

Lion and Lamb Apologetics'

Difficult Questions for Mormons

VARIOUS AUTHORS

These 65 Difficult Questions have been collected from various sources over the past several decades and their original authors are unknown. It should be noted that these questions are not designed to be used as an attack upon your Mormon friend's beliefs, but to encourage him to carefully consider the veracity of the claims of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Furthermore, it is suggested that these questions not be used early in an encounter with your Mormon friend, but only after a trusting relationship has been developed wherein he is more willing to carefully examine the substance of these questions.

1

General Questions

1. Why did the angel take the Nephi Plates back to heaven? Do they not belong with man? Would not their existence prove once for all that Mormonism is truth? God allowed the Jews to carry the Ten Commandments for several centuries in their original physical form, written by the finger of God Himself!
2. "Will you, as a Mormon, please read the Bible cover to cover and ask God to reveal to you that it contains all of God's message to man and that parts are not lost or altered and that the Book of Mormon is false?"
3. If the original 1830 Book of Mormon was inspired then why were there so many errors and changes and additions and deletions, when compared to current editions?
4. How can we be assured that the translation of the Book of Mormon into French or any other language is correct? Only the English translation is claimed to be inspired!
5. How do you account for the stunning parallels in both content and order between the Book of Mormon and *View of the Hebrews*, by Ethan Smith, which was published in 1823 (7 years before the Book of Mormon) less than 100 miles from Joseph Smith's parent's home?
6. Mormon Article of Faith #8: "We Believe the Bible to be the word of God as far as it is translated correctly; we also believe the Book of Mormon to be the word of God." Why do you only add the phrase, "as far as it is translated correctly" to describe the Bible

Lion and Lamb Apologetics

and not after the book of Mormon when in fact there are far more translating errors in the Book of Mormon than the Bible?

7. If the Book of Mormon is true, then why has the Mormon church changed it? Examples are: 1 Nephi 11:21; 19:20; 20:1 and Alma 29:4. Compare these with the original Book of Mormon. (Gerald and Sandra Tanner have counted 3913 changes in the book of Mormon, excluding punctuation changes.)
8. How did Joseph Smith carry home the golden plates of the Book of Mormon, and how did the witnesses lift them so easily? (They weighed about 230 lbs. Gold, with a density of 19.3 weighs 1204.7 lbs. per cubic foot. The plates were 7" x 8" by about 6". (See *Articles of Faith*, by Talmage, page 262, 34th ed.)
9. If Moroni devoutly practiced the Mormon Gospel, why is he an angel now rather than a God? (Doctrine & Covenants 132:17,37)
10. Why do Mormons emphasize part of the Word of Wisdom and ignore the part forbidding the eating of meat except in winter, cold or famine? (Doctrine & Covenants 89:12,13).
11. When Christ died, did darkness cover the land for three days or for three hours? (Luke 23:44 and 3 Nephi 8:19, 23).
12. Joseph Smith said that there are men living on the moon who dress like Quakers and live to be nearly 1000 years old. Since he was wrong about the moon, is it safe to trust him regarding the way to Heaven? (*The Young Woman's Journal*, 3:263-264. See reprint in *Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?* by Jerald and Sandra Tanner, page 4.)
13. Joseph Smith prepared fourteen Articles of Faith. Why has the original No. 11 been omitted? (*Joseph Smith Begins His Work*, Vol. 2, three pages after page 160, among the photos.)
14. Why did the Nauvoo House not stand forever and ever? (Doctrine & Covenants 124:56-60).
15. How can a man who is not a descendant of Aaron hold the Aaronic Priesthood? (Numbers 16:40; Hebrews 7:13,14).
16. Since Mormonism teaches that only God the Father had a physical body at the time Adam was created, why did God say, "Let us make man in OUR image"? Why didn't He say, "Let us make man in MY image?" (Genesis 1:26).

Lion and Lamb Apologetics'

17. If Jesus was conceived as a result of a physical union between God and Mary, how was Jesus born of a virgin? (*Journal of Discourses*, 1:50).
18. How did Nephi with a few men on a new continent build a temple like Solomon's while Solomon needed 163,300 workmen and seven years to build his temple? (1 Kings 5:13-18 and 2 Nephi 5:15-17).
19. Why was Joseph Smith still preaching against polygamy in October 1843 after he got his revelation in July 1843 commanding the practice of polygamy? (Doctrine & Covenants 132; and *History of the Church*, 6:46, or *Teachings of the Prophet*, page 324).
20. God rejected the fig leaf aprons which Adam and Eve made (Genesis 3:21). Why do Mormons memorialize the fall by using fig leaf aprons in the secret temple ceremonies?
21. How do you explain the fact that 2 Nephi 16:2 is copied from an older version of the KJV of the Bible in Isaiah 6:2? This is proven because this older KJV (the mistake is corrected in current versions) made a rare grammatical error by using the incorrect plural form of "seraphims" rather than "seraphim".

