

## **Sunday School Lesson #9: Parallel Doctrines**

Submitted by Michael Kelley 2006-07

**Lesson #9: Parallel Doctrines:** As the previous 8 lessons have shown, there are numerous parallel doctrines found between the Bible and Book of Mormon. This follows the Biblical principle as shown in these passages:

**Matthew 18:16** But if he will not hear *thee*, *then* take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.

**2 Corinthians 13:1** This *is* the third *time* I am coming to you. In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established.

If God indeed caused the Book of Mormon to be written by Nephi, Jacob, Mosiah, Alma and others, and translated by Joseph Smith as claimed, then it would stand to reason that the Book of Mormon would have many similar or parallel doctrines when compared to the Bible. The Book of Mormon itself claims this very purpose:

**1 Nephi 3:192** And the angel spake unto me, saying: These last records which thou hast seen among the Gentiles shall establish the truth of the first, which are of the twelve apostles of the Lamb, and shall make known the plain and precious things which have been taken away from them;

Many Evangelical Christians assume the Book of Mormon was fabricated for the intent of turning people away from the truth of the Bible. This couldn't be further from the truth. While some Restoration factions have adopted doctrines not taught in the Bible that many Christians oppose, the Evangelicals fail to notice these same doctrines are also utterly absent from the Book of Mormon as well, and is why the Church of Christ also rejects those unscriptural doctrines. The very intent of the Book of Mormon is to teach the very same Gospel truth as found in the Bible and to show to the world that there is more than just one witness that Jesus is the Christ. The very word "Restoration" means to restore that which was lost or corrupted back to the original condition. In the next set of lessons I wish to cover other parallel doctrines that show the same unchanging God working with different peoples. I describe these parallel doctrines in three ways:

**1. Direct Quotes:** This is where a Book of Mormon writer or speaker is directly quoting from the Bible. There are instances of Nephi quoting directly from Isaiah and of Jesus directly quoting words He gave to Malachi that He wanted the Nephites to also have.

**2. Indirect Quotes:** This is where a parallel doctrine is found in the Book of Mormon that is an almost exact quote from the Bible but has many differences. The past lessons on the differences between the Sermons on the Mount is a good example... Jesus is re-teaching the Sermon on the Mount but altered it due to different timeline and cultural differences, and is not a direct quote from the Bible.

**3. Parallel Situations:** This is where either the Biblical author or Book of Mormon author teaches the same doctrine, often word for word, without any knowledge that another has or will teach the same thing at another time and place. The lesson on Paul's weakness is a good example wherein Paul and Moroni had no knowledge of each other.

**Direct Quotes:** Biblical doctrines that are very important are often directly quoted in the Book of Mormon. Nephi and Jesus speak of the importance of the words of Isaiah:

**2 Nephi 8:2** And now I, Nephi, write more of the words of Isaiah; for my soul delighteth in his words.

**3 Nephi 9:47** Ye remember that I spake unto you, and said that when the words of Isaiah should be fulfilled, behold they are written, ye have them before you; therefore search them.

**3 Nephi 10:26-27** And now behold I say unto you, that ye ought to search these things. 27 Yea, a commandment I give unto you, that ye search these things diligently; for great are the words of Isaiah.

Nephi quotes many passages directly from Isaiah and for the most part are word for word identical. There are a few minor differences found in these and other passages:

**Isaiah 2:5-6, 9-10** O house of Jacob, come ye, and let us walk in the light of the LORD. 6 Therefore thou hast forsaken thy people the house of Jacob, because they be replenished from the east, and *are* soothsayers like the Philistines, and they please themselves in the children of strangers. 9 And the mean man boweth down, and the great man humbleth himself: therefore forgive them not. 10 Enter into the rock, and hide thee in the dust, for fear of the LORD, and for the glory of his majesty.

**2 Nephi 8:21-22, 25-26** O house of Jacob, come ye and let us walk in the light of the Lord; *yea, come, for ye have all gone astray, every one to his wicked ways.* 22 Therefore, *O Lord*, thou hast forsaken thy people, the house of Jacob, because they be replenished from the east, and *hearken unto* soothsayers like the Philistines, and they please themselves in the children of strangers. 25 And the mean man boweth *not* down, and the great man humbleth himself *not*: therefore, forgive him not. 26 *O ye wicked ones*, enter into the rock, and hide thee in the dust, for the fear of the Lord, and the glory of his majesty *shall smite thee*. (Note: 1990 Version v.25 And the mean man boweth down...)

As can be seen above the Book of Mormon contains some differences that actually make the passage more correct and easier to understand. I believe these differences must have occurred during the translation from Greek into English. As in any translation effort, errors are inevitable and are certain to happen, however due to the fact that the vast majority of these quotes as well as much of the Sermon on the Mount being word for word identical between the two books, this verifies to me not only the authenticity of the Book of Mormon, but the Bible as well. A review of the history of the King James Bible shows a most diligent effort and preparation by the translators in their desire for accuracy, and the Book of Mormon seems to validate God's hand in their efforts to a very large degree. Some Restoration factions seem to diminish the value of the Bible because of the "Plain and Precious" things that were taken out during the dark ages, however these comparisons seem to authenticate the Bible and reinforce its value. Some of the plain and precious things that were taken away may not always be Biblical passages being deleted, but rather the people's understanding being corrupted by the traditions of men. The following lessons will explore more of these parallel doctrines.