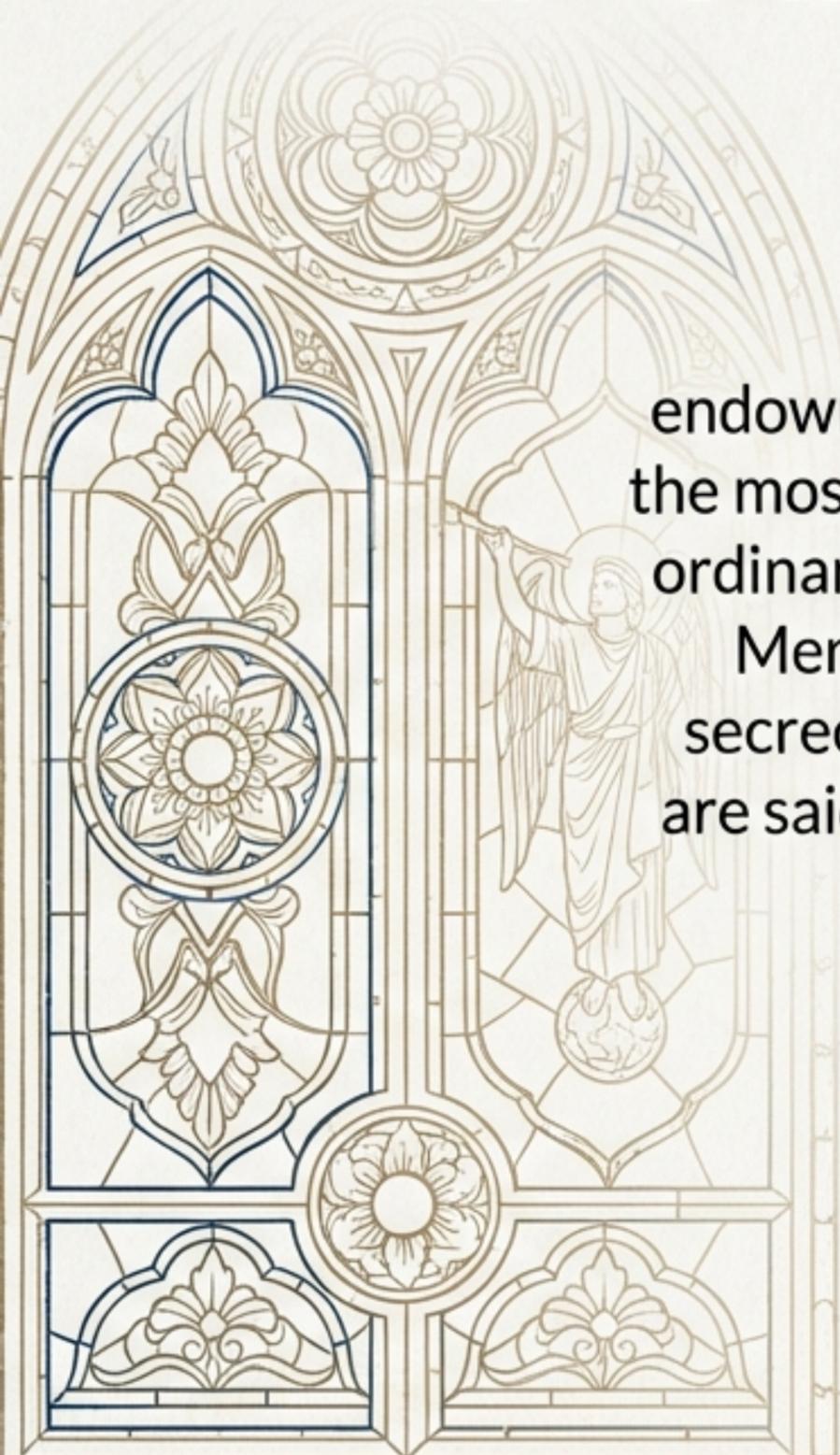




# The Temple & The Lodge

An Evidence-Based Analysis of the Mormon Endowment's Masonic Origins

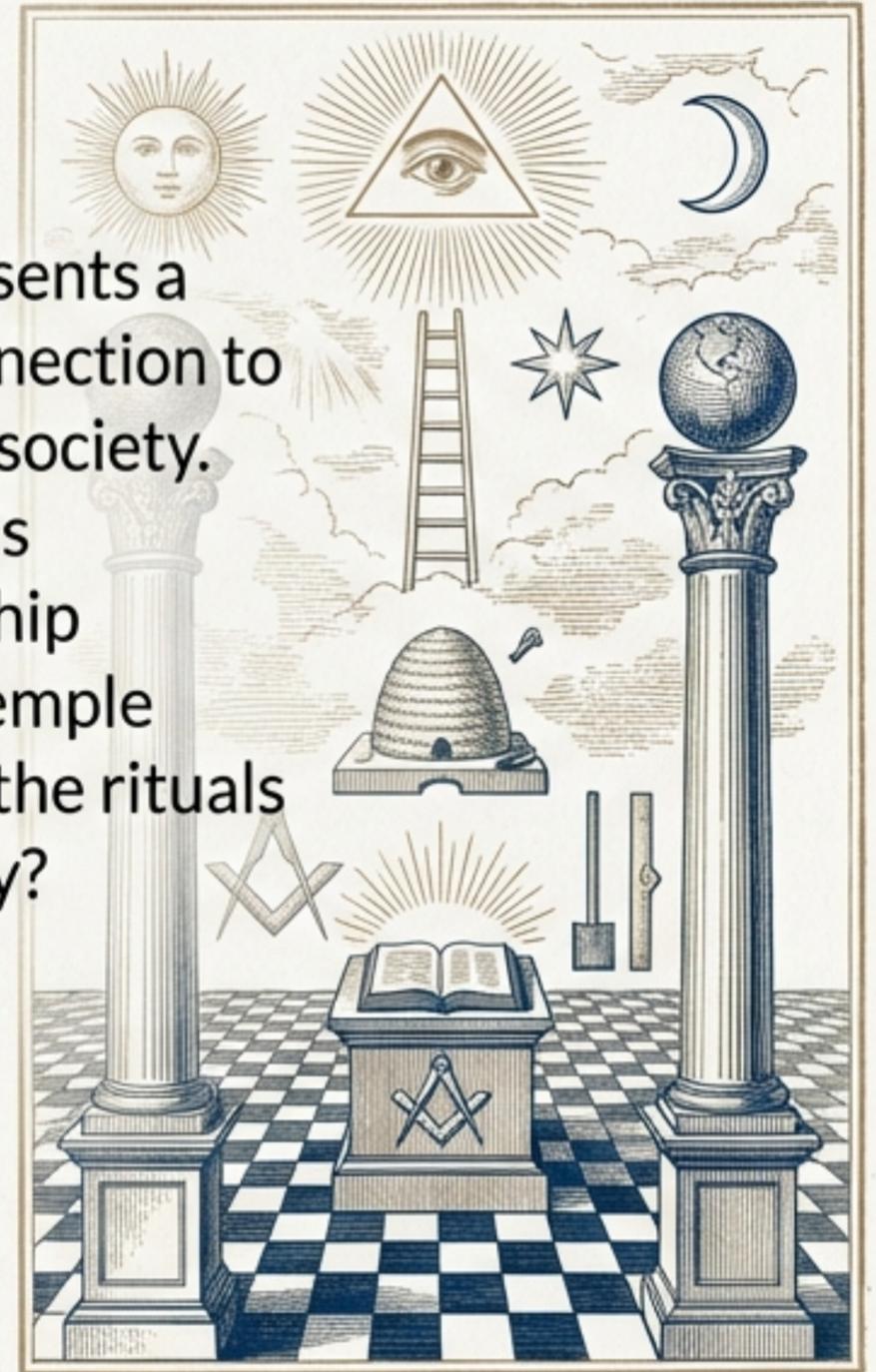
# A Fundamental Question of Origin



The LDS Temple endowment is considered the most sacred ordinance ordinance in Mormonism. Members are sworn to secrecy, and its contents are said to be restored by divine revelation.



But history presents a compelling connection to another secret society. What, exactly, is the relationship between the Temple ceremony and the rituals of Freemasonry?



# The Church's Explanation: A Story of Parallels

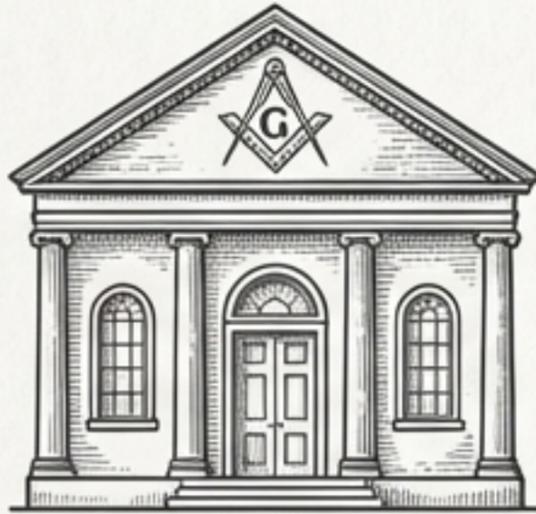
In a video series titled "Now You Know," the LDS Church addresses the connection, framing it as a matter of similar presentation methods for different, divinely-revealed content.

