

Answering Book of Mormon Critics

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Description: Before it was even published in 1830, the Book of Mormon was subject to criticism. Some of the earliest criticisms are still being circulated while others are more recent developments. This class examines the most common and responds with reason, evidence, and testimony.

Introduction

It is easy to make an accusation against someone. It can be done in a single, short sentence: “He lied!” But sometimes to show that the accusation is false takes more work. You have to explain all the details of the situation and go deep into the various issues. Such is the case here. The critics love to toss out a collection of short, typically poorly documented accusations, and declare, ‘See, the Book of Mormon can’t be true—look at this huge pile of evidence!’ However, their work¹ is often a combination of some truth mixed with far more distortions, misrepresentations, exaggerations, and outright lies. And their conclusions are always the same—Joseph Smith was a fraud and therefore the Church cannot be true. We’ll do our best in this class to pick apart some of their arguments, find any nuggets of truth, and correct the rest.

King James Version “Errors”

Criticism: “What are 1769 King James Version errors doing in the Book of Mormon? A purported ancient text? Errors which are unique to the 1769 edition that Joseph Smith owned?”

The issue is not which version of the Bible Joseph Smith read, though emphasizing the 1769 date seems to imply that. The real issue is that where the Book of Mormon quotes the Bible, it does so using the King James Version text.

The Bible of Joseph Smith’s day was indeed based on a revised King James Version first created in 1769. Today we recognize that this Bible version included some errors, because any translation of that period was based on what are today considered ‘flawed’ manuscripts, which were relatively recent copies that perpetuated errors made by scribes copying them along the way. Today we have older and more reliable manuscripts to work from, so we are aware of these translation problems. None of them are considered serious or in any way impact the ultimate meaning of the text.²

The critics’ point is fundamentally that the Book of Mormon contains quotes from the KJV Bible of Joseph Smith’s day. But since we claim that the Book of Mormon is an inspired translation, they contend, it should be a perfect rendering of ancient Biblical texts and not have any of the flaws of any other translation. At the very least, they say, it should be different from the KJV because it’s a translation of Isaiah or other prophets from the brass plates, dating from 600 BC. How can it end up as 1769 King James’ English? The fact that it looks and feels like the KJV with all its flaws and errors show Joseph Smith was simply plagiarizing, they conclude.

The real question is, why is the KJV quoted at all in the Book of Mormon? And the answer is quite simple—what other language should Joseph Smith and the Lord have used when quoting Biblical texts? King James language was the only language of scripture in that day. Let’s say, for example, the Lord had inspired Joseph Smith to write it in the language today’s translations, such as the NIV or NRSV, which are based on better ancient manuscripts and understanding of the ancient world.

¹ Perhaps best exemplified by the recent composition, the *CES Letter*, which does its best to capture all significant critical arguments against the Church in a single document. Most of the critical quotations in these notes come from this document.

² For example, in Isaiah 2:16 (2 Nephi 12:16), the KJV and the Book of Mormon read “. . . and upon all pleasant pictures.” Modern translations recognize that it should be “and against all the beautiful craft” (NASB, ESV, NRSV).

How would that text have been received in 1830, a world that only knew the KJV? What if the Book of Mormon used a translation from the future, such as the year 2200? Surely by then we'll have even better manuscripts and a more perfect understanding of ancient Greek and Hebrew, allowing a better rendition of the Bible into English? But how would that rendition have been received in 1830, or even today? The critics would likely rip it apart, saying it doesn't conform to what we know about the Bible, and that Joseph was just fabricating a text.

In the end, we must remember that the KJV was the *only* Bible in Joseph Smith's world in English, so if a Biblical text is going to be rendered into English, that is the only language *anyone* would use in 1830, errors and all. We would actually be more shocked if it was rendered in something else.

King James Version Italics

Another criticism is that the Book of Mormon uses words that were in italics in the King James Version. Related to the point above, the notion here is that the translation should somehow be separated from the KJV and reject all these words. Why? Because these words are the translators putting "their own words into the text to make the English more readable."

This is a gross misunderstanding of how any translation works. When translating from one language to another, there is no such thing as a one-to-one equivalency of words. The KJV translators choose to display certain words in italics that were not directly in the Hebrew or Greek but those words are needed to convey the sense of the passage in English. Modern translations do the exact same thing—but don't italicize the words. If you remove the English words that are not strictly in the original language, you end up with a translation that sounds stilted at best but is not even a valid representation of the meaning of the original.

