

The majority of members don't know where the [Book of Abraham](#) (found in the Pearl of Great Price) comes from. Here is a brief history from [Wikipedia](#):

Several papyri and eleven mummies were discovered in Thebes by Antonio Lebolo between 1818 and 1822. Sometime between 1822 and his death on February 19, 1830, Lebolo arranged to have them sold. The mummies were shipped to New York, where they were purchased by Michael Chandler in 1833. Over the next two years Chandler toured the eastern United States, displaying and selling some of the mummies.

In July 1835, Chandler brought the remaining four mummies and associated papyri to Kirtland, Ohio, the then home of the Latter-Day Saints. Although the Rosetta Stone had been discovered in 1799, the ability to read Egyptian wasn't well developed until the 1850s. Chandler asked Joseph Smith to look at the scrolls and give some insight into what was written on them, due to Smith's notoriety and claim to have translated the golden plates of the Book of Mormon. After examining the scrolls, Smith, Joseph Coe and Simeon Andrews purchased the four mummies and at least five papyrus documents for \$2,400.

After Joseph died and Brigham Young went west with a large portion of the Saints, Emma Smith didn't like Brigham so she chose to stay behind, and with her remained the papyri Joseph had said he translated to produce the Book of Abraham. She eventually sold them along with a certificate of authenticity to a museum in Chicago.

In 1871 was the Great Chicago Fire and the papyri were thought to have been burnt and gone. However, in 1966, the papyri surfaced in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. They had luckily survived the fire mostly intact. They were given to the Church as a gift from the museum.

The question on everyone's minds at this point was "Does Joseph Smith's translation match?" After Egyptologists translated the papyri, the answer was unanimous: no. The papyri were standard Egyptian funerary texts dating to around 100 BC, some 2000 years after Abraham had already died. Abraham isn't mentioned once in any of the papyri. Many Egyptologists have looked at the papyri, and [their translations](#) are scholarly.

This is quite a heated topic among Mormon apologists, which I have spent a lot of time studying. They come up with lots of excuses why the papyri don't talk about Abraham. I find all of their reasoning very weak.

Let's take a closer look at parts of the papyri and how they don't coincide at all with Joseph's interpretation of them. Much of this analysis was compiled from other sources.