Book of Mormon Culture¹

1. Why does the Book of Mormon mention Silk (Alma 1:29)?
 - LDS Apologist John Welch cites several New World fabrics as possible matches for Linen and Silk (*Reexploring the Book of Mormon*, pg. 162). Agave fibers and fig bark for Linen? Ceiba fibers, pineapple fibers and rabbit hair for Silk?
 - Welch concludes with the staggering claim 'Mesoamerica evidently exhibits almost an embarrassment of riches for the "silk" and "linen" of Alma 1:29.
 - All but the most trivializing critics should be satisfied with the parallels.' (pg. 164)
 - My response to Welch: You'll have to forgive my trivializing nature, but rabbit hair doesn't equal silk in my book.
2. What about Chariots (Alma 18:9)? There is no evidence of actual wheeled vehicle usage in the 2,000BC to AD400 time frame in Ancient America.

¹ The following series of questions have been provided courtesy of <https://bible.ca/mor-questions.htm>. Accessed July 7, 2014.

Lion and Lamb Apologetics

3. Why does the Book of Mormon imply a seven day week (Mosiah 13:18) when it was not known to Ancient Americans?
 - The Mesoamericans used a variety of calendars, none of which match the Old World calendar. The Maya seemed to be oversupplied in the calendar department.
 - One calendar consisted of a 260-day cycle divided into 13 “months” of twenty days. (This calendar was used by most of the ancient Mesoamericans). Each day was presided over by its own god. Another consists of a 365-day cycle, also divided into “months” of twenty days, eighteen of them in fact. The five leftover days were called the “resting, or sleep of the year”.
 - Another consists of a 3276-day cycle divided into four quadrants of 819 days (the product of 7*9*13, all sacred numbers to the Maya).
 - And then, of course, there was the so-called ‘long count’ calendar, which simply counted days from the creation of the world (August 11, 3114BC, if anyone wants to know). (Linda Schele, *A Forest of Kings*, pg. 78).
4. Why are Cimicers—an Old-World weapon of war—mentioned in Mosiah 9:16 and other verses when none have been found to exist in the New World?
 - John Sorenson cites a Mesoamerican ‘maccuahuitl’ for a Cimicer (*An Ancient American Setting for the Book of Mormon*, pg. 262). The Maccuahuitl was a hardwood club with obsidian blades.
 - A Cimicer is a heavy, two-handed steel blade. What’s wrong with this picture?
5. Why have some (like Elder Peterson and Elder Brewerton) used the Quetzalcoatl legend to “prove” the Book of Mormon’s Christ when the Quetzalcoatl (or feathered serpent) legend dates to 1,000 years before the Book of Mormon’s Christ?
6. When the Nephites landed in the Americas there were already millions of inhabitants in the land with large cities and infrastructure. Why are these people not mentioned? The Book of Mormon seems to indicate that the continent was empty at the time. 2 Nephi 1:8 One wonders if ‘knowledge’ of the land had been kept from the natives who had already been there for thousands of years?
7. Why didn’t Nephi compare and contrast the New World with Jerusalem? These were two vastly different places.

Lion and Lamb Apologetics'

Book of Mormon Metallurgy

1. Why does the Book of Mormon mention Bellows (1 Nephi 17:11), Brass (2 Nephi 5:15), Breast Plates & Copper (Mosiah 8:10), Iron (Jarom 1:8), Gold and Silver currency (Alma 11), Silver (Jarom 1:8), and Steel Swords (Ether 7:9)?
 - No evidence indicates that these items existed during Book of Mormon times.
 - Tom Ferguson: "Metallurgy does not appear in the region until about the 9th century AD."
2. Why doesn't the art (which is abundant) of the supposed Book of Mormon cultures portray the existence of metallurgical products or metallurgical activity?

Book of Mormon Animals

1. Why does the Book of Mormon mention the following animals: Ass, Bull, Calf, Cattle, Cow, domestic Goat (the Nephites claimed to have found the domestic goat!), Horse (the horse plays a major role in the Nephite and Lamanite societies), Ox, domestic Sheep, Sow, Swine, & Elephants (contrary to the dated information on this site).
 - Non-LDS indicate that there is no evidence of elephants in the New World and the mammoth and mastodon of North America have been extinct for thousands years—see Stan Larson's *Quest for the Gold Plates*, pages 184-188?
 - None of these animals even existed in America during the era and timescale of Book of Mormon times.
2. Why aren't animals such as Coatimundis, Deer, Jaguars, Tapir, Monkeys, Sloths, Turkeys, etc.. mentioned when they were animals that existed? They were unknown to Joseph Smith, but later discovered to have lived here at the time the Nephites were supposed to have co-existed with them.

