) will have to be sealed to their parents... But this must be in a temple and nowhere else.

(Mackley, p. 105. See also: *Wilford Woodruff's Journal* 6:553, June 18, 1870. See also *Journal of Discourses* 16:186.)

# Adoption Theology

This diagram is attributed to Orson Hyde - "Diagram of the Kingdom of God" (*Millennial Star* 9:2 [January 15, 1847]:23). See also Samuel Morris Brown, *In Heaven as it is on earth: Joseph Smith and the early conquest of death*, p. 227.



# Type of plural marriages

1. “Time Only” marriages – 3 perhaps 4 marriages - examples: Agnes Coolbrith (1842), Delcena Johnson (1842)
2. “Time and Eternity” marriages – 11-17 marriages – Louisa Beaman (1841) to Malissa Lott (1843)
3. Adoptive, Dynastic, or Eternity Only marriages – 14 marriages – Sylvia Sessions 1842 to Fanny Young 1843

# Not one of Joseph's wives accused Joseph of wrongdoing

Despite their varied lives after Nauvoo, it seems striking that none of Joseph Smith's plural wives ever accused him of abuse or deception, including the seven who did not gather to Utah with the main body of the Church. Decades after their feelings had matured and their youthful perspectives had expanded by additional experiences with marriage and sexual relations, none of them claimed they were victimized or beguiled by the Prophet.

(Brian and Laura Hales, *Joseph Smith's Polygamy: Toward a Better Understanding*, p. 99)

# The numbers

When the Saints entered the Salt Lake Valley in 1847, at least 196 men and 521 women had entered into plural marriages. Participants in these early plural marriages pledged to keep their involvement confidential, though they anticipated a time when the practice would be publicly acknowledged.

(LDS.org - <https://www.lds.org/topics/plural-marriage-in-kirtland-and-nauvoo?lang=eng&old=true> )

# The numbers

At present, perhaps the best estimates of the number of polygamous families among late-nineteenth-century Latter-day Saints **range between 20 and 30 percent**. Nevertheless, studies of individual communities show a wide variation in the incidence of plurality. Using 1880 census data, geographer Lowell C. Bennion found the lowest percentage of polygamous families—5 percent—in Davis County's south Weber and the highest—67 percent—in Orderville. He found 15 percent in Springville. In a study of St. George, historian Larry Logue found nearly 30 percent of the families polygamous in 1870 and 33 percent in 1880. (Alexander's centennial history of Utah, quoted in Flake, *The Politics of American Religious Identity*, 65 and 192)

# Ideas that do not bear scrutiny

1. Restitution of “all things” is subjective...remember there are 613 Torah Laws
2. Women outnumbered men

The most common of these conjectures is that the Church, through plural marriage, sought to provide husbands for its **large surplus of female members**. The implied **assumption** in this theory, that there have been more female than male members in the Church, **is not supported by existing evidence**. On the contrary, there seem always to have been more males than females in the Church. Families — father, mother, and children — have most commonly joined the Church. Of course, many single women have become converts, but also many single men.

The United States census records from 1850 to 1940, and all available Church records, uniformly show a preponderance of males in Utah, and in the Church. Indeed, the excess in Utah has usually been larger than for the whole United States, as would be expected in a pioneer state. The births within the Church obey the usual population law — a slight excess of males. Orson Pratt, writing in 1853 from direct knowledge of Utah conditions, when the excess of females was supposedly the highest, declares against the opinion that females outnumbered the males in Utah. (*The Seer*, p. 110) The theory that plural marriage was a consequence of a surplus of female Church members fails from **lack of evidence**.

(John A. Widtsoe, *Evidences and Reconciliations* [Salt Lake City: *Improvement Era*], 391.)





Elder Widstoe continues the discussion debunking the myth that plural marriage came about because of the licentiousness of the leaders of the church **or because the sisters did not want to marry rough, unrefined men of low character.** He goes on to answer the question as to why the Lord commanded plural marriage: **“The simple truth and the only acceptable explanation, is that the principle of plural marriage came as a revelation from the Lord to the Prophet Joseph Smith for the Church.** It was one of many principles so communicated to the Prophet. It was not man-made. It was early submitted to several of his associates, and later, when safety permitted, to the Church as a whole.”  
(Widstoe, 392.)



