

JOSEPHS "ANCIENT" PLATES WERE NOTHING SPECIAL

Joseph Smith claimed to have translated the Book of Mormon from ancient golden plates. There is no hard evidence that he ever had these plates.

His claims sound good until you encounter a trickster who was doing much the same thing.

THE STRANGITE AFFAIR

Smith's mother and Martin Harris and all the living witnesses to the Book of Mormon joined the Strangites after Smith's demise. This was a sect that claimed that James Jesse Strang was Joseph's successor and it boasted a short revelation written on tiny plates of brass that had four witnesses and another revelation, The Book of the Law, which was written on the brass plates of Laban mentioned in the Book of Mormon and like the Book of Mormon it was miraculously translated. It has been thought that they were unreliable when they followed a Church that used fake plates and had a few witnesses for them.

The Mormons reply: "But the witnesses to the fake plates were not from their number and they were attracted to the Strangites because of a forged letter from Smith appointing Strang as his successor and an antipathy towards Brigham Young among other things. It was not their fault if the witnesses to the plates of the Book of the Law led them astray. The Book of the Law is certainly not scripture for the Church based on it is nearly dead and the kingdom and prophecies it makes failed. Plus it was written by a false prophet who lied and cheated in his effort to become Smith's successor. He forged a letter from Joseph Smith appointing him as the new prophet. The fact that they believed in Strang highlights that they must have had real experiences of the golden plates."

Despite the fact that its witnesses never ever admitted that there were no plates and that Strang was a phoney the story is unbelievable though they were ten times better than Smith's visionaries. That ought to be a warning to us. Smith's evidence is proven worthless all the same. Competing claims cancel each other out. Belief is to be based on evidence that is credible.

Strang's witnesses claimed they closely examined his plates and saw that they were old and held them. If Smith's witnesses believed that they saw the plates by some kind of vision inside their heads which the evidence indicates, they would have been very attracted to Strang and his more solid plates for it would have been confirmation to them that their own experiences were real and not just imagination. It is not evidence that they were wholly sure of their own experience before that.

If the Smith witnesses had really seen anything strange they should have been able to tell by Strang's if they were fakes. Smith's witnesses believed that Strang's forged letter from Joseph Smith was real. So they could not be trusted then as witnesses to the plates.

The story of the golden plates is a pack of lies. Smith manipulated his witnesses. There was nothing stopping the angel of God from leaving the plates with us instead of taking them back to Heaven. That is just a cover for there having been no plates in the first place.