Book of Mormon Crops

1. Why is plow agriculture such as Barley (Alma 11:7) and Wheat (Mosiah 9:9) included in the Book of Mormon when it didn't exist during that time period?
 - "There's a whole system of production of wheat and barley . . . It's a specialized production of food. You have to know something to make flax [the source of linen], and especially in tropical climates. Grapes and olives . . . all these are cultures that are highly developed and amount to systems, and so the Book of Mormon is saying

Lion and Lamb Apologetics

that these systems existed here.” (BYU anthropology professor, Dr. Raymond T. Matheny, August 25, 1984 Sunstone conference in Salt Lake City).

- Welch claims barley existed in the Book of Mormon based on one find in Phoenix, Arizona! Arizona is hardly the setting of the Book of Mormon.
2. Why aren't the foods known to ancient America such as chocolate, lima beans, squash, potatoes, tomatoes, manioc, etc. included in the Book of Mormon?

Book of Mormon Geography

1. Why isn't the terrain of Central America described?
2. Why is it that numerous LDS books and papers describe proposed Book of Mormon locations for cities and the “narrow neck of land”?
 - No city has been identified as being Nephite, Lamanite, Jaredite, etc.
 - For example, Zarahemla was occupied for hundreds of years, but we still don't have any real evidence of it ever existing.
 - The Book of Mormon describes a time period from 2000BC to AD400 and millions of people. No city they occupied has yet to be found.
3. Why didn't any of the place names from the Book of Mormon still exist when Columbus arrived?
4. Where was the Hill Cumorah? Was it in New York or Central America? If it was in Central America, why hasn't it been found? If it was in New York, how did they move that quickly and where are all the remains?
5. Why don't gaps exist in the archeological record of Mesoamerica if these missing people existed?
6. Did the Book of Mormon take place outside of Mesoamerica?
 - The *History of the Church* records an incident from June, 1834 in which Joseph Smith identified a skeleton found in an Indian burial mound in Illinois: “. . . the visions of the past being opened to my understanding by the Spirit of the Almighty, I discovered the person whose skeleton was before us was a white Lamanite, a large, thick-set man, and a man of God. His name was Zelph . . . who was known from the Hill Cumorah, or eastern sea to the Rocky mountains.” (*History of the Church*, 1948 ed., II: 79-80).

Lion and Lamb Apologetics'

7. Why don't any archeologists theorize any Hebrew or Egyptian linkages or influences in Mesoamerica?

Book of Mormon Script

1. Why are Greek names such as Lachoneus, Timothy, Jonas, and Alpha & Omega in a book that should have absolutely no Greek influence?
2. Why aren't there other examples of "Reformed Egyptian" in Ancient America?
3. Why doesn't a linguistical relationship exist between any native American language and ancient Egyptian or Hebrew?
4. How did the Book of Mormon language evolve so rapidly into non-related Indian languages? Indo-European is much older than the Book of Mormon time period, yet vestiges of Indo-European exist through all of Europe and parts of Asia.
5. Why are only four main types of Mesoamerican writing systems known (and none in pre-Columbus North America): Aztec, Mixtec, Zapotec, and Maya?
6. Why can't the Anthon transcript (which contains copies of the supposed Reformed Egyptian characters) be identified with any forms of Egyptian? The only three Egyptologists that have looked at it say it does not contain any Egyptian (Ferguson Collection, BYU)
7. If the Book of Mormon took place outside of Mesoamerica (like in New York where the Hill Cumorah supposedly is), why are written languages of ancient America only found in Mesoamerica?
8. Why haven't any of the Book of Mormon proper names such as Nephi, Laman, Zarahemla, etc. been found in all of the many writings that have been found in Mesoamerica?

Book of Mormon Races

1. If the Book of Mormon is true, why do Indians fail to turn white when they become Mormons? (2 Nephi 30:6, prior to the 1981 revision).
2. Why aren't any of the Indian tribes racially or genetically the same as Hebrews? American Indians are all of Mongoloid origin.