# Will this be required of me in the next life? Is this essential for exaltation?

In response to a letter “received at the office of the First Presidency of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints” in 1912, Charles W. Penrose of the First Presidency wrote:

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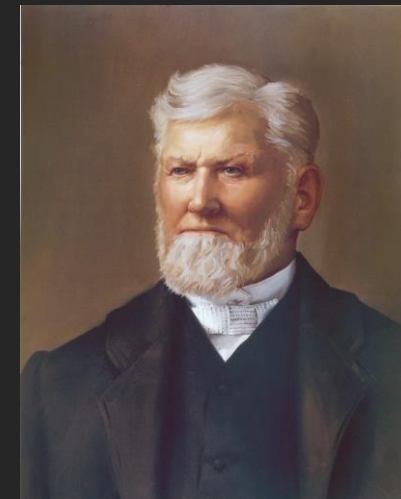
These questions are answered, so that it may not be truthfully claimed that we avoid them. (President Charles W. Penrose, *Improvement Era*, vol. 15, no. 11, September 1912, 1042.)



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“I spent the day in the council house... he attended the school of the prophets... Brother John Owen... speeches were made... Orson Pratt, Erastus Snow... Brigham Young stood up and said that there would be men saved in the CK with one wife, with many wives, and with no wife at all.”

*(Wilford Woodruff Journal, Feb. 12, 1870)*



# Helen Mar Kimball (Smith Whitney)

Helen was 14 at the time she married Joseph Smith – May 1843

The marriage was arranged by Heber C. Kimball.

The marriage was dynastic, meaning no intimacy.

Helen married Horace Whitney Feb. 3, 1846.

She and Horace Whitney had 8 living children.

Helen died in SLC, Utah in 1896, an active member.

(Todd Compton, *In Sacred Loneliness*, p. 486-534)



# More Questions

Did any of Joseph Smith's marriages result in children?

Angels and swords?

# No children

No children are known to have been born to Joseph and his plural wives.

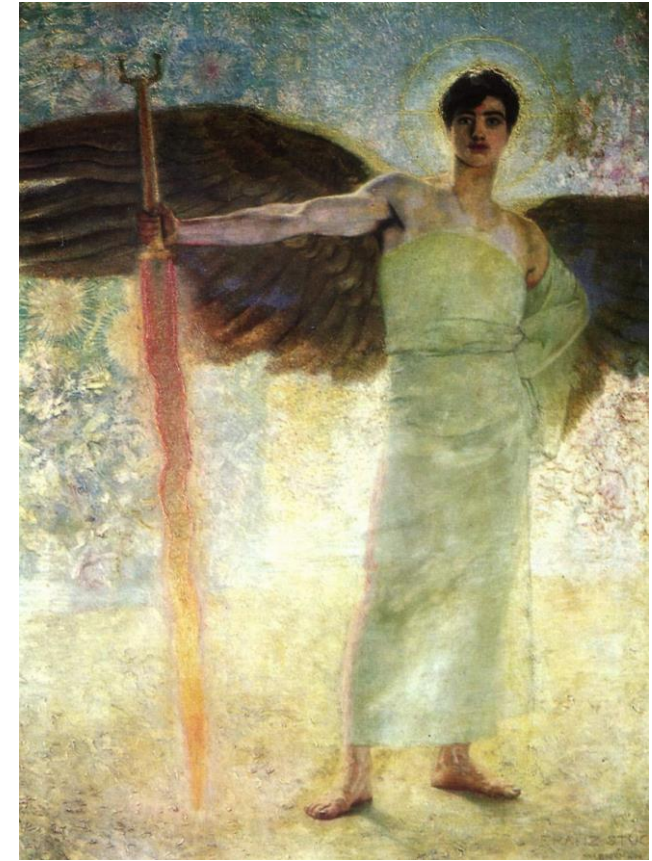
<http://josephsmithspolygamy.org/common-questions/plural-marriages-sexual/#NoChildrenfromPluralWives>