As with the previous criticism, the italicized words are there because the Book of Mormon uses the KJV language. What other language would it use?

The Book of Mormon and the Joseph Smith Translation of the Bible

Criticism: "The Book of Mormon includes mistranslated biblical passages that were later changed in Joseph Smith's translation of the Bible. These Book of Mormon verses should match the inspired JST version instead of the incorrect KJV version [sic] that Joseph later fixed."

The critic does not understand the nature of the Joseph Smith Translation (JST). That three-year effort on Joseph Smith's part (from June 1830 to July 1833) was part revelation, part intellectual effort. He made thousands of changes to the Biblical text. Some were identical to changes in the Book of Mormon—in fact, it appears that the Prophet copied from an 1830 Book of Mormon when he was working in Isaiah chapters 2-12. But the main purpose of the JST was to teach Joseph Smith about the gospel, his calling, and important eternal truths that he didn't know or understand when he was working on the Book of Mormon. Knowing that, we would be shocked if the JST was identical to the Book of Mormon in every instance; that would mean that he learned nothing since 1829 and that the time spent working through the Bible was a waste of time. Instead, because of greater revelatory light and knowledge and personal growth and maturity, the translation of the Bible was different than Biblical passages quoted in the Book of Mormon. And if he had translated the Bible again in the 1840s, it would have been even more different. How could it be any other way for a young prophet learning so much?

The Book of Mormon and DNA

Criticism: "DNA analysis has concluded that Native American Indians do not originate from the Middle East or from Israelites but rather from Asia." The Church's essay on this topic deals with the issue well: <https://www.lds.org/topics/book-of-mormon-and-dna-studies?lang=eng>. The summary of the argument is this:

- DNA evidence does indeed reflect that among Native Americans tested, Asian DNA is carried by the majority.

- The Book of Mormon tells the story of a small group of outsiders that intermingles with the existing population already in the Americas when they arrive.
- It is impossible to know what the DNA of Lehi and his party looked like, therefore how can we say that it is not here?
- There are many valid genetic reasons (including the founder effect, population bottlenecks, and genetic drift) why we might not find any Lehi DNA with someone who could be a direct descendent, even if we knew what to look for (which we do not).
- DNA cannot be used to either prove or disprove anything about the Book of Mormon. This is the conclusion of every valid genetic scientist who has examined the evidence.

Related to this, the critics say that the Church changed a phrase in the introduction to the Book of Mormon. In 1981, it read that the Lamanites “are the principal ancestors of the American Indians.” In 2006 it was changed to, “are among the ancestors of the American Indians.” This they said was done in response to the DNA criticism. In reality, this introduction, written by someone on the scripture publication committee and which was never doctrinal nor a statement of an official Church position, was updated as this topic was better understood.

Book of Mormon Anachronisms

Criticism: “Horses, cattle, oxen, sheep, swine, goats, elephants, wheels, chariots, wheat, silk, steel, and iron did not exist in pre-Columbian America during Book of Mormon times. Why are these things mentioned in the Book of Mormon as being made available in the Americas between 2200 BC - 421 AD?”

An anachronism is something that is out of its own time or place, such as George Washington quoting Barak Obama. If the Book of Mormon truly contained 19th-century items portrayed as existing in the ancient world, that would indeed present a problem. However, the simplistic statement of the critics that these things simply “did not exist” in Book of Mormon times conveniently ignores significant evidence to the contrary. A complete response is available here: http://debunking-cesletter.com/?page_id=148. This will only touch on a couple of them as representative of the responses.

One LDS scholar has noted that there are two possible responses to these supposed anachronisms.³ 1) Ancient examples of the items in question have yet to be discovered by archaeology. 2) The words used did not have the same meaning in the ancient world as they do for us today. Let’s examine both.⁴

Ancient examples not yet discovered

Much of the New World is not friendly to human and cultural remains. Clothing, metal, wood, and other substances marking the presence of people quickly rot and disappear. Even bones and stone can easily be destroyed by time, weather, and insects. The New World is also poorly excavated, compared to other parts of the world, especially the Biblical world. Looters often get to sites before scientists. So just because something hasn’t been found yet doesn’t mean it won’t one day. In fact, by one estimate, 87% of the items mentioned in the Book of Mormon had never been seen in the New World in Joseph Smith’s day, while today that number is about 25%. That dramatic change alone shows great promise for the rest of the items. Patience is certainly called for, since as the famous phrase states, “The absence of evidence is not evidence of absence.”