Lion and Lamb Apologetics

3. Why did Joseph Smith send missionaries to the “Lamanites” if the American Indians at the time weren’t really “Lamanites”? (Doctrine & Covenants 10:48, 28:8, 54:8, etc.)
 - He certainly considered the Indians to be Lamanites (even if the current leaders of the church no longer believe them to be so).
 - “The Book of Mormon is a record of the forefathers of our western tribes of Indians. By it we learn that our western tribes of Indians are descendants from that Joseph who was sold into Egypt, and that the land of America is a promised land unto them.” (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, pg. 17).
 - “He told me of a sacred record which was written on plates of gold, I saw in the vision the place where they were deposited, he said the Indians were the literal descendants of Abraham.” (*Personal Writings of Joseph Smith, Diary 1835-1836*, pg. 76).
 - (Note: this was one of Smith’s “founding visions”. Apparently, Moroni was not aware that there were other, non-Semitic natives in America either).

Book of Mormon Witnesses

1. Why were the witnesses only allowed to see the plates with “spiritual eyes”?
2. If the plates were real, why would it take faith to see them? (D&C17:2) (How could he have translated without the plates, as his scribes said, if he was doing a literal translation of a physical object?)
3. Why does the church now extol the witnesses when Joseph Smith condemned them?
4. Why would most of them leave the church?
5. Why did Brigham Young say that the Three Witnesses doubted and disbelieved in their experience? “Some of the witnesses of the Book of Mormon, who handled the plates and conversed with the angels of God, were afterwards left to doubt and disbelieve that they had ever seen an angel.” (*Journal of Discourses*, 1859, 7:164).
6. Why were all of the witnesses (except Martin Harris) related to Joseph Smith or David Whitmer?

Lion and Lamb Apologetics

Book of Mormon Style and Inconsistencies

1. If God was inspiring the translation process of the Book of Mormon, why were 4,000 changes necessary?
2. Why do the stories and the characters in the Book of Mormon repeat with only minor variations in content and different names given to the characters?
 - Example: Nephi and Moroni sound and act like the same character.
 - “There were other Anti-Christes among the Nephites, but they were more military leaders than religious innovators . . . they are all of one breed and brand; so nearly alike that one mind is the author of them, and that a young and undeveloped, but piously inclined mind. The evidence I sorrowfully submit, points to Joseph Smith as their creator. It is difficult to believe that they are the product of history, that they come upon the scene separated by long periods of time, and among a race which was the ancestral race of the red man of America.” (B.H. Roberts, *Studies of the Book of Mormon*, page 271).
3. Why was the Book of Mormon cast into the KJV style?
 - “...there is a continual use of the ‘thee’, ‘thou’ and ‘ye’, as well as the archaic verb endings ‘est’ (second person singular) and ‘eth’ (third person singular).
 - Since the Elizabethan style was not Joseph’s natural idiom, he continually slipped out of this King James pattern and repeatedly confused the norms as well.
 - Thus, he lapsed from ‘ye’ (subject) to ‘you’ (object) as the subject of sentences (e.g. ‘Mos. 2:19; 3:34; 4:24), jumped from plural (‘ye’) to singular (‘thou’) in the same sentence (Mos. 4:22) and moved from verbs without endings to ones with endings (e.g. ‘yields . . . putteth,’ 3:19).” (*The Use of the Old Testament in the Book of Mormon*, by Wesley P. Walters, 1990, page 30).
4. Was there a room full of plates in a secret chamber in the hill near Joseph’s house as he and Brigham Young said?
5. Why were cliched Indian phrases like “Nine Moons” in (Omni 1:21) or “Great Spirit” in (Alma 19:25-27) included?
6. How did the Jaredites come up with the same rare idea of writing on plates 2,000 years before Lehi when such a record keeping system is virtually unknown?

Lion and Lamb Apologetics

7. Why include the ridiculous prayer of the Zoramites in Alma 31?
8. Why is the Passover mentioned 71 times in the Bible, but -0- times in the Book of Mormon?
9. How did Book of Mormon characters get the priesthood when they weren't from the tribe of Levi?
10. Why was Shakespeare used?
11. What was the purpose in Moroni taking the plates back? Similarly, what ever happened to the parchment written by John of the New Testament? (Doctrine & Covenants 7) Why weren't the supposed writings of Abraham (which were actually common A.D. funerary texts) also taken similarly back?
12. Why did Joseph's own accounts confuse whether he was visited by Moroni or Nephi. "He called me by name, and said unto me that he was a messenger sent from the presence of God to me, and that his name was Nephi." (Joseph Smith, *Times & Seasons*, 1842, 3:753) also (Joseph Smith, 1851, Pearl of Great Price, p. 41).

