

# The Foundational Claim of a Prophet Is Honesty

The President of the Mormon Church is considered a Prophet, Seer, and Revelator—a special witness who communicates directly with God. This claim demands an exceptional standard of truthfulness. If personal, verifiable stories told by a prophet prove to be embellished or fabricated, it calls into question the integrity of their unverifiable, divine claims.



*"If you're the prophet of God, maybe you have ... a little bit of a duty to be honest."*

– Radio Free Mormon

# This Isn't a New Phenomenon. It's a Historical Pattern.



Joseph Smith

Foundational “miracle” stories in Mormonism have been shown to be late additions or evolutions of more mundane events. This pattern of retrofitting miraculous details serves to establish the authority of church leaders.

## **The First Vision**

Evolved over multiple accounts from a personal seeking of forgiveness to a grand theophany that established his authority.

## **The Priesthood Restoration**

Details of Peter, James, and John appearing were retrofitted into church history years after the event was said to have occurred.



Brigham Young

## **The Transfiguration**

The story of Brigham Young appearing and sounding like Joseph Smith was not mentioned in any contemporary source. It emerged nearly a decade later to solidify his position as Joseph's successor.

We will now examine if this pattern continues with the current prophet.

# An Investigation into Four of President Nelson's Miracle Stories



CASE FILE #1

## The Woman in the Hat

A serendipitous meeting, a divine prompting, and a miraculous dream.



CASE FILE #2

## The Mozambique Assassination Attempt

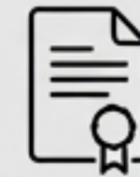
An armed robbery that evolves into a foiled assassination plot with angelic protection.



CASE FILE #3

## The Spiraling Dive to Death

A routine flight incident that becomes a near-death plunge from the sky.



CASE FILE #4

## The November 2015 “Revelation”

A controversial policy presented as a unified, prayerful revelation from God.

# A Divine Prompting in Tennessee

“During the Sunday morning session... Elder Nelson says he was drawn to a woman wearing a large hat... He felt prompted to call this young woman to join him.”

## Key Miraculous Elements:

- Nelson is divinely “drawn” to a stranger in a large hat.
- The woman, Beverly Ashcraft, reveals he baptized her 30 years prior in Korea, where she was a nurse.
- She had a dream two nights before that she would be asked how many people joined the church because of her.
- She pulls out a prepared paper from her purse with the answer: 80 people.

## The Family Sets the Record Straight.

Source: Testimony from Beverly Ashcraft's daughter (Leslie) and granddaughter (Katie), who were present at the event and contacted the book's publisher.

- **No Korea Connection:** "Beverly was never a nurse. She never lived in Korea." She met Nelson at Walter Reed Medical Center.
- **No Stranger:** Nelson knew Beverly was in attendance. The family made sure to attend because they heard he was coming.
- **No Prompting:** He called her to the podium as part of a planned story about her baptism.
- **No Dream:** "There was no dream the night before."
- **No Prepared Note:** "There was not a prepared note in her purse."
- **No Hat:** "Her grandmother has never worn a hat to church and did not have a hat on that day."

**FABRICATED**

"Every single miraculous part of this was made up." The publisher, Deseret Book, stopped the printing of the biography to remove the fabricated story.



## Case File 02: The Claim

# A Gun to My Head Failed to Fire.

**Source:** Russell M. Nelson's retelling, nearly five years after the event.

“On one occasion, we were attacked by armed men with malicious intent. They announced their purpose: to kidnap her and to kill me.. A gun to my head failed to fire, and my wife was suddenly released from their hideous grasp.. We were protected by angels round about us.”

The event was a targeted assassination and kidnapping attempt. Divine intervention caused a firearm to misfire at point-blank range.

Angels provided protection and rescue.



## Case File 02: The Evidence

### The Story's Evolution from Robbery to Assassination Plot



#### Key Discrepancies:

- A random robbery becomes a targeted assassination plot.
- The mission president's direct refutation of targeting is ignored.
- The misfiring gun and angelic rescue are details that appear only years later.



