

## **Sunday School Lesson #7: Differences in the Sermon on the Mount**

Submitted by Michael Kelley 2006-07

**Lesson #7: Gifts, Chiasmus and Other Differences:** There are several other differences between the Bible and Book of Mormon Sermons on the Mount that I would like to cover in this lesson with the differences highlighted in *Bold Italics*:

**Matthew 5:21** Ye have heard that it *was* said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: 22 But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother *without a cause* shall be in danger of *the* judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: *but* whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.

**3Nephi 5:69-70** Ye have heard that it *hath been* said by them of old time, *and it is also written before you*, that thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment *of God*. But I say unto you, that whosoever is angry with his brother, shall be in danger of *his* judgment. And whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council; *and* whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire;

One difference is that in the Bible the words “without a cause” are added. Vine’s Dictionary states that the most authentic manuscripts also omit “without a cause” and this correction is reflected in many of today’s more modern Bible versions such as the NIV, NASB, and ESV. I do not believe Jesus was saying we will never get angry with a brother over an injustice that he may do against us but rather we should not harbor a lasting hatred that can lead to murder. Jesus also teaches a similar principle in the Sermon on the Mount by commanding us to not harbor lusts in our heart that can lead to adultery... He not only addressed the crime but the root cause of the crime as well. The Book of Mormon also clarifies as to whose judgment we shall face... the judgement of God for murder, and the judgement of your brother if you harbor a grudge against him.

**Matthew 5:23** Therefore if *thou bring thy gift to the altar*, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; 24 *Leave there thy gift before the altar*, and *go thy way*; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then *come and offer thy gift*.

**3 Nephi 5:71-72** Therefore, if *ye shall come unto me, or shall desire to come unto me*, and rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, 72 Go thy way unto thy brother, and first be reconciled to thy brother, and then *come unto me with full purpose of heart, and I will receive you*.

Here the Book of Mormon explains what the gift is we should offer to God... and that is making amends to any we may have hurt and coming to God with full purpose of heart. It was common among the Jews to offer animal sacrifices and gifts to make propitiary offerings for their sins. While the Nephites continued to observe the outward ordinances of the Law of Moses until the coming of Christ, they also understood the deeper spiritual meanings of the Law of Christ. Some may misinterpret this passage by feeling unworthy to partake of the Sacrament because another severely hurt them and caused hurt feelings in their own heart. I believe the Sacrament is a commandment of God and helps us to bear our crosses and heal from those hurts when another sins against us and refuses to repent... it is the offender who stand in need of making reconciliation before they are worthy to partake of the Sacrament or approach God, not the innocent victim.

**Matthew 5:34** But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne: 35 Nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: *neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King.* 36 Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair *white or black.*

**3 Nephi 5:82** But *verily, verily,* I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven, for it is God's throne; nor by the earth, for it is his footstool; neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair *black or white;*

Here the difference is that the city of Jerusalem is not mentioned in the Book of Mormon, possibly because the Nephites would not have had personal experiences with the city of Jerusalem and the references would not mean as much to them. The other difference is the words black and white are transposed... possibly indicating what I would term as a “global chiasmus” between the Bible and Book of Mormon. Chiasmus is a Hebraic writing style wherein a series of points are made, then repeated in reverse order. The word Chiasm is derived from the Greek letter X which is pronounced as Chi, and describes how Chiastic writings cross over into reverse order or mirror image. There are over 200 Chiasmus found in both the Book of Mormon with the entire books of 1 Nephi, 2 Nephi, 3 Nephi, Mosiah and Ether written in Chiastic style. This Hebraic writing style was unknown to Joseph Smith and are evidences of Divine Inspiration that is found frequently in both the Bible and Book of Mormon.

<p><b><u>Examples of Chiasms:</u></b></p> <p><b>Matthew 19:30</b>  <b>A</b> But many that are <i>first</i> shall be  <b>B last</b>; and the  <b>B' last shall be</b>  <b>A' first.</b></p> <p><b>2Nephi 12:25-26</b>  <b>A</b> And <i>others</i> will  <b>B he</b> pacify, and lull them away into carnal  <b>C</b> security that they will say <i>All is well</i> in  <b>D Zion</b>; yea,  <b>D' Zion</b> prospereth,  <b>C' all is well</b>—and thus the  <b>B' devil</b> cheateth their souls, and leadeth  <b>A' them</b> away carefully down to hell.</p> <p><b>Isaiah 60:1-3:</b>  <b>A Arise</b>, Shine:  <b>B</b> For thy <i>light</i> is come,  <b>C</b> and the <i>glory</i> of the Lord  <b>D is risen</b> upon thee.  <b>E</b> for, behold, the <i>darkness...</i>  <b>E'</b> and gross <i>darkness</i> the people  <b>D'</b> but the Lord shall <i>arise</i> upon thee  <b>C'</b> and his <i>glory</i> shall be seen upon thee.  <b>B'</b> And the Gentiles shall come to thy <i>light</i>,  <b>A'</b> and kings to the brightness of thy <i>rising</i>.</p>	<p><b><u>Entire Book of Mosiah*:</u></b></p> <p><b>A</b> King Benjamin exhorts sons (1:1-13)  <b>B</b> Mosiah chosen to succeed father (1:15,16)  <b>C</b> Mosiah received records (1:23)  <b>D</b> Benjamin's speech, angel (1:36-2:50)  <b>E</b> People enter covenant (3:6)  <b>F</b> Priests consecrated (4:4)  <b>G</b> Ammon leaves Zarahemla (5:4-8)  <b>H</b> People in prison, Ammon (5:9)  <b>I</b> Twenty four gold plates (5:64)  <b>J</b> Record of Zeniff begins (6:1)  <b>K</b> Defense from Lamanites (6:14-57)  <b>L</b> Noah and his priests (7:1-15)  <b>M</b> Abinadi persecute, prison (7:69)  <b>N</b> Abinadi reads Old Law (7:70-99)  <b>N'</b> Abinadi prophecies (7:106-8:91)  <b>M'</b> Abinadi persecute, killed (9:1-27)  <b>L'</b> Noah and his priests (9:100-112)  <b>K'</b> Lamanites threaten (9:113-139)  <b>J'</b> Record of Zeniff ends (10:19)  <b>I'</b> Twenty four gold plates (9:169)  <b>H'</b> People in bondage (11:54-64)  <b>G'</b> Alma returns to Zarahemla (11:65)  <b>F'</b> Alma organizes church (11:97-104)  <b>E'</b> Unbelievers refuse (11:105-120)  <b>D'</b> Words of Alma, Angel (11:116-176)  <b>C'</b> Alma receives records (13:1-2)  <b>B'</b> Judges elected instead king (13:7-62)  <b>A'</b> Mosiah exhorts people (13:7-62)</p> <p><small>*Source: Recent Book of Mormon Developments</small></p>
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