Prophecies in the Book of Mormon

1. Why are the prophecies in the Book of Mormon dealing with events that already occurred unrealistically specific?
 - Three Witnesses.
 - Charles Anthon story.
 - Columbus described.
 - Joseph Smith's name given.
 - Smith called to be the translator of the Mormon record.
 - Jerusalem destroyed.
 - 600 years until Jesus is born.
 - Martin Harris and the lost manuscripts. (1 Nephi 9, Words of Mormon)
 - Why do the unfulfilled prophecies in the Book of Mormon remain unfulfilled? Example: Jews becoming Christian in mass.

Lion and Lamb Apologetics'

2. Why is the Book of Mormon quite specific about Christ but does not add anything that the New Testament does not address (for example, what Christ did from age 12 - 30)?
3. Why does the Book of Mormon prophesy that the Jews would be restored to the land of their inheritance if they believed in Christ (they are occupying it now without believing in Christ)? (2 Nephi 10:7)
4. Why did Alma not know when Christ was coming (Alma 13:21-26) even though he possessed plates and Lehi and Nephi had written precisely when he would arrive?

Influenced by Joseph Smith's Background

1. Why are themes of the revolutionary war and patriotism (liberty, freedom, country, religion, flags, etc.) woven throughout a book supposedly written over a thousand years before the revolutionary war?
2. Why is an agrarian society similar to the society Joseph was most familiar with described as the setting for the entire book?
3. Why is a democracy after a monarchy described (Mosiah 23, 29)—as happened in the history of the United States?
4. Is it purely coincidental that there was much speculation in Joseph Smith's area about Indian Mounds and battles?
5. Why does the Book of Mormon describe wood forts with pickets to protect people—much like the forts of frontier?
6. Is it purely coincidental that Lehi had six sons as did Joseph Smith Sr., Sam/Samuel were sons of both, and Nephi and Joseph Smith Jr. were so similar?
7. Why did Mormon, Nephi and other "heroes" of the Book of Mormon have so many common traits with Joseph Smith? (large in stature, had visions while a teenager, etc.—see *The Refiner's Fire* by John Brooke for many more similarities)
8. Why does the Book of Mormon repeatedly address 19th century readers?
9. Why is the anti-Masonic excitement that arose near Smith's home in 1827 reflected? (Gadianton Robbers / Secret Combos)
10. Why is infant baptism (a much, discussed issue in the early 19th century) condemned in Chapter 8 of Moroni when it wasn't even an issue in the Bible?

Lion and Lamb Apologetics'

Influenced by the KJV Bible

1. Why does the Book of Mormon use old KJV-type English at a time when it was not currently used?
2. Why is about 1/8th of the Book of Mormon copied directly from the KJV (AD1611) when it was alleged to have been written some 1200-2000 years before the KJV existed?
3. How do you explain the fact that Joseph Smith copied from the KJV but deleted the italicized words in the KJV because he figured they were not in the original? "Then said I, Woe is me! For I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips" Isaiah 6:5, The words "is & am" are deleted in the Book of Mormon.
4. Why are portions of Isaiah quoted off of the plates of brass when these items weren't written until after Nephi supposedly got the plates out of Laban's treasury?
5. Why was Paul referred to before his time? (Paul said, "Death where is thy sting")
6. Why is it that of the 350 names in the Book of Mormon, 100 are found in the Bible, others are place names found on early 19th century maps, and the rest are derivatives of Bible names?
7. Why didn't Joseph Smith ever acknowledge using the KJV of the Bible to "translate"?
8. Why were the following phrases used out of the New Testament supposedly before the New Testament was even thought of—much less written?
 - 1. "oh wretched man that I am" Romans 7:24 / 2 Nephi 4:17
 - 2. "earthquake, rocks rent" Matt 27:51 / 1 Nephi 12:14
 - 3. "old serpent, which is the devil" Rev 20:2 / 2 Nephi 2:18
 - 4. "one faith, one baptism" Ephesians 4:5 / Mosiah 18:21
 - 5. "One man perish" Jesus/Laban / John 11:50 / 1 Nephi 4:13
9. Why is a Greek word like "Christ" used throughout the Book of Mormon?
10. Why does the Book of Mormon always follow KJV errors?
11. Why don't the Book of Mormon quotes from out of the Old Testament agree to earlier Latin, Syriac, Coptic, or Patristic texts?