This kind of patience has been required with Biblical archaeology for years. Though lions are mentioned often in the Bible, and in spite of many excavations, no evidence for lions in Israel was discovered until 1983. Likewise, scientists discounted references to camels, saying they did not exist in Egypt during Greek and Roman times—at least until bones were discovered dating to those times just a few decades ago. Even though the Huns were famous for their massive herds of horses, no remains of Hun horses were found until 1974. Many more examples could be cited. The point is that prior to any of these discoveries, critics said the records were wrong, based on a total lack of archaeological support. Today the evidence validates the records and silences the critics.

³ Ash, *Bamboozled*, 27-29.

⁴ See Ash, *Shaken Faith Syndrome*, 145-170.

Ancient examples not acknowledged

In some cases, the criticism of the Book of Mormon is just wrong, with the critics not showing willingness to recognize the data that goes contrary to the conclusion of “no evidence.”

Horses

Consider the case of the New World horse. For years, the common belief was that there were ancient, small horses in the Americas but that they died out long before Book of Mormon times and were only reintroduced by the Spaniards during their conquests. However, some scholars see evidence that small populations of horses survived the extinctions or were brought here about 2,000 BC by Asians arriving on boats. Remains have been discovered in at least three sites that indicate pre-Columbia horses in Mesoamerica. So, to say that horses “did not exist in pre-Columbian America during Book of Mormon times” does not accurately represent the data.

Chariots

Chariots are mentioned six times in the Book of Mormon (not counting one mention in an Isaiah quotation). And while it is true that no full-size chariot has even been found in ancient America, there are dozens of small figurine-type objects that portray small animals with wheels, dated to pre-Columbian times. One even shows a man riding on a platform with wheels. All this indicates that the people had the knowledge to build vehicles with axels and wheels, an important element of chariots in the traditional sense of the word today. Again, to say there is no evidence that such things were possible does not reflect such discoveries.

Ancient words mean different things

The second possibility to help understand these alleged anachronisms is that the words used may not have meant the same thing anciently as they do to us today. There are numerous examples in history of people coming to a new land and naming new creatures, plants, or things using a name they knew, even though the new items were not identical. One group called bison “wild cows,” while another group called cows “deer.” The Bible is full of words that can mean more than one thing, including *sus* which can be correctly translated as “horse,” “leaping,” “riding,” and “crane” (the bird), depending on context.

Translators, travelers, and others often have to use familiar words to represent the unfamiliar, something called “loanshifting.” Marco Polo, seeing a rhinoceros for the first time, called it a unicorn, because of the single horn on its nose, even though it was quite different than any mythical horse-like unicorn ever imagined. Greeks arriving in Egypt called a large animal there a *hippopotamus*, which means “river horse,” even though it clearly does not look just like a horse.

Horses

Take the New World horse again as an example. In the Quiché language in Guatemala, the word *keh* means both “deer” and “horse.” Pre-Columbian drawings show people riding deer, just as they still do in Siberia today. When the Spaniards brought European horses to the Aztecs, the natives called them “deer” because men rode them. So it is no stretch to suggest that when Lehi’s family arrived, they might have used their word for “horse” to describe these deer that the natives they encountered rode.

Another possibility is an animal called the Central American or Baird’s tapir, actually part of the horse and donkey family. These large and generally docile grazing creatures can be tamed and were often eaten. They were also used as beasts of burden but there is no evidence that they were ridden. When Spaniards first saw them, they called them donkeys, and some Maya called European horses “tapirs.” Indeed, in the Yucatec language, the word *tzimin* translates to either “tapir” or “horse.”

Looking carefully at all references to horses in the Book of Mormon, we notice three things: 1) They are never ridden; 2) They are never involved in warfare; and, 3) They are mentioned with other animals used for food. This completely breaks the stereotype we imagine for “horses” but works perfectly with tapirs.

Chariots

More likely than finding wheeled vehicles (as mentioned above), it seems probable that the word “chariot” is also a loanshifted word that means something else in the context of ancient American culture. It could be that Nephites used wheelless chariots, otherwise called a travois. These are known to have been used in these societies and to have been pulled

by dogs, deer, and tapirs. Another possibility is a palanquin, a chair/throne or box carried by men or animals. Both of these kinds of conveyances could be called “chariots,” especially considering that the Latin root meaning of the word is “to carry.”