# “We Were Spinning Down to Our Death.”

Source: Nelson’s 1992 General Conference talk and a 2011 church video

### Key Narrative Points

- One of the two engines “suddenly burst open and caught on fire.”
- “Burning oil was poured all over the right side of the airplane.”
- The plane “plummeted in a steep spiral dive down toward the earth.”
- A fellow passenger screamed in “uncontrollably hysterical panic.”
- Nelson remained “totally calm... ready to meet my maker.”
- Implies an emergency crash landing in “a farmer’s field.”





## Case File 03: The Evidence

# The Official Report Details a Precautionary Landing, Not a Death Spiral.

Source: The official report for the flight on November 11, 1976 (Piper PA-31, Salt Lake City to St. George).

NELSON'S CLAIM 	OFFICIAL REPORT 
  Steep spiral dive to our death	  Precautionary landing

Direct Excerpts from the Report:

- **The Problem:** "Pilot experienced **rough engine.**"
- **The Action:** "Engine was feathered and **precautionary landing made** at Delta, Utah."
- **The Result:** "**No damage to aircraft. No injuries** to crew or passengers."

A Breakdown of the Discrepancies

**"Engine exploded in flames"** vs. **"Rough engine."**

**"Steep spiral dive to our death"** vs. **"Precautionary landing."**

**"Landing in a farmer's field"** vs. **Landing safely at the Delta, Utah airport.**



# A Policy Born of Divine Revelation

“We wrestled at length to understand the Lord’s will in this matter.”



“When the Lord inspired his Prophet, President Thomas S. Monson, to declare the mind of the Lord... each of us... felt a spiritual confirmation.”

“We met repeatedly in the temple in fasting and prayer and sought further direction and inspiration.”

The policy was a direct revelation to President Monson, unanimously confirmed by all apostles after a lengthy, prayerful, and collaborative process.

# 🔍 Case File 04: The Evidence

## An Insider Account Reveals a Rushed Vote, Not a Revelation.

Source: Historian Gregory Prince, relaying an account from Tom Christofferson, brother of Apostle D. Todd Christofferson

### The Reality of the Process

- **President Monson's Condition:** At the time, Monson "had sunk fairly deep into dementia" and was "not capable... of having formulated this decision."
- **Apostle Todd Christofferson's Account:** He first learned about the policy on the morning it was presented.
- **The "Revelation":** The policy was "presented to the 12 as an up and down vote without debate."

Key Discrepancies	
Claim	Reality
A months-long process of prayer and fasting.	A sudden, no-debate vote.
A unified spiritual confirmation.	Apostles being blindsided by the policy.
Revelation received by a capable prophet.	A policy presented for a reflex "go-ahead" from a mentally incapacitated leader.

# The Verdict: A Clear and Repeated Pattern of Fabrication

## Case #1: "Woman in the Hat"

**Claim:** Serendipitous, spirit-directed encounter.

**Verdict:**

Key details (hat, dream, Korea) are demonstrably false.

**FABRICATED**

## Case #2: "Mozambique Attack"

**Claim:** Targeted assassination attempt thwarted by divine intervention.

**Verdict:**

Evolved from a random robbery, contradicted by the mission president.

**EMBELLISHED**

## Case #3: "Plane Crash"

**Claim:** Miraculous survival from a fiery death spiral.

**Verdict:**

A standard precautionary landing was transformed into a near-death event.

**EMBELLISHED**

## Case #4: "2015 Revelation"

**Claim:** A unified, prayerful revelation given to the prophet.

**Verdict:**

An insider account reveals a rushed, no-debate vote.

