

Polygamy and Mormon Church Leaders
Orson Hyde
January 8, 1805 – November 28, 1878

***Journal of Discourses 4:259;** “It will be borne in mind that once on a time, there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and on a careful reading of that transaction, it will be discovered that no less a person than Jesus Christ was married on that occasion. If he was never married, his intimacy with Mary and Martha, and the other Mary also whom Jesus loved, must have been highly unbecoming and improper to say the best of it.” – Orson Hyde, Salt Lake City, March 8, 1857*

The life of Orson Hyde was an interesting one indeed and his views of Jesus are the epitome of why Mormonism separates itself from the ranks of Christianity. Mr. Hyde was the second youngest of twelve children born to Nathan and Sally Hyde in January 1805 and became orphaned at the age of eight or nine. His mother passed away not long after his younger brother Ami was born (Orson was 7 yrs old) and it was then his father enlisted in the military to fight in the War of 1812. Several years into his enlistment he drowned in Derby while trying to swim across a river.

Upon the death of both parents all the children were scattered and Orson ended up in Kirtland, Ohio in 1819 to work as a store clerk. While attending the ever popular camp meetings for the Methodists in Ohio he met up with Samuel Smith and Peter Whitmer who was promoting their “golden bible” that declared the Restored Gospel of God had arrived on the earth. Suffice it to say he became a believer in Joe Smith’s version of the Lord’s gospel.

In 1834 Hyde married the first of his nine wives Marinda Johnson, but his devotion to the god of Mormonism and its anointed leader came with a price. Hyde also had the dubious distinction of being one of a handful of men in the early Church who had the misfortune of Joseph Smith marrying their wives while they were away on missions for the Church.

While away in Palestine he consecrated the land for the gathering of Judah in October 1841 and six months later in April 1842 Smith had himself a revelation that Mrs. Hyde was to be his wife. When Mr. Hyde returned stateside he found things to be a little different than they were when he left.

Some Church records are glaringly silent about all aspects of this particular revelation. They don’t all mention Joseph bedding down Marinda, but they report the need to take care of the missionaries’ families when they’re out of town. As always their records are kept in a Masonic style referendum. There’s always an unanswered mystery that envelopes each scenario.

Marinda was wedded to Smith in April 1842 (Hyde returned from Jerusalem at the end of the year) and then he was sent out again, this time to Washington in April 1844. Two of her ten children are thought to be fathered by Smith.

The other problem we encountered was finding all those wives the Church claimed he had. Many of the Church’s info stated he had nine wives, but we kept seeing they’d only list four or five of them. When we did find a list of all nine wives from the Library of Congress amongst other sites, one of the wives (Emma Price) had supposedly died before he could’ve married her so the Masonic mystery saga comes into play again.




Hyde’s displeasure with various aspects of the Church led to a “disciplinary” action taken against him in the spring of 1838. He along with numerous other members/leaders of the Church were either booted out of the Church or placed under restrictions. Because Orson was


already an apostle it caused a great deal of strife within the ranks of Mormonism, but even that would be short lived.

Hyde returned to full fellowship and recouped his apostleship, albeit the chance of becoming God’s appointed prophet would never be in his future. Brigham Young decided his length of service in the apostleship was shorter than that of John Taylor so he (Taylor) became the next in line to head the Saints.

Hyde’s lengthy sermons are well documented in the historical writings of the Church as well as the footprint he left through the Washoe Valley in the Sierra Nevada region. He was instrumental in helping Mormons settle the region as he fulfilled the duty of being a judge, teacher, farmer, mission president, community leader and church apostle.

Surprisingly while the Church likes to boast of his many wives they’re reticent in listing all of them as mentioned earlier. This is a glaring scab on their testament to the claim they’re honest in all things considering the wives they’ve omitted gave birth to over half the kids he helped bring into the world.

		Wife/Age @ marriage (Hyde’s age)	Marriage date	Kids	Other info	Wife’s marital status
1		Nancy Marinda Johnson – 19 (29)	9/4/1834	10	Died 3/17/1876 In SLC. Polyandrous marriage to Smith during marriage to Hyde. 2 children of record during this time. Divorced him 1870	Polyandrous with Joe Smith
2		Martha Rebecca Browett – 24 (38) Also last Name of Browitt	7/10/1843	1	B. 6/15/1819 Died 10/30/1904. Some reports list her div. Hyde in 1850 then marrying Tho. McKenzie who also divorced her. See note below.	Single
3		Mary Ann Price – 26 (38)	4/1843 or 7/20/1843	1	Born 6/5/1816 Died 6/16/1900 In SLC. Their Daughter Urania born 8/15/1846 & died 8/27/1846. Witnessed Brigham Young’s “miraculous appearance as	Widowed/ Her late husband was also her cousin.

					Joseph Smith".	
4		Charlotte Staunton Quindlan Johnson – 30 (47)	11/22/1852	0	B. 8/22/1802 D. 12/3/1881 Separated from Hyde In 1859. Had a very liberal education. Schoolteacher and smoked a pipe. She was paid in vegetables and fruit.	Divorced
5		Ann Eliza Vickers – 16 (52)	3/12/1857	6	Born 1/1841 died 5/4/1923. Ancestry.com lists her w/ 7 kids.	Single
6		Emma Price – 37 (56)	10/9/1861	0	Born in 1824. Died 3/24/1842. See note below for further info. Younger sister of Mary Ann – wife #3.	Single
7		Julia Thomene Reinert – 21 (58)	8/29/1863	5	B. 7/23/1842 in Denmark. Died 5/19/1919 SLC	Single
8		Elizabeth Josephine Gallier – 20 (59)	1864	5	Born 2/2/1844 Switzerland. Died 3/18/1920 Farmington, UT. She was 4 mos old when J. Smith died.	Single

9



Sophia
Margaret
Lyon – 18
(60)

10/10/1865

4

Born 2/1847 died
3/25/1932 or
1935 SLC (some
sites list her
last name as
Lave)

Single

Emma Price

Our Genealogy

In the book [Women of Faith in the Latter-days](#), pg 70 it states Mary Ann's younger sister Emma's death was probably due to less than ideal housing and food conditions in 1842.

One family site listed her as a proxy marriage in 1861 which makes the most sense.

[Library of Congress](#)

Martha Hyde Browett

Martha's complaints and jealousy of other wives led to the divorce of her marriage to Orson, but into another marriage to McKenzie who was also a polygamist. The problem with her scenario of course is conflicting info. In the book by Myrtle Stevens Hyde, Orson Hyde: the [Olive Branch of Israel](#), pg 274, it gives info mentioned above, but Geni.com says McKenzie died in 1846 – the book says they were married in 1850.