Of course, critics reject all such equivalencies, insisting that “horse” always means our modern animal and “steel” always means an alloy mixed and tempered as we do it today, etc. Claiming “significant problems” in such apologist efforts, the critic bemoans that “horses [have] become tapirs.” In reality, the anachronisms have reasonable explanations, alternatives, and evidence, typically discovered and promoted by non-Latter-day Saint scientists, archaeologists, and historians, which critics simply choose to ignore.

Archaeology

Criticism: “There is absolutely no archaeological evidence to directly support the Book of Mormon or the Nephites and Lamanites, who were supposed to have numbered in the millions.”

While it is true that no stone monument has been found that says, “Nephi slept here,” to say that is no evidence is simply untrue. In the Old World (reflecting 1 Nephi 1-16), several locations have been identified that match Nephi’s record marvelously, especially the ancient location of NHM which is a perfect match for Nahom, the location where Ishmael was buried. In the New World, there are abundant correlations and evidences that align with Book of Mormon timelines, movements, cultural trends, technologies, and historical events and locations. John Sorenson has done the most thorough job documenting these in two books, *An Ancient American Setting for the Book of Mormon* and *Mormon’s Codex*. No critic can credibly address this topic without dealing with the mountain of evidence he has provided.

Critics will compare the abundant evidence supporting the text of the Bible to that supporting the Book of Mormon, but they overstate the case on both sides in that argument. There are many holes in Biblical archaeology, even though it has received strong attention and support for nearly two hundred years. Many Biblical cities and locations are unsubstantiated in the archaeological record and very few people of the Old Testament have any evidence of their existence. On the other hand, there are more correlations than they care to acknowledge with the Book of Mormon and New World archaeology, which is relatively immature in its findings and efforts.

Location of the Hill Cumorah

One of the specific arguments made is that there is no evidence of a massive final battle at the Hill Cumorah in New York. That is supposed to disprove the veracity of the story. The *CES Letter* spends a great amount of ink trying to show that early Church leaders taught that the hill in New York was indeed the very hill of the Nephite final battle and that there is no evidence for such a battle taking place, even though similar battle sites do indeed have such remains.

However, it is not the Church’s position that the hill in New York, in spite of our modern name, is the same hill called Cumorah in the Book of Mormon. Joseph Smith did not give the hill that name in his histories or accounts, and it’s not yet fully clear just how the association got started. But Joseph Smith, during the Nauvoo days, was at least open to the idea of the Nephite civilization being in Central America. A careful reading of the Book of Mormon accounts of Mormon, Moroni, and the plates also shows that the plates Mormon gave to his son came *out* of the hill and were given to Moroni for safekeeping, and that he protected and carried them for years, moving away from the Lamanites for his own safety. Wherever the final battle Hill Cumorah was, Moroni had decades—plenty of time—to take the plates elsewhere, ending up putting them in a hill that would be within walking distance of the future Prophet’s home.

The proposed Mesoamerican location for the hill is modern Cerro El Vigia in Veracruz, Mexico, part of the San Andrés Tuxtla mountain range on the southern edge of the Gulf of Mexico.

Thomas Stuart Ferguson

Criticism: “Latter-day Saint Thomas Stuart Ferguson was the founder of BYU’s archaeology division (New World Archaeological Foundation). NWAF was financed by the LDS Church. . . . Ferguson wrote in a February 20, 1976 letter about trying to dig up evidence for the Book of Mormon: ‘. . . you can’t set the Book of Mormon geography down anywhere – because it is fictional and will never meet the requirements of the dirt-archaeology.’”

This quote is used often in an effort to substantiate that there is no archaeological support for the Book of Mormon. Sadly, the information presented is somewhat untrue. Ferguson was an attorney, not an archaeologist, who was one of three founders of the NWAf and while it did receive some funding from the Church for a short time, it was not BYU's archaeology division. In the end, Ferguson left the Church, perhaps one of the first victims of 'shaken faith syndrome' as a result of the Book of Abraham papyri discoveries, the First Vision accounts, his association with Gerald and Sandra Tanner, and his lack of finding anything concrete about the Book of Mormon in the archaeological realm.

That said, one person's statement of his personal lack of faith does not impact the veracity of the Book of Mormon. A number of real archaeologists and scholars can be readily identified who know the same evidence as Ferguson and still strongly believe in the Book of Mormon.

Place Names

Criticism: "Many Book of Mormon names and places are strikingly similar to many local names and places of the region where Joseph Smith lived."