"The content of the instruction, the covenants and truths... were revealed to him prior to his encounter with masonry."

"The presentation methods may have parallels to Masonic ritual."

"The purposes and origins stand distinct from one another."

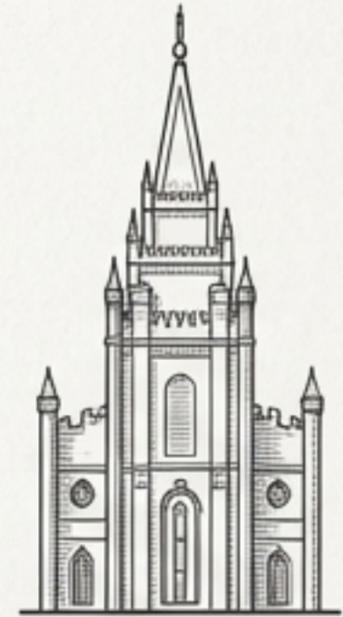
# The Timeline Is Not a Parallel. It's a Direct Sequence.



**March 15, 1842**

Joseph Smith is initiated  
as a Master Mason.

**SEVEN WEEKS LATER**



**May 3, 1842**

Joseph Smith introduces  
the first Temple  
Endowment ceremony

Exactly seven weeks after becoming a Master Mason, Joseph Smith introduced an endowment featuring nearly identical text, symbols, clothing, and handshakes.

# Early Leaders Taught ‘Restoration,’ Not ‘Parallels’

When early members who were also Masons noticed the ceremonies were identical, Joseph Smith didn't claim “parallels.” He taught that Masonry was a corrupted form of the original, ancient endowment which he was now restoring.

We have the true masonry. The masonry of today is received from the apostasy which took place in the days of Solomon and David... we have the real thing.

— Heber C. Kimball

Quoting Joseph Smith, he said, “Freemasonry as at present was the apostate endowments as sectarian religion was the apostate religion.”

— Benjamin F. Johnson

# The Foundational Flaw in the "Restoration" Claim



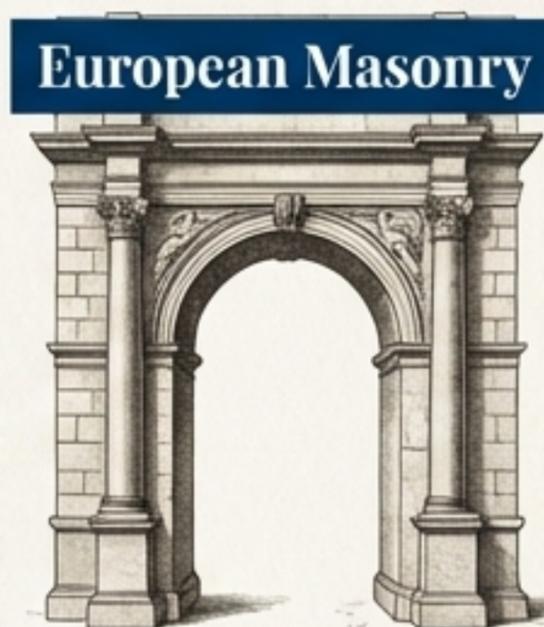
## The Claim

Joseph Smith taught that Freemasonry was an apostatized version of rituals from the original Temple of Solomon.

## HUGE 2000-YEAR GAP

## The History

Historical fact shows Freemasonry did not originate until early modern Europe, approximately 2,000 years *after* Solomon's Temple. There is no historical evidence of a continuous line.



“We know what went on in Solomon's Temple. It's the ritualistic slaughter of animals.”  
— FairMormon Q&A

**Joseph Smith's premise was based on a 19<sup>th</sup>-century myth, not actual history.**

# Evidence: The Ritual Exchange is Verbatim

Beyond structure and theme, the literal script of the ritual exchange at the heart of the ceremony was taken directly from Masonic rites.