Lion and Lamb Apologetics

12. Example: Matthew 5:27 and 3 Nephi 12:27 “by them of old time” not included in earliest Greek (should have said “to them of old”).
13. Matthew 6:4, 6, 18 and 3 Nephi :4, 6, 18 “openly” added later.
14. Matt 6:13 and 3 Nephi 13:13 “lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil” should have said, “and do not bring us to the time of trial, but rescue us from the evil one”.
15. Why does the phrase “the lamb of God” appear only in the New Testament portion of the Bible yet it appears in the Book of Mormon over 30 times—28 times in 1 Nephi alone?
16. Why do the words of Malachi 4:1 appear in 1 Nephi 22:15 over a hundred years before Malachi wrote them?
17. Why do so many stories seem like exaggerated borrowings from the Bible? Examples:
 - Ammon killed six sheep rustlers with a sling (Alma 17:36) vs. David’s killing of Goliath. (1 Samuel 17:50)
 - Pillar of Fire. (Exodus 13:21) vs. (1 Nephi 1:6)
 - Lord instructs Noah to build the Ark (Genesis 6:14) / Lord instructs Nephi to build ship (1 Nephi 17:8) / Lord instructs Jaredites to build barges (Ether 2:16)
 - Jaredites brought flocks, two of a kind, seeds. (Ether 2:1) vs. Noah doing the same in (Genesis 7:9)
 - Raising dead. (Matthew 10:8) vs. (3 Nephi 19:4)
 - Temple of Solomon supposedly took 180,000 people seven and a half years to build (1 Kings 5, 6) / The few in number Nephites supposedly did it in less than 20 years after arriving (2 Nephi 5).
 - Calming Storm (1 Nephi 18:8-21) vs. (Matthew 8:23-27).
 - Men in Fire (Helaman 5:22-24) vs. (Daniel 3).
 - Feeding Multitude (3 Nephi 20:3-7) out of nothing / In Bible, Christ multiplied existing food (Matthew 14).

Lion and Lamb Apologetics

- Christ heals masses in Book of Mormon (3 Nephi 17:9) / in Bible Jesus healed as he encountered (Luke 9:42).
- Multitude feels wounds in Book of Mormon (3 Nephi 11:13) / In Bible, Thomas felt wounds (John 20:27).
- Book of Mormon prophecies of Christ specific / Bible prophecies veiled (actually non-existent unless scripture misquoted or “prophecies” stretched to have two meanings).
- Book of Mormon Christ is completely accepted / In Bible he is rejected.
- Aminadi deciphered writing on the wall (Alma 10:2-3) like Daniel (Daniel 5).
- Daughter of Jared danced before the king (Ether 8) like the daughter of Herodias (Matthew 14) (decapitation followed in both cases).
- Daughters of Lamanites abducted like the daughters of Shiloh.
- Jews of Old Testament were monotheists / Pre-Christ Jews of Book of Mormon were not.

Influenced by Happenings of Early 19th Century America

1. Why does the Book of Mormon confuse the Old and New Covenants?
 - It stresses that before Christ, the faithful kept the Law of Moses (2 Nephi 5:10; 25:23-25, 20; Alma 30:3), yet they also established churches, taught and practiced Christian baptism, and were conversant with New Testament doctrines and events (e.g., 2 Nephi 9:23; Mosiah 18:17).
 - In the Bible, the Old Covenant is taken away to establish the New according to Paul and his followers (Hebrews 10:9).
 - The Book of Mormon intermingles the covenants. Paul was the man who first tried to reconcile the Old to the New covenant—not anyone during Old Testament times.
2. Why does the Book of Mormon discuss the concept of infinite sins paid by an infinite being? (Alma 12) This idea was originated by Anselm of Canterbury and was a raging debate during the time of Joseph Smith.

Lion and Lamb Apologetics'

3. Why does the Book of Mormon's teachings reflect the religious conflicts of the early 19th century including: grace, infant baptism, ordination, authority, repentance, resurrection, eternal punishment, fall of man, nature of man, fasting, etc.?
4. Why were there missionaries in the Book of Mormon before Christ? That certainly wasn't the case in the Old World.
5. Why is King Benjamin's oratory like a 19th century camp meeting?
6. Revival gathering (Mosiah 2)
7. Guilt ridden falling exercise (4:1-2)
8. Petition for spiritual emancipation (4:2)
9. Absolution and ecstasy (4:3)
10. Repentance (4:4-8)
11. Born again (5:7)
12. Take name of Christ (5:8-15)
13. Why do other works early in Joseph Smith's lifetime teach that the Indians were descended from the Hebrews?
14. Was "View of the Hebrews" one of the sources?
 - B.H. Roberts (*Studies of Book of Mormon*, pp. 240,242) said, "But now to return . . . to the main theme of this writing—viz., did Ethan Smith's *View of the Hebrews* furnish structural material for Joseph Smith's Book of Mormon? It has been pointed out in these pages that there are many things in the former book that might well have suggested many major things in the other. Not a few things merely, one or two, or a half dozen, but many; and it is this fact of many things of similarity and the cumulative force of them that makes them so serious a menace to Joseph Smith's story of the Book of Mormon's origin . . ."
15. Was Josiah Priest's book, *The Wonders of Nature and Providence*, (copyrighted by him June 2, 1824, and printed soon afterwards in Rochester, New York, only some twenty miles distant from Palmyra) a source?
16. Was James Adair's *A History of the American Indians*, a source?