**FABRICATED  
PROCESS**

# The Motive: Crafting a Persona of Prophetic Authority

Fabricating and embellishing stories serves several key purposes:

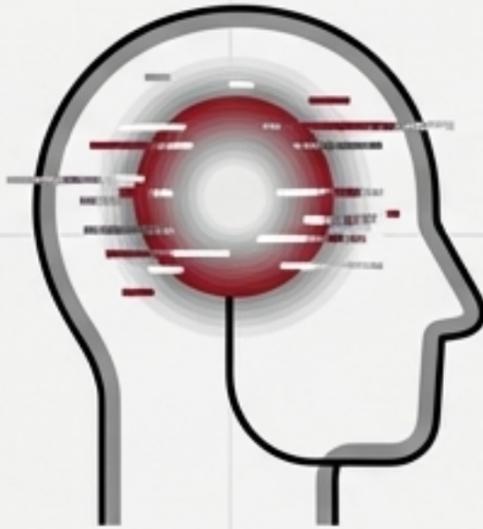
1. **Elevates Personal Status:** It separates the prophet from ordinary people, framing him as one of "God's chosen" who experiences miracles others do not.
2. **Establishes Credibility:** Miraculous stories act as proof of divine favor, encouraging members to trust and obey his unverifiable claims.
3. **Manufactures 'Spiritual Witnesses':** Dramatic, emotional stories are designed to elicit a spiritual confirmation from listeners, which reinforces belief in the storyteller.



Wendy Nelson on her husband after he became president: "It's as though he's been Unleashed. He's free to follow through with things he's been concerned about but could never do." This highlights a mindset focused on enacting a personal agenda.

# If the Verifiable Stories Are False, What About the Unverifiable Claims?

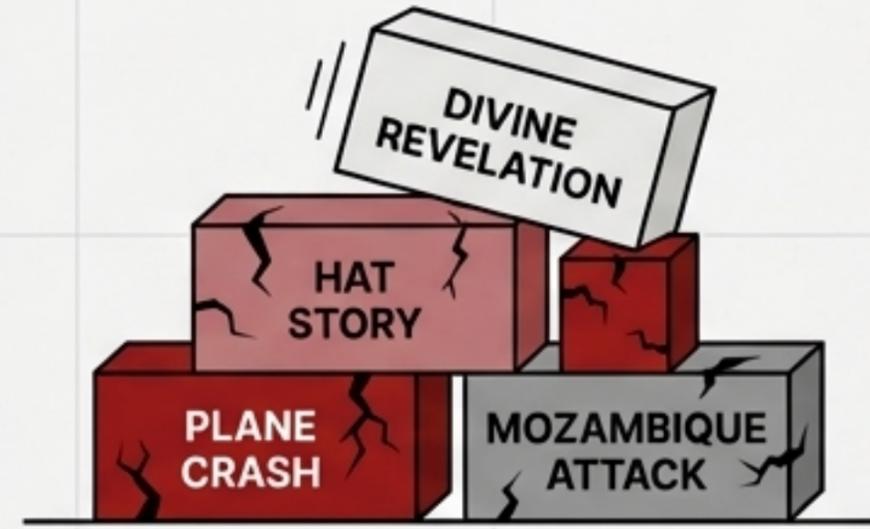
## The Consequence for Personal Faith



Many members receive a powerful “spiritual confirmation” when hearing these stories. Learning they are fabricated fundamentally undermines the reliability of using feelings to determine truth.

"If you're getting a spiritual witness on a story that didn't happen as it's being told... what exactly are you feeling?"

## The Consequence for Prophetic Authority



The investigation demonstrates a willingness to manipulate facts for a desired outcome in stories that *can* be checked.

**Why should unverifiable claims—of divine revelation, priesthood authority, or communication with God—be trusted when the verifiable foundation is built on falsehood?**

# The Uncomfortable Parallel.

A church leader fabricating miraculous stories from mundane events is a profound problem for a religion whose entire claim to authenticity rests on the miraculous stories of its founder.



*As soon as you start taking ordinary things and fabricating them to become miraculous, you immediately raise the question of whether Joseph Smith did the same thing. And you shouldn't go there as a leader of the church. You don't want the members to ask that question.*

— Radio Free Mormon