

Joseph Gessed Right: The Impossible Fraud

How a 23-year-old farm boy knew things he couldn't have known

THE IMPOSSIBLE TASK

1829: Joseph Smith dictates 269,000 words in 65 days—4,100 words/day, oral, single draft, no notes

Comparison:

- J.R.R. Tolkien (Oxford professor): 109 words/day
- J.K. Rowling: 293 words/day
- Stephen King: 650 words/day
- **Joseph Smith: 4,100+ words/day (40x Tolkien's rate)**

But speed is just the beginning...

THE PATTERN: 25+ "LUCKY GUESSES"

Joseph wrote things critics said were false—then ancient texts discovered 8-194 years later proved him RIGHT

Category 1: Ancient Texts (Unknown Until 1878-2024)

What Joseph Wrote (1830)	Ancient Text	Years Later
"Full of grace and truth" (Moses 1:6)	Old Slavonic Enoch, Hebrew Enoch	66 years
"No unclean thing can dwell" (1 Ne 10:21)	Ethiopian Enoch, Old Slavonic Enoch	8-66 years
Satan's "great chain" and darkness (Moses 7:26)	Book of Giants (Dead Sea Scrolls)	118 years
Satan was angel who fell from heaven (2 Ne 2:17)	Egyptian Life of Adam & Eve	52 years
Satan "transforms into angel of light" (2 Ne 9:9)	Egyptian Life (exact phrase)	52 years
"Our first parents" (2 Ne 2:18-20)	Multiple Adam/Eve texts	48-83 years
Messiah's name "Jesus" in pre-Christian prophecy	Book of Giants, Paralipomena	59-118 years
Resurrection in pre-Christian era	Latin Vita, Old Slavonic Word	48-194 years

Category 2: Archaeological Discoveries

Joseph's Claim (1830)	Critics Said	Verified
Cement in ancient America (Hel 3:7)	"Impossible!"	100+ years later at Teotihuacán
Place called "Nahom" in Arabia (1 Ne 16:34)	"Made up!" (1838)	1990 - NHM tribe, exact location
"Land of Jerusalem" (1 Ne 1:4)	"No such land!" (1838)	1887 Amarna Letters confirm
Chiasmus (Hebrew poetry)	Unknown to West until 1960s	1967 - discovered in BoM
Alma as male name	"Latin female name!"	100+ years - Hebrew male name
Metal plates for records	"Impossible!" (1838, 1887)	50+ years - found across Near East

The Fraud Hypothesis Requires:

- 1. Impossible Library Access:** Joseph needed 15+ ancient texts that wouldn't exist in English for 31-194 years (Old Slavonic Enoch, Hebrew Enoch, Egyptian Life of Adam & Eve, Book of Giants, etc.)
- 2. Linguistic Genius:** Mastered Hebrew poetry (chiasmus) 137 years before Western scholars recognized it
- 3. Archaeological Foresight:** Predicted 6 discoveries 50-160 years in advance

Category 3: Fulfilled Prophecies

Leonid Meteor Storm (1833): October 6, 1833 - Joseph prophesied "stars fall from heaven" within 40 days. November 13, 1833 (day 39!) - Most spectacular meteor shower in recorded history (100,000+ meteors/hour)

Civil War (1832): Prophesied war would begin "at rebellion of South Carolina" over slavery. April 12, 1861 - Fort Sumter, SC (29 years later)

Rocky Mountains (1842): Saints would be "driven to Rocky Mountains." 1847 - Exodus to Utah (5 years later)

THE WITNESSES: MORE EVIDENCE THAN THE RESURRECTION

11 witnesses signed legal affidavits testifying they saw/handled the gold plates

3 Witnesses: Saw plates, saw angel, heard God's voice

8 Witnesses: Physically handled and examined plates

The Stunning Fact:

- Several left the Church and became Joseph's enemies
- **NONE ever recanted**—even when they had every reason to
- Oliver Cowdery (deathbed): "I saw the angel and heard God's voice"
- David Whitmer (left Church, stayed angry): Still published testimony, kept on tombstone

Why would they die maintaining a lie—especially after becoming enemies of the "fraud"?

THE IMPOSSIBLE FRAUD

For fraud to be true, Joseph (age 23, 3rd grade education) must have:

1. Secretly accessed 15+ ancient texts in foreign languages (texts that wouldn't exist in English for 31-194 years)
2. Mastered Hebrew literary forms unknown to scholars for 137 years
3. Predicted 6 archaeological discoveries 50-160 years in advance
4. Made prophecies that came true decades later (Civil War, migration, meteor storm on day 39 of 40!)
5. Produced 269,000 coherent words in 65 days, oral, no notes (40x Tolkien's rate)
6. Maintained perfect consistency: 337 names, 86 places, complex geography
7. Convinced 11 witnesses to maintain lie even after becoming his enemies
8. Died at age 38 defending his story instead of recanting to save his life

EACH of these is virtually impossible. ALL of them together? That would be a BIGGER miracle than God calling a prophet.