Allegations of Joseph's Paternity					
	Child's Name	Mother	Birth Date	Evidence	Discussion
1.	Orrison Smith	Fanny Alger (allegedly)	1834?	"Tradition" <sup>1</sup>	<b>Genetic testing</b> demonstrates that Joseph Smith could not be the father. <sup>2</sup> The Smith-Alger plural marriage occurred (probably) in 1835; and if she was ever pregnant, it was after the marriage.
2.	Mosiah Lyman Hancock	Clarissa Reed Hancock	April 9, 1834	Observation	<b>Genetic testing</b> demonstrates that Joseph Smith could not be the father. <sup>3</sup>
3.	John Reed Hancock		April 19, 1841	Family tradition	<b>Genetic testing</b> demonstrates that Joseph Smith could not be the father. <sup>4</sup>
4.	Josephine Lyon	Sylvia Lyon	February 8, 1844	Rumors and ambiguous statement	<b>Genetic testing</b> demonstrates that Joseph Smith could not be the father. Father is Windsor Lyon
5.	Oliver Norman Buell	Presendia Huntington Buell	January 31, 1840	Mary Ettie V. Smith's statement	<b>Genetic testing</b> demonstrates that Joseph Smith could not be the father. <sup>5</sup>
6.	Don Alonzo Smith	Lucinda Pendleton	August 29, 1840	Family tradition	<b>Genetic testing</b> demonstrates Joseph Smith could not be the father. <sup>6</sup>
7.	Zebulon Jacobs	Zina Huntington Jacobs	January 2, 1842	William Hall statement	<b>Genetic testing</b> demonstrates Joseph Smith could not be the father. <sup>7</sup>
8.	Moroni Llewellyn Pratt	Mary Ann Frost Pratt	December 7, 1844	Observation	<b>Genetic testing</b> demonstrates that Joseph Smith could not be the father and verifies Parley P. Pratt as the biological father. <sup>8</sup>
9.	Hannah Ann Dibble	Hannah Ann Dubois Smith Dibble	January 7, 1842	Benjamin Winchester	Winchester's described chronology contradicts the possibility that Joseph Smith was the father. Hannah Ann Dibble was born eleven months after her mother wed Philo Dibble.
10.	Loren Walker Dibble		May 29, 1844	John Hyde	Evidence of a plural marriage or sexual relationship between Joseph Smith and Hannah Dubois are problematic. <sup>9</sup> John Hyde's additional claims concerning Loren Walker Dibble are contradicted by numerous evidences. However, Joseph Smith III recalled that a son of Hannah was "shown after father's death as his." <sup>10</sup>
11.	George Algernon Lightner	Mary Elizabeth Rollins Lightner <sup>11</sup>	March 22, 1842	Observation	Joseph and Mary Elizabeth Rollins were sealed in February 1842, after George Algernon's conception. No evidence of sexual relations in their polyandrous relationship has been located.
12.	Florentine Mattheas Lightner Orson Washington Hyde		March 23, 1844	Observation	Mary Elizabeth Rollins Lightner was living in Farmington, fifty miles east of Nauvoo, when Florentine was conceived.
13.	Frank Henry Hyde	Marinda Johnson Hyde	Nov. 9, 1843	Fawn Brodie <sup>12</sup>	No specific evidence available. Allegation is based on Brodie's speculation.
14.	Josephine Henry or Hendry	Margaret Creighton	January 23, 1846	Observation	Birth date on his birth certificate and in his obituary would preclude Joseph Smith's being the father. <sup>13</sup>
15.	John Hiram Buell	Presendia Huntington Buell	July 8 1844	Rumor <sup>14</sup>	Chronology in available historical documents shows that Margaret became pregnant before the couple arrived in Nauvoo.
16.	Joseph Albert Smith	Esther Dutcher	July 13, 1843	Observation	Presendia was living sixty miles from Nauvoo when John Hiram was conceived. Stanley S. Ivins considered Mary Ettie V. Smith's book as "inaccurate and of no value." <sup>15</sup>
17.	Sarah Elizabeth Holmes	Marietta Carter	Sep 21 1844	Observation	Documentation supports an "eternity only" sealing to the Prophet. Other than observations, no supportive evidence has been found. Legal husband's name was Albert. <sup>16</sup>
18.	Carolyn Delight	Lulu Vermillion	January 24, 1838	Observation	Marietta Carter, Jonathan Holmes's first wife, died August 20, 1840. No evidence links her with Joseph Smith.
19.	"child"	Olive Gray Frost	?	Unknown	Assertion made to Ugo Perego. <sup>17</sup> I have been unable to find additional information about Carolyn or her mother.
20.			Unknown; sealing occurred in summer of 1843	Joseph E. Robinson, "Diary/Autobiography," October 26, 1902. <sup>18</sup>	Single attestation: "During the afternoon I called on Aunt Lizzie" <sup>18</sup> . . . She knew Joseph Smith had more than two wives. Said he Married . . . Olive Frost [and] had a child by him and that both died."



