

## **Sunday School Lesson #12: Parallel Doctrines**

Submitted by Michael Kelley 2006-07

**Lesson #12: Parallel Situations:** The final lesson in this series will cover parallel situations. I find these the most interesting in that not only does God cause the same doctrines to be taught to different peoples... but also causes similar or identical situations to occur so that the same lesson can be taught. Those going through these situations have no idea that another individual, often centuries apart, are going through the very same experience. Some examples of these parallel situations are listed below with identical phrasing highlighted in ***Bold Italics***:

Paul and Nephi's struggle with personal sin:

**Romans 7:22-24** For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: 23 But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. 24 ***O wretched man that I am;*** who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

**2 Nephi 3:31** Nevertheless, notwithstanding the great goodness of the Lord, in shewing me his great and marvelous works, my heart exclaimeth, ***O wretched man that I am!*** yea, my heart sorroweth because of my flesh.

Paul's weakness in speech, Moroni's weakness in writing:

**2 Corinthians 12:9** And he said unto me, ***My grace is sufficient for*** thee: for my strength is made perfect in ***weakness***. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

**Ether 5:28** I give unto men ***weakness***, that they may be humble; and ***my grace is sufficient for*** all men that humble themselves before me; for if they humble themselves before me, and have faith in me, then I will make weak things become strong unto them.

There are a couple of cases that I am aware of where the devil works on people the same way between the Jews and the Nephites:

Harlots seducing God's servants:

**Revelation 2:20** Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman ***Jezebel***, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to ***seduce my servants*** to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols.

**Alma 19:5** And this is not all, my son. Thou didst do that which was grievous unto me; for thou didst forsake the ***ministry***, and did go over into the land of Siron, among the borders of the Lamanites, after the harlot ***Isabel***; yea, she did ***steal away the hearts*** of many; but this was no excuse for thee, my son.

Seducing women dancing for the head of the righteous:

**Matthew 14:6-8** But when Herod's birthday was kept, the daughter of Herodias ***danced*** before them, and ***pleased*** Herod. 7 Whereupon he promised with an oath to give her whatsoever she would ask. 8 And she, being before instructed of her mother, said, Give me here John Baptist's ***head*** in a charger.

**Ether 3:83-85** And now Omer was a friend to Akish, wherefore, when Jared had sent for Akish, the daughter of Jared *danced* before him, that she *pleased* him, insomuch that he desired her to wife. 84 And it came to pass that he said unto Jared, Give her unto me to wife. 85 And Jared said unto him, I will give her unto you, if ye will bring unto me the *head* of my father, the king.

There is one case where a parallel situation occurred between a Book of Mormon leader and a modern day leader, Joseph Smith, with the final outcome starkly different:

**Alma 17:43-48** O *remember, remember*, my son Helaman, *how strict are the commandments* of God. 44 And he saith, If ye will keep my commandments, ye shall prosper in the land. But if ye keep not his commandments, ye shall be cut off from his presence. 45 And now remember, my son, that God *has entrusted you with these things*, which are sacred, which he has kept sacred, and also which he will keep and preserve for a wise purpose in him, that he may shew forth his power unto future generations. 46 And now behold, I tell you by the spirit of prophecy, that *if ye transgress the commandments of God*, behold, these things which are sacred, shall be taken away from you by the power of God, and ye shall be delivered up unto Satan, that he may sift you as chaff before the wind; 47 But if ye keep the commandments of God, and do with these things which are sacred, according to that which the Lord doth command you (for you must appeal unto the Lord for all things whatsoever ye must do with them), behold, no power of earth or hell can take them from you, for God is powerful to the fulfilling of all his words. 48 For he will *fulfill all his promises* which he shall make unto you, for he has fulfilled his promises which he has made unto our fathers.

**Book of Commandments 2:2-3** *Remember, remember* that it is not the work of God that is frustrated, but the work of men; for although a man may have many revelations, and have power to do many mighty works, yet if he boasts in his own strength, and sets at naught the counsels of God, and follows after the dictates of his own will, and carnal desires, he must fall and incur the vengeance of a just God upon him. 3 Behold, *you have been entrusted with these things*, but *how strict were your commandments*; and *remember, also, the promises* which were made to you, if you did not transgress them; and behold, how oft *you have transgressed the commandments and the laws of God*, and have gone on in the persuasions of men; for behold, you should not have feared man more than God, although men set at naught the counsels of God, and despise his words, yet you should have been faithful and he would have extended his arm, and supported you against all the fiery darts of the adversary; and he would have been with you in every time of trouble.

Helaman was always faithful and was supported throughout his life, victorious in battles leading 2000 boy soldiers, and was allowed to retain the plates. Due to Joseph Smith's many disobediences the plates and interpreters were immediately removed from his possession after the translation was completed, and he and his followers were driven from their homes and towns as the chaff before the wind, ultimately leading to Joseph Smith's untimely death by an angry mob. The history of the Restoration could have been so much better had Joseph Smith been as faithful as Helaman was, rather than exalting himself into positions not authored by God and allowing false doctrines to corrupt the church.