This one is stunningly deceptive. Critics provide two maps. The first is presented as a map of Book of Mormon geography, "constructed from internal comparisons in the Book of Mormon." The source of the map is not given but it actually has no relationship to any internal map generated by careful study of the Book of Mormon. Looking at the second map, it becomes clear that the first map was created simply to create the illusion of equivalency with the second map.

The second map shows a 200,000 square mile area roughly centered on western New York, Joseph Smith's boyhood home, that includes part of New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, and Canada. On it are eleven locations, mostly cities, that are supposed to correlate with Book of Mormon cities on the first map. Outside of the map, twenty location names (meaning, nine that aren't on the maps) are supplied that supposedly match up with Book of Mormon names.

The purpose of this is to demonstrate that Joseph Smith took names from his environment and used them in the Book of Mormon.

- Four are indeed the same—Biblical names Boaz, Jerusalem, Jordan, and Noah. There was no need for the Prophet to draw on his environment for names readily available in a Bible.
- Alma is also a match, however the comparison is completely bogus, since that particular city wasn't given the name Alma until 1854, ten years after Joseph Smith's death and twenty-four years after the Book of Mormon was published.
- Other names—Antioch, Lehigh, Sodom, and Shiloh—are readily found in the Bible and don't match particularly well with their supposed equivalent Book of Mormon names (Antioch becomes Ani-Anti, for example).
- Six of the locations (including Alma) would have been unknown to Joseph Smith, as they were not found on maps available in his day. Except for Jerusalem (which he could get from the Bible), these names have little similarity to the supposed equivalents in the Book of Mormon (Kiskiminetas and Kishkumen, for example).
- Other comparisons are simply a stretch: Mantua becomes Manti; Moraviantown to Moriaton; Ripple Lake to Ripliancum; Sherbrooke to Shurr.

The Book of Mormon has 337 proper names, of which 188 are unique to the book. Out of this list, there are only five that were at least remotely possible for Joseph Smith to have encountered and used in distorted forms. So even if these cities were his source, that only accounts for less than 3% of the unique names and 1.5% of all names in the book. And he frankly could have just made up these five names easily enough, along with the 183 others that didn't come from his environment. How is this even relevant to the truth of the Book of Mormon?

One author imagined it this way:

Hellam, Mantua, Lehigh, Rama, Oneida, Kishkimenetas—they sound like great names that I can tweak a bit and read off to Oliver Cowdery, passing them off as real Book of Mormon city and people names. I can't use the original untweaked names because then Oliver would know that I'm borrowing the names from our environment. Alma, Boaz,

*Jordan, Shiloh—I really like these names as well but can't, for the life of me, figure out how to tweak them so Oliver won't recognize that I just cribbed them from cities a few thousand miles away. Darn! If only I could figure out how to tweak these difficult names, or if I were only smart enough and creative enough to come up with my own city names then I wouldn't have to worry about Oliver spotting my con.*⁵

Researchers have attempted this same type of exercise—with the states of Virginia and Hawaii. In both cases, they were able to find even more and better matches than this comparison, simply showing that with almost 400 names to work with, it's pretty simple to find a handful of matches in almost any geography.

It should also be noted that the cited author of this comparison, Vernal Holley, is repudiated even by many Church critics, because of his inconsistencies and inaccuracies.

Cumorah

One fascinating example is Joseph Smith's alleged source for the names Cumorah and Moroni. A tiny island off the southeastern coast of Africa was called "Camora" (or more accurately "Comoro") in the early 1800s (today called Comoros). The capital city of the island was and still is Moroni or Meroni. Critics claim that Joseph Smith heard tales of Captain Kidd and his buried treasure on Camora/Comora, modified the name to Cumorah, used Moroni outright, and dropped them right in the book. But the burden of proof is on the accusers: where is any evidence that Joseph Smith knew these details? One disgruntled neighbor mentioned that Joseph was enamored with Captain Kidd stories in 1867, trying to make him out as a treasure seeker. He also claimed that Joseph was an amazing and voracious reader, consuming "dime novels" constantly (nevermind that such novels didn't exist until 1860). However, books available to Joseph Smith made no mention of either of these names. The likelihood of him sponging either of these names from such obscure sources is extremely low. And, as with the other place names above, even if he did, it is only two names of hundreds.