# Angels and swords

When God commands a difficult task, He sometimes sends additional messengers to encourage His people to obey. Consistent with this pattern, Joseph told associates that an angel appeared to him three times between 1834 and 1842 and commanded him to proceed with plural marriage when he hesitated to move forward. During the third and final appearance, the angel came with a drawn sword, threatening Joseph with destruction unless he went forward and obeyed the commandment fully.



(Gospel Topics Essays <https://www.lds.org/topics/plural-marriage-in-kirtland-and-nauvoo?lang=eng#9> See also Brian C. Hales, "Encouraging Joseph Smith to Practice Plural Marriage: The Accounts of the Angel with a Drawn Sword," *Mormon Historical Studies* 11, no. 2 (Fall 2010): 69–70. See also Brian and Laura Hales, *Joseph Smith's Polygamy: Toward a Better Understanding*, p. 18-19.)



## Mary Elizabeth Rollins Lightner

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In 1834 Joseph was commanded to take me for a wife. I was a thousand miles from him. He got afraid. The angel came to him three times, the last time with a drawn sword and threatened his life. I did not believe. If God told him so, why did he not come and tell me? The angel told him I should have a witness.





# Mary Elizabeth Rollins Lightner

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An angel came to me- it went through me like lightning – I was afraid. Joseph said he came with more revelation and knowledge than he ever dare reveal. (Brigham Young sealed me to him, for time and all eternity – Feb. 1842.)

Mary Elizabeth Rollins Lightner, “Statement,” signed Feb. 8, 1902.



# Mary Elizabeth Rollins Lightner

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Joseph Smith told Mary Elizabeth that she would receive a witness from an angel.

“... I retired to bed... when lo, a personage stood in front of the bed looking at me. Its clothes were whiter than anything I had ever seen. I could look at its person, but when I saw its face so bright and more beautiful than any earthly being could be, and those eyes piercing me through and through, I could not endure it... As it is, I can never forget that face. It seems to be ever before me.”

(Mary Elizabeth Rollins Lightner, “Mary Elizabeth Rollins,” copy of holograph in Susa Young Gates Papers, MSS B 95, box 14, folder 4, Utah State Historical Society.)

# Additional resources

[http://josephsmithspolygamy.org/mormon\\_polygamy/](http://josephsmithspolygamy.org/mormon_polygamy/)



The screenshot shows the website 'Joseph Smith's Polygamy'. The header includes a logo, social media links, and a search bar. The main content area is titled 'Introduction to Joseph Smith's Polygamy' and contains the following text:

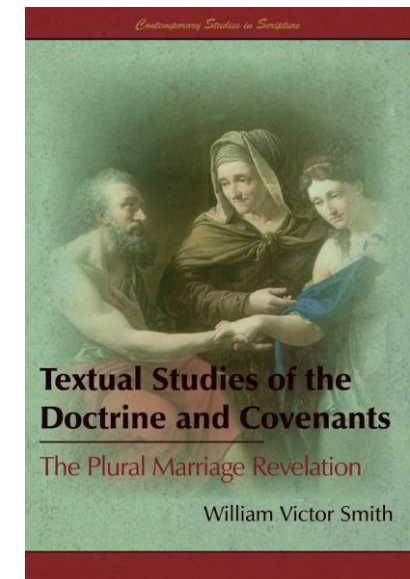
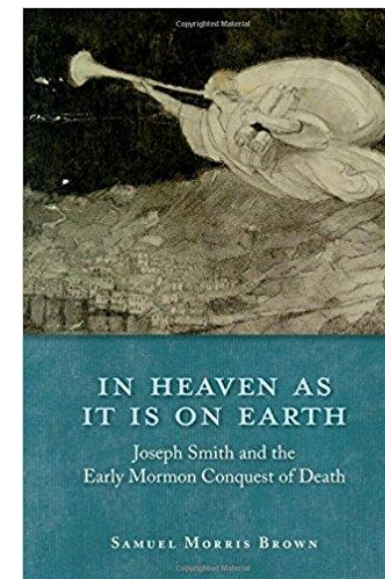
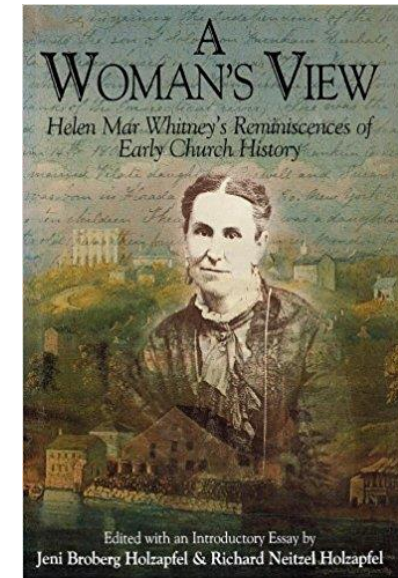
Home > Introduction to Joseph Smith's Polygamy

