

Problems with the

BOOK OF MORMON

Part 1

Beginnings

Joseph Smith Jr., the Founder and First Prophet of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, better known as the Mormon Church, made certain claims regarding the beginning of his Church which affects his first written work, the Book of Mormon.

These claims are as follows - and in this order.

- A revival in 1820.
- A vision (known as Joseph Smith's First Vision) which it is claimed, took place in the Spring of 1820.
- An angelic visitation on September 21, 1823.
- Followed by a four year period of waiting during which Joseph was to gain knowledge and intelligence.
- The gold plates obtained by Joseph on September 22, 1827.
- Translation began on April 7, 1829.
- First edition Book of Mormon published: March 1830

The Revival

The problems begin with the very first event, the revival. Joseph claimed there was a revival in his area in the year 1820, he spoke specifically about the Methodist, Baptist and Presbyterian faiths, many people, Joseph said, were joining those churches. He felt drawn toward the Methodists, but was unsure which, if any, was right. This led him to go into the woods and ask God which he should join. This is when his First Vision is said to have occurred.

"On the morning of a beautiful, clear day, early in Spring of 1820."

However, the records of all three Churches show there was no revival in that year. There was a revival later, it started in the Autumn of 1824 and there is abundant evidence to show that this was the revival which Joseph had in mind - not an earlier one!

Angelic Visitation

The next event which Joseph relates is a visit to his bedroom on the

evening of September 21, 1823. Having suffered years of “severe persecution” because of his claim to have had a vision, Joseph was visited by an angel called Moroni (early Mormon writings called this angel Nephi).

Moroni informed Joseph that God had a work for him to do; told him about the plates but also told him that he could not receive the plates yet; he must wait four years. Finally, on September 22, 1827, Joseph received the plates.

On April 7, 1829, Joseph began to translate them. The revival, which set the ball rolling, did not begin until the autumn of 1824 (that is an historical fact which can be proven). It continued well into 1825.

Joseph claimed his vision was both in the springtime, and during the revival, therefore it **must** have been Spring 1825.

Following that came his angelic visit; supposed to have been on September 21, 1823, after three years of “severe persecution”.

Let us be [very] generous and say the visit was on September 21st, 1825, - the same year as his first vision, (rather than September 21st, 1828, which it would be if we went by Joseph’s chronology).

From September 21st, 1825 Joseph had to wait four years. He claimed to have received the plates on September 22nd, so that must have been September 22nd, 1829, (going by our generous time-table: if we follow Joseph’s time scale it would now be September 22nd 1832).

Notice that even our generous time-table, which removes the intervening years between the vision and the visit, means that Joseph began translating the plates (on April 7, 1829,) BEFORE he received them!

By his time-table the translation had been on sale for over two years before he received the plates from which to translate!

It should be remembered that Joseph Smith penned **this** version (there are other versions) of his vision in 1838. Eighteen years after the supposed event.

I repeat, it can be proven that the revival Joseph Smith had in mind occurred from Autumn 1824 and continued into 1825. A brief account of some of the evidence can be read in the next article entitled:

Problems with the Book of Mormon
Beginnings
Revival Facts