Lion and Lamb Apologetics

- On pages 377-378, he wrote the following about the Indians: “Through the whole continent, and in the remotest woods, are traces of their ancient warlike disposition. We frequently met with great mounds of earth, either of a circular, or oblong form, having a strong breast-work at a distance around them, made of the clay which had been dug up in forming the ditch on the inner side of the inclosed ground, and these were their forts of security against an enemy... About 12 miles from the upper northern parts of the Choktah country, there stand...two oblong mounds of earth...in an equal direction with each other... A broad deep ditch inclosed those two fortress, and there they raised an high breast-work, to secure their houses from the invading enemy.”
- In Alma it states, “Yea, he had been strengthening the armies of the Nephites, and erecting small forts, or places of resort: throwing up banks of earth round about to enclose his armies...the Nephites were taught...never to raise the sword except it were against an enemy... they had cast up dirt round to shield them from the arrows...the chief captains of the Lamanites were astonished exceedingly, because of the wisdom of the Nephites in preparing their places of security ... they knew not that Moroni had fortified, or had built forts of security in all the land roundabout ... the Lamanites could not get into their forts of security ... because of the highness of the bank which had been thrown up, and the depth of the ditch which had been dug round about ... they (the Lamanites) began to dig down their banks of earth ... that they might have an equal chance to fight ... instead of filling up their ditches by pulling down banks of earth, they were filled up in a measure with their dead ... And (Moroni) caused them to erect fortifications that they should commence laboring in digging a ditch round about the land ... And he caused that they should build a breastwork of timbers upon the inner bank of the ditch: and they did cast up dirt out of the ditch against the breastwork of timbers”.

17. Why are there other direct word parallels between Adair and the Book of Mormon such as Omni 1:21 and page 125 of Adair which says, “...for the space of four moons...” or page 122 which says “for the space of three days and nights...” and Alma 36:10.

Main Themes of Mormonism Not in the Book of Mormon

1. Why isn't the Elohim (God) being the father of Jehovah (Jesus) and being once a mortal man discussed? (In fact, God and Jesus appear to be one in the same being in the Book of Mormon—especially in the first edition).

Lion and Lamb Apologetics

2. What about God having a body of flesh and bones, God being married, men becoming Gods, temple participation necessary for exaltation, baptism for the dead, Aaronic and Melchizedek Priesthood, word of wisdom, and three degrees of glory?
3. Why is polygamy condemned in the Book of Mormon, but condoned in the D&C and still believed to be necessary in church doctrine for exaltation in the after-life?
4. Where are such doctrines as a man having to marry in order to be exalted, member having to wear sacred undergarments, official doctrine being voted upon by the general membership, God being the offspring of another God, etc.?

Treasure Hunting and Magic

1. Why was Joseph Smith arrested for “money digging” and convicted of being a disorderly person?
 - He admitted to being a money digger, though he said it was never very profitable for him (*History of the Church*, 3:29).
 - He and his father’s money digging continued until at least 1826. On March 20, 1826, Joseph was arrested, brought before a judge, and charged with being a “glass-looker” and a disorderly person.
 - The laws at that time had what was known as the “Vagrant Act.” It defined a disorderly person as one who pretended to have skill in the areas of palmistry, telling fortunes or discovering where lost goods might be found.
 - According to court records Justice Neely determined that Joseph was guilty, though no penalty was administered, quite possibly because this was a first offense (*Inventing Mormonism*, Marquardt and Walters, SLC: Signature Books, 1994, pp. 74-75).
2. Why did Joseph Smith have to use a seer stone both before and after being called as a prophet?
3. Why did the Book of Mormon have to be translated while he looked into the seer stone placed in a black top hat?
 - D. Michael Quinn writes: “During this period from 1827 to 1830, Joseph Smith abandoned the company of his former money-digging associates, but continued to use for religious purposes the brown seer stone he had previously employed in the treasure quest. His most intensive and productive use of the seer stone was in

Lion and Lamb Apologetics

the translation of the Book of Mormon. But he also dictated several revelations to his associates through the stone” (*Early Mormonism and the Magic World View*, D. Michael Quinn, Signature Books, SLC, 1987, p. 143).