## Introduction to Joseph Smith's Polygamy

This website deals with Joseph Smith's practice of polygamy from his initial curiosity in the early 1830s to his 1840s sealings to plural wives and his teachings of the principle as a commandment.

It is the first online site completely dedicated to presenting this topic to a mainstream LDS audience, written from a faithful perspective. History, esoteric theology, and controversies are all covered.

Below the text is a video player with a play button and a progress bar. A 'Download Essay' link is located at the bottom right of the page.



# Sociological Effects of Plural Marriage

“The institution of polygamy was the best thing that ever happened to Mormonism, and polygamy’s suppression at the hands of the federal government was the next best...”

– Douglas H. Parker (Douglas H. Parker, “Victory in Defeat—Polygamy and the Mormon Legal Encounter with the Federal Government,” *Cardozo Law Review* 12:805 (1991): 808).

Geographical isolation had become necessary for the Saints’ safety. Yet, as Terryl Givens has demonstrated, there was little aside from their theology which separated the Saints from general American society. (Givens, *Viper on the Hearth*, 18–93) Polygamy served as the perfect dividing line between “Gentile” and “Zion” America. The Saints remained relatively isolated until the coming of the railroad to Utah; by this time their status as a distinct religious and social culture was assured, given that they had spent most of the past half century in conflict with the U.S. government over polygamy. – Gregory L. Smith, *Polygamy, Prophets, and Prevarication*. Download available [here](#).

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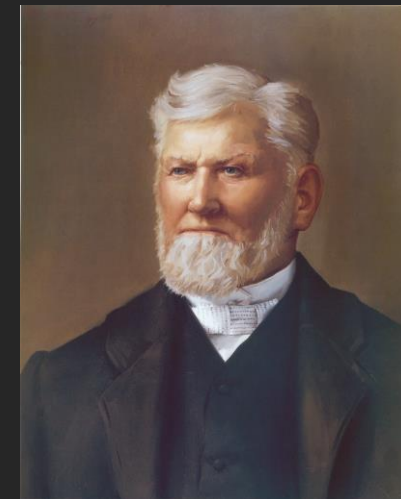




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*(Wilford Woodruff Journal, Feb. 12, 1870)*



# On questions, scientific laws, and brick walls

Some of you struggle with certain doctrines or practices of the Church, past or present; they just don't quite seem to fit for you. I say, so what? That's okay. You're still young. Be patient, but be persistent. Keep studying them, thinking about them, and praying about them. Everyone has questions. I suppose even the prophets themselves had and have some questions. But don't throw away the jewels you do have in the meantime. Hold on to them; build on them.

Did you know that the two greatest intellectual achievements of the first half of the last century, the general theory of relativity and quantum mechanics, are in some points in conflict with each other? They cannot both be right in every detail. These are not my words but the words of Stephen Hawking, the great British physicist. Yet scientists rely on both of these theories every day to advance scientific knowledge, knowing that someday the differences will be understood, reconciled, and corrected.

# On questions, scientific laws, and brick walls

So it is with the gospel and our testimonies, yours and mine. This is not to suggest that the gospel is imperfect, but our understanding of it sometimes is. Like the scientist who uses relativity and quantum mechanics, we do not discard the gospel or our testimony because not every piece “fits” today. Years ago a Church leader used the following metaphor: Have you ever watched a stonemason build a rock wall? He will sometimes pick up a rock that just does not fit anywhere in the niches in the wall. But does he abandon the wall and walk away? No, he simply sets the rock aside and keeps building until a niche appears where it fits and then proceeds until the wall is finished. So perhaps should we temporarily set aside questions that we continue to struggle with and that we cannot quite seem to answer today, having faith that at sometime in the future a niche will appear in the rock wall of our testimony where they fit perfectly. Don’t abandon the rock wall of your testimony because one or two rocks don’t seem to fit. (Richard Hinckley, Prophetic Priorities, BYU Devotional, May 15, 2007)