View of the Hebrews

Criticism: An 1823 book called *View of the Hebrews* by Ethan Smith (no relation to Joseph) was a source for Joseph Smith in creating the Book of Mormon. Critics have built what appears to be a detailed comparison of *View of the Hebrews* (VH below) and the Book of Mormon, showing many similarities. However, a close examination shows that these are quite superficial and highly summarized, essentially creating artificial similarities. It is quite easy to build a similar list that shows the *dissimilarities*, which is much longer.

For example, critics charge that both books speak of "the destruction of Jerusalem." True, but VH is about the Roman destruction in AD 70 while the Book of Mormon speaks of the Babylonian destruction in 586 BC. Two completely separate and quite different events. Others are equally as generic: Hebrews leaving the Old World, Religion part of their society, a long journey, or mention of a breastplate. In some cases, the critics make incorrect comparisons, such as claiming both books speak of America as an uninhabited land; in the case of the Book of Mormon, it makes no such claim and in fact has important evidence of outsiders coming in to the story.

If Joseph Smith was stealing from VH, then he left out some of the most exciting elements that could really have made the Book of Mormon more Jewish, including a new ark of the covenant, Passover observance, high priest robes, and ritual purification. The Book of Mormon is also about five times longer than VH, so even if Joseph Smith had been using it as the basis for his own story, he still had to come up with a lot more material.

And how did Joseph Smith get access to VH? Critics say from Oliver Cowdery whose family lived in the same town with Ethan Smith, the author. But there is no evidence that Oliver or Joseph had any awareness of this book until the Nauvoo period, when Joseph Smith published parts of it in the Church's newspaper, *The Times and Seasons*, in support of the Book of Mormon!

⁵ Ash, *Bamboozled*, 33.

Finally, critics like to point out that B. H. Roberts, a general authority Seventy about a hundred years ago, who studied *VH* and compared it to the Book of Mormon, calling out that someone could call out some similarities. However, the critics leave out the rest of Robert's words that his "faith is not only unshaken but unshakable in the Book of Mormon, and therefore we can look without fear upon all that can be said against it."⁶

The text of the *VH* if publicly available (see sources below). Read it and compare it to the Book of Mormon to see just how different these two books are. As with other points above, even if Joseph Smith had read *VH* (and there is no evidence he did) before working on the Book of Mormon (if he was the author, as the critics propose), the superficial similarities, the missing elements from *VH*, and the substantially longer Book of Mormon could not have been dependent on *VH* for much of anything.

The Late War and The First Book of Napoleon

Critics like to call out two additional books that they claim may have influenced Joseph Smith in writing the Book of Mormon. Both are written in King James Bible language. The first book, *The Late War Between the Unites States and Great Britain*, was published in 1819, depicting the war of 1812 in King James' style language. One critic called even the first chapter "stunning" because it sounds so much like the Book of Mormon, and lists a number of phrases and parallels to the Book of Mormon. But as with *View of the Hebrews*, the similarities are superficial and coincidental. The overlapping language are words that either come from the King James Bible or were commonly used in Joseph Smith's day, such as "stripling" or "curious workmanship." Scholars have identified other books and magazines of the period of time using these phrases as well.⁷ And as with *View of the Hebrews*, there is no evidence that Joseph Smith ever saw or read this book.

The First Book of Napoleon (*FBN*) was published in 1809, also using King James' language. A parallel comparison of the language of this book with the Book of Mormon is presented in two paragraphs that are nearly word-for-word. However, one quickly realizes that to achieve this great feat, the compiler included lots of ellipses, which means missing text—in this case, pages and pages of missing text. What looks like a paragraph is really grabbing words across the Book of Mormon introduction and the first three chapters, grabbing a word here and another there (not even in order). The "paragraph" from *FBN* comes from a full twenty-five pages in that book, also grabbing a word here and there in order to make the quotations sound similar. Such comparisons can easily be made with many books, creating phony parallels that demonstrate nothing. And as with the other books, there is no evidence that Joseph Smith ever saw this book.

Again, there are far more dissimilarities than similarities between these books and the Book of Mormon. In fact, setting aside the common language from the Bible, there is nothing of any substance that ties the books together. The attempt by the critics to somehow convince that Joseph Smith was influenced by this books completely fails for lack of any evidence, support, or demonstration of what that influence might have been.

Both books can be read in full at the links in the sources section below.

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⁶ See http://debunking-cesletter.com/?page_id=313.

⁷ See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eAr-JnmPWOM> for a video that demonstrates these issues well, along with those of *The First Book of Napoleon*.

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