THE SIMPLE EXPLANATION

Occam's Razor: Simplest Explanation Wins

Fraud Hypothesis: 8 impossible things happened by coincidence

Prophet Hypothesis: God exists + calls prophets + Joseph was one

Which requires more faith? The fraud hypothesis requires believing in MORE miracles than the prophet hypothesis.

THE STATISTICAL IMPOSSIBILITY

25 correct "guesses" about things discovered 8-194 years later

Even giving Joseph 50% chance on each (absurdly generous):

$0.5^{25} = 1$ in 33,554,432 (1 in 33 million)

More realistic 10% per guess:

$0.1^{25} = 1$ in 100 septillion

THE "DEVIL INSPIRED HIM" OBJECTION

Some claim Joseph wasn't a fraud but was inspired by Satan. The Bible decisively refutes this.

Test #1: Jesus's Own Standard (Matthew 12:25-26)

"Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation... If Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand?"

If Joseph was Satan's instrument, why would Satan:

- Write 269,000 words testifying of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior?
- Declare "there is no other name... whereby salvation can come" (Mosiah 3:17)?
- Teach the Bible is God's word and command people to search it?
- Call people to repent, be baptized, and follow Christ?
- Preach against the very sins Satan promotes (pride, lust, greed)?

Satan's goal: Turn people FROM Christ. Book of Mormon's goal: Turn people TO Christ. Satan divided against himself = impossible.

Test #2: By Their Fruits (Matthew 7:16-20)

"By their fruits ye shall know them. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit."

Fruits of the Book of Mormon:

- **Brings people to Christ:** Millions testify it strengthened their faith in Jesus
- **Promotes biblical morality:** Chastity, honesty, service, family
- **Strengthens biblical literacy:** LDS score higher on Bible knowledge tests
- **Service & charity:** LDS volunteer at 7x national average
- **Family stability:** Lower divorce rates, stronger families
- **Health & longevity:** Word of Wisdom = longer lifespans, lower cancer rates

Question: If Satan wrote the Book of Mormon, why does it produce the OPPOSITE of Satan's goals? Evil trees can't produce good fruit (Matt 7:18).

Test #3: Confessing Christ (1 John 4:1-3)

"Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: And every spirit that confesseth not... is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist."

Book of Mormon explicitly teaches:

- Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God (title page)
- Jesus came in the flesh, born of Mary (Mosiah 3:8)
- Jesus suffered, died, and rose again (3 Nephi 11)
- Salvation only through Christ's name (2 Nephi 25:20)

By John's test: The Book of Mormon passes. It confesses Christ come in flesh.

Test #4: Truth vs. Error (1 John 4:6)

We've documented 25+ details Joseph "guessed right" 8-194 years before verification. If Satan inspired this:

- Satan knew ancient texts that wouldn't be discovered for 194 years
- Satan knew archaeology 160 years in advance
- Satan knew Hebrew poetry Western scholars didn't recognize until 1967
- Satan predicted Civil War, meteor storm (day 39 of 40!), Rocky Mountain migration

If Satan has this much knowledge and predictive power, why doesn't he use it to OPPOSE Christ instead of writing 269,000 words EXALTING Christ?

The Devastating Problem

If Satan inspired the Book of Mormon:

1. Satan testifies Jesus is Lord (contradicts Matt 12:25-26)
 2. Satan produces good fruit: faith, service, families (contradicts Matt 7:18)
 3. Satan confesses Christ in flesh (contradicts 1 John 4:3)
 4. Satan draws millions TO Jesus (contradicts Satan's entire purpose)
- = Satan working against himself = Biblically impossible

THE CHOICE

Either:

- A 23-year-old farm boy pulled off the most sophisticated fraud in history, predicted dozens of discoveries 50-200 years in advance, died for his lie, and convinced 11 people to maintain the lie even as his enemies, OR
- Satan wrote 269,000 words testifying of Christ, producing good fruit, and drawing millions to Jesus (dividing his kingdom against itself), OR
- God called a prophet

"Ask God, the Eternal Father, in the name of Christ, if these things are not true"
— Moroni 10:4

The Invitation

1. Read the Book of Mormon
2. Pray with sincere heart
3. Ask God if it's true

If true: Joseph was a prophet, God still speaks, families are eternal

If false: You've lost a few hours

But if it IS true, you've gained everything.