## Masonic Elements

- ✓ Ritualistic Grips (Handshakes)
- ✓ Keywords and their names
- ✓ A question-and-answer test

## Text from the Masonic Ceremony

**Master:** “What is that?”

**Deacon:** “The pass grip of a fellow craft.”

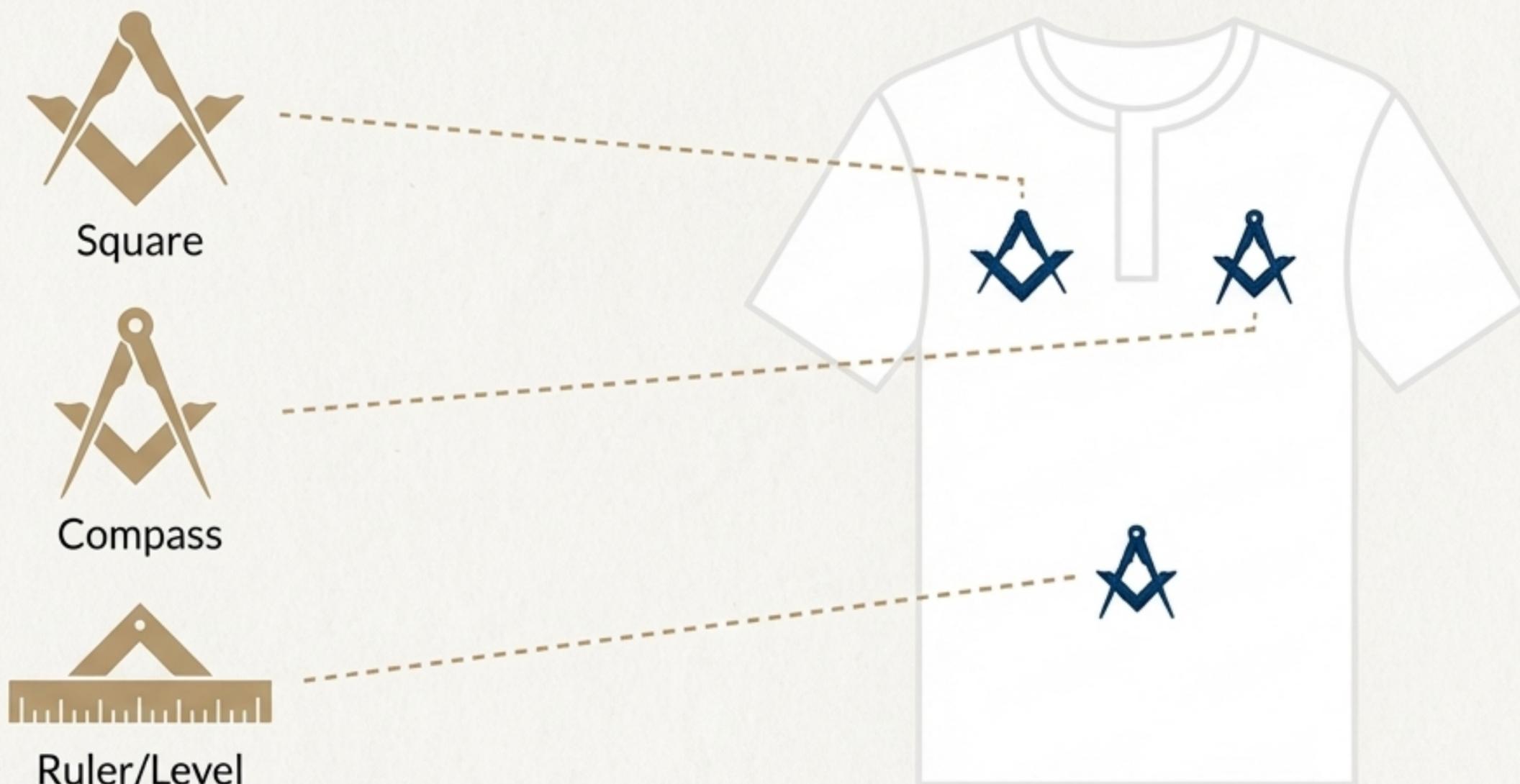
**Master:** “Has it a name?”

**Deacon:** “It has.”

**Master:** “Will you give it to me?”

**Deacon:** “I did not so receive it neither will I so impart it.”

# Evidence: Masonic Symbols on Sacred Garments



Square

Compass

Ruler/Level

**Core Masonic Symbols**

**Symbols on LDS Temple Garments**

Members are taught these symbols were revealed to Joseph Smith to represent sacred covenants.  
They are, in fact, established Masonic symbols.

# Evidence: The Penalties (1 of 2)

Until 1990, the endowment ceremony included oaths with bloody penalties for revealing its secrets, taken directly from the Masonic initiation rites.