- Richard S. Van Wagoner writes: “This stone, still retained by the First Presidency of the LDS Church, was the vehicle through which the golden plates were discovered and the medium through which their interpretation came” (*Sidney Rigdon: A Portrait of Religious Excess*, Signature Books, SLC, 1994, p.57).
4. Why would a prophet need to send members to seek for treasure seen in a vision? (See Doctrine & Covenants 111). Why wasn’t any found when the revelation states they would?
 5. Did the Jaredites’ magic stones have anything to do with Joseph’s acquaintance with magic stones?
 6. Why does the Book of Mormon discuss “slippery treasure” so much?

The First Vision

1. Why do the accounts differ with respect to who was in the vision? See: *The New Mormon History: Revisionist Essays on the Past* for more on this.
2. Why doesn’t Jesus show up (separate from God) until after the God doctrine had evolved into a plurality of Gods? (i.e., after 1835)
3. Why don’t the early “prophets” even know the story accurately?
 - “The Lord did not come with the armies of heaven ... But he did send His angel to this same obscure person, Joseph Smith jun... and informed him that he should not join any of the religious sects of the day, for they were all wrong” (Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*, 1855, 2:171).
4. “How did it (the organization) come? By the ministering of an holy angel from God, out of heaven, who held converse with man, and revealed unto him the darkness that enveloped the world...He told him the Gospel was not among men, and that there was not a true organization of His kingdom in the world.” (Wilford Woodruff, *Journal of Discourses*, 1855, 11:196).
5. “How did the state of things called Mormonism originate? We read that an angel came down and revealed himself to Joseph Smith and manifested unto him in a vision the true position of the world in a religious point of view. He was surrounded with light

Lion and Lamb Apologetics'

and glory while the heavenly messenger communicated these things to him.” (John Taylor, *Journal of Discourses*, 1863, 10:127).

6. “When the holy angel appeared, Joseph inquired which of all these denominations was right and which he should join, and was told they were all wrong.” (George A. Smith, *Journal of Discourses*, 1863, 12:334).
7. Why doesn't any published source mention the “official” first vision account until 1842—22 years after the “official” event supposedly happened?
8. Why doesn't the First Vision play an important role in Mormon history until the 1860s? No one seems to mention it before then even though it is now deemed by Mormons to be the most important event in almost 2,000 years.
9. Why isn't there evidence to support the revival described by Joseph Smith in early 1820—yet there is evidence to support revivals several years later?
 - Joseph Smith's neighborhood experienced no revival in 1820 such as he described, in which great multitudes joined the Methodist, Baptist, and Presbyterian churches.
 - According to early sources—including church conference reports, newspapers, church periodicals, presbytery records and published interviews—nothing occurred in 1820-21 that fits Joseph's description.
 - There were no significant gains in church membership in the Palmyra-Manchester, New York area, during 1820-21 such as accompany great revivals.
 - For example, in 1820, the Baptist Church in Palmyra only received 8 people through profession of faith and baptism, the Presbyterian church added 14 members, while the Methodist circuit lost 6 members, dropping from 677 in 1819 to 671 in 1820 and down to 622 in 1821 (see Geneva area Presbyterian Church Records, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia, PA; Records for the First Baptist Church in Palmyra, American Baptist Historical Society, Rochester, NY; Minutes of the [Methodist] annual Conference, Ontario Circuit, 1818-1821, pp. 312, 330, 346, 366).
10. Why does Lucy Smith (his mother) indicate that the revival occurred around 1824?
 - Her son, Alvin died on November 19, 1823, and following that painful loss Lucy Smith reports that, “about this time there was a great revival in religion and the whole neighborhood was very much aroused to the subject and we among the rest,

Lion and Lamb Apologetics'

flocked to the meeting house to see if there was a word of comfort for us that might relieve our over-charged feelings” (First draft of Lucy Smith’s *History*, p. 55, LDS Church Archives).

- Church records from that time period show outstanding increases in membership due to the reception of new converts. The Baptist Church received 94, the Presbyterian 99, while the Methodist work grew by 208. “You will recollect that I mentioned the time of a religious excitement, in Palmyra and vicinity to have been in the 15th year of our Brother J. Smith Jr’s, age that was an error in the type- it should have been the 17th...This would bring the date down to the year 1823.” (Oliver Cowdrey, *Times & Seasons*, 1840, 2:241). For further details see, *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Spring 1969, pp. 59-100.

11. Why does Joseph Smith’s first autobiography not even mention the “First Vision”?

Why does Joseph Smith have Lehi make such a statement as 1 Nephi 8:2? Is he equating a dream to an actual, physical vision or visitation from God?

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