

**Polygamy and Mormon Church Leaders**  
**Ezra Taft Benson**  
**February 22, 1811 – September 3, 1869**

Ezra Taft Benson is commonly known and referred to as Ezra T. Benson in Mormonism to distinguish him from the thirteenth LDS prophet, Ezra Taft Benson, his great-grandson.

Ezra was born at the dawn of the Second Great Awakening. America's hunger for a religious experience was grumbling once again and was fed with revivals hosted by itinerate pastors from upstate New York to New Orleans.



His family immigrated into the country from England in the mid 1600's and became politically active straightaway. With countless relatives and options available for employment the only need Ezra may have had was deciding which vocation he'd pursue. As it turned out he chose to be a farmer and then a hotel manager in Uxbridge, Massachusetts and after making a fair amount of money invested it into a cotton mill and moved west.




In July 1840 he and Pamela joined Mormonism in Quincy, Illinois and subsequently moved to Nauvoo when the Mormons were driven out of Missouri. He spent many years serving on missions from Hawaii to his home state of Massachusetts until 1845.



In 1844 he took up the practice of polygamy when he married his wife's sister Adeline Brooks Andrus and ended up with eight wives in all, but not all references produced by the LDS Church or otherwise, shows his marriages to two of his wives; Desdimona and Lucinda (Pioneers and Prominent Men of Utah, pg 750).

He was **ordained** as an apostle July 16, 1846 to replace John Page who was excommunicated and after being in the first pioneer company to Salt Lake he went back to Iowa twice to help people organize the pioneer companies that were headed west.

He died young at the age of 58 from a major heart attack in 1869. One of his grandsons who bore his name became the thirteenth prophet of the Church.

		Wife/Age @ marriage (Benson's age)	Marriage date	Kids	Other info	Wife's marital status
1		Pamela Andrus – 22 (20)	12/11/1831 or 1/1/1832	8	Born 10/21/1809 Died 9/14/1877 Older sister of Adeline, wife #2. Moved to Utah in 1849. 1 <sup>st</sup> son died @ 1 yrs old. 2 <sup>nd</sup> child (Chloe) died @ 7 mos from croup. Had 2 more kids (boy &	Single

					girl) when her sister married Ezra. Gave birth to daughter 3/1846 while on trek to Utah.	
2		Adeline Brooks Andrus – 31 (33)	4/27/1844	3	Born 3/18//1813 Died 4/20/1898 in Logan, UT Younger sister of wife #1 Pamela. Picture here is from 1897 celebrating 50 <sup>th</sup> anniversary of the pioneers' arrival to Salt Lake. She's the grandmother to Ezra Taft Benson, 13 <sup>th</sup> prophet of Church.	Single
3		Desdimona Fullmer Smith – 36 (34)	1/26/1846	0	Born 10/6/1809 Died 2/9/1886 in SLC. Widow of Joe Smith. Told Joseph she had a dream that Emma tried to poison her and Joseph replied "she'd do it". Married for time to Benson. Married Harrison Parker McLane, had 1 girl w/ him but the baby died the same year.	Widow
4		Eliza Ann Perry – 17 (36)	3/4/1847	7	Born 3/30/1829 Died 4/30/1913 Her parents very unhappy with her marriage to Benson. Gave birth to 2 <sup>nd</sup> child (boy) in 1849 while trekking to Utah. Her family raised him even tho she had several more after that. Lived in Tooele in dirt hut & remembered her sister visiting dressed in a silk dress & arriving in a fancy carriage.	Single

5		Olive Mary Knight – 21 (40)	7/12/1851 or 1858 or 1860	7	<p>Born 1/24/1830  Died 3/27/1905  Went by name of Mary. Moved to the states from England There's varying data on her marriage date, but 1851 seems to be the most reasonable. Their son <b>Moroni</b> (Roni) suffered a childhood disease which left him w/ speech impediment. He never went to public school and walked w/ limp. Lived with Olive until she died.</p>	Single
6		Elizabeth Gollaher – 21 (42)	6/4/1853	7	<p>Born 12/30/1832  Died 5/4/1904  Her family sent to Tooele to settle. Father repaired wagons when she met <b>Ezra</b>. She was 37 w/ 7 kids when he died. Sewed clothes to make money. One year she couldn't take the youngest outside because she didn't have money to buy the child shoes. Moved to Logan, Utah in 1860 &amp; became Relief Society President.</p>	Single
7		Lucinda Barton (Burton) West – 21	3/18/1847	0	<p>Born 10/22/1826  Died – unknown date  Married to Joseph West. He died in 1846. She was <b>endowed</b> w/ name of West, sealed to Benson 3/18/1847. Solemnized by Brigham, Kimball &amp; Orson Pratt in Winter Quarters. Not known if she crossed the plains.</p>	Widow

8



Mary  
(Ane-Marie)  
Larsen - 22  
(54)

9/15/  
1866

2

Born 12/19/1843  
Died 2/21/1926  
After immigrating  
to Utah from  
Denmark she  
cleaned house  
for Benson &  
ended up marrying  
him. She was 22.  
Married Peter Peterson  
& lived in Logan  
then Petersboro, UT  
after death of Ezra.  
Had 7 sons w/  
Peterson which  
included 2 sets  
of twins. Family in  
Denmark were very  
wealthy.

Single