## Masonic Penalty (Entered Apprentice)

**“...having my throat cut across, my tongue torn out by its roots...”**

## Pre-1990 Endowment Penalty

**“...we agree that our throats be cut from ear to ear and our tongues torn out by their roots.”**



# Evidence: The Penalties (2 of 2)

## **Masonic Penalty (Entered Apprentice)**

**“...having my left breast torn open, my heart plucked out...”**

## **Pre-1990 Endowment Penalty**

**“...we agree to have our breasts cut open and our hearts and vitals torn from our bodies...”**

**“...to have my body cut in two, my bowels removed and burned to ashes...”**

**“...we agree that our bodies be cut asunder in the midst of and all our bowels gush out.”**

These penalties were removed from the Temple Endowment in 1990. The fact that they could be removed undermines the claim that the ceremony is an eternal, unchanging revelation from God.

# A Consistent Method: Joseph Smith's Pattern of Adaptation

The borrowing from Masonry was not an anomaly. It was part of Joseph Smith's consistent method of incorporating and repurposing ideas from his 19th-century environment and claiming them as ancient restoration.



# 'Eternal' Ordinances Are Constantly Evolving

Beyond Masonic elements, other controversial doctrines were inserted into the temple ceremony and later removed, proving it is not a fixed, ancient rite.

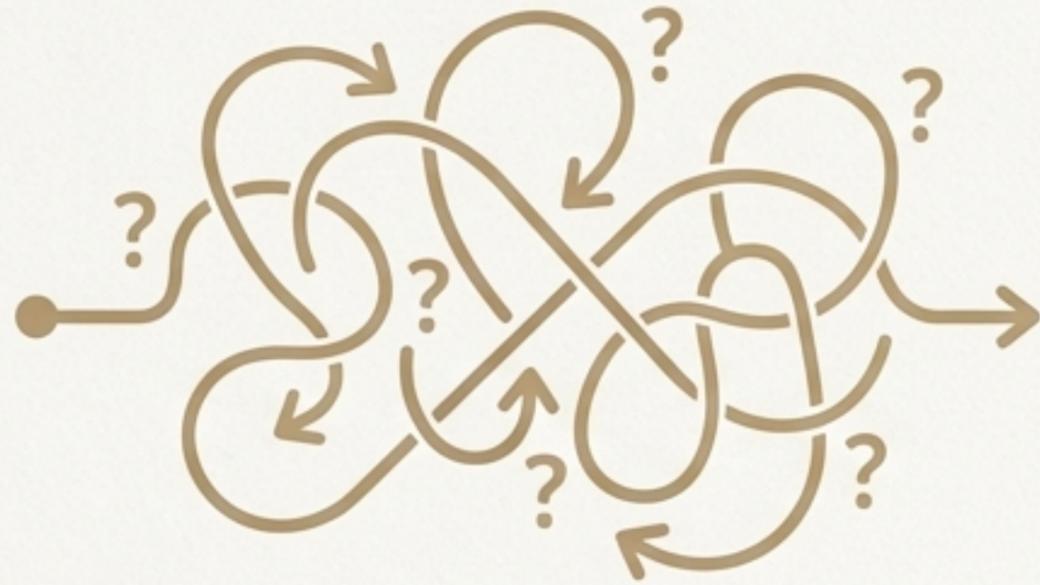
## The Oath of Vengeance

Added after Joseph Smith's death, this required members to "pray and never cease to pray to almighty God to avenge the blood of the prophets Upon This Nation." It was removed in the 1930s.

## Adam-God Doctrine

Brigham Young inserted the doctrine that "Father Adam" was God into the lecture at the veil. It was later removed and is now officially disavowed as "false doctrine" by the Church.

# Occam's Razor: Which Explanation is Simpler?



## Explanation A: Divine Revelation via Parallels

An omniscient God revealed covenants to Joseph *before* he met the Masons, then inspired him to package them in a nearly identical Masonic framework (which was based on a false history), complete with violent penalties He would later command the Church to remove.



## Explanation B: Direct Adaptation

Joseph Smith, needing a ceremony to ensure secrecy for practices like polygamy, encountered the impressive Masonic ritual. Believing its own myths about ancient origins, he adapted it for his purposes and claimed it as a "restoration."

# The Weight of Evidence

The sheer volume of direct overlaps is not a 'parallel." It is a fingerprint. The timeline, the verbatim text, the symbols, the penalties, the structure, and the original claim of "restoration" all point overwhelmingly to one conclusion: The Temple Endowment is a 19th-century adaptation of Freemasonry, not an ancient revelation.

# For Further Inquiry

The research and analysis presented here are part of a comprehensive examination of LDS truth claims. To explore the sources, read the full essays, and listen to the detailed discussions, please visit:



**[ldsdiscussions.com](https://ldsdiscussions.com)**