



Type: Magazine Article

The Bible and the Book of Mormon—A Parallel

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Source: *The Young Woman's Journal*, Vol. 9, No. 11 (November 1898),
pp. 490–492

Published by: Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Association

Abstract: Shows parallels and commonalities between the Book of Mormon and the Bible. For example, both books were written by different men over a span of several centuries and both contain hymns or psalms.

Madge's cheeks glowed and her eyes sparkled with radiant, yet mischievous happiness.

"I might if I were given a chance, Sir Knight," she answered demurely.

Tom would not leave Madge that night until she had promised to have

her picture taken in her quaint costume.

"So we can show our children, long years from now," he pleaded, whereat Madge blushed furiously, "Just to let them know what a lovely old-fashioned girl I married."

THE BIBLE AND BOOK OF MORMON—A PARALLEL.

George Reynolds.

Not long ago I heard a gentleman compare the Bible with other sacred books of the peoples of the earth such as the Koran of Mohammed and the writings of Confucius. He claimed that all these other books were the work of one mind and belonged exclusively to one people, one age, and one country. On the other hand, the Bible was the result of the inspiration of many men, men of every class of society, living in widely separated ages, and not all of the same race. Thus the Bible was so much better fitted for universal humanity than the others. There was this further difference, that the songs and hymns contained in these other scriptures glorified man, they were sung in praise of their heroes and great ones, while the songs and psalms of the Old and New Testaments glorified God, the Divine One was their theme; and, so far as man was concerned, it laid bare, with an unsparing hand, the weaknesses, the shortcomings, and the follies of the best men earth has ever seen, its motto being God alone is perfect.

As I sat and listened I thought that every argument, every assertion thus used in support of the Bible, could with equal truth be advanced in favor of the Book of Mormon. In all these respects they were very much alike.

If the Bible was written by many men in varied walks of life (which we admit), so was the Book of Mormon. Its writers were kings, governors, judges, generals, prophets, priests, scribes and others. Many of these officers when not engaged in their official duties were tillers of the soil or by their daily toil earned their daily bread. Again, they lived in various ages, covering the period of the world's history from the building of the Tower of Babel to early in the fifth century of the Christian era. Its first writer ante-dated Moses by several centuries, its latest closed his record long after John had written the Book of Revelation. Though to be accurately just, it has to be stated that we have only an abridgement of the writings of the earlier writers, those of the Jaredite race, but we do have

actual extracts from the prophecies of Joseph, the son of Jacob, and also of other very ancient worthies, such as Zenos and Zenoch, the dates of whose existence on the earth is still unknown to us. All these men wrote, as did the writers of the Bible, the history of their day and times according to their understanding, and as the Spirit of the Lord directed their thoughts. All were not equally blessed in this direction, for all did not live equally near to God.

As in the Bible so in the Book of Mormon we not only have the writings of the men whose names the various books bear, for the Book of Mormon, like the Bible, is a collection of books, in that respect the parallel is exact and complete, but we have also copies of the sayings and writings of other worthies. These are given in their original form, some only in part, others complete. Thus we have embodied in the Book of Mosiah the Record of Zeniff, which contains not only this original record, but that of a later writer who gives an account of the doings of the Nephites in the land of Lehi-Nephi in the days of Zeniff's son and grandson, Noah and Limhi. It is not improbable from the tenor of the latter portion of this record, that it was written or revised by Alma, the elder.

Then again, in the Book of Mormon the Hymns or Psalms are all in praise of God. I recollect no passage in which man is glorified. Take the outpouring of Ammon's grateful heart after his return, with his brethren, from their mission to

the Lamanites as one example; take Alma's recital of his experience, and Mormon's occasional outbursts of praise and exultation. The glory is always the Lords, and the honor is His, and the praise.

Then again, there is no more "whitewashing" of men's weaknesses, good men though they were, in the Book of Mormon than in the Bible. The murmuring of Lehi in the wilderness is not palliated, the harlotry of Corianton is not excused. The plain, bald facts are stated in as uncompromising a manner as lapses from correct conduct are described in the Bible. It is the truth, and the truth unvarnished that appears in both books.

Then in both cases, different from other sacred writings, neither the Bible nor the Book of Mormon presents itself to us as a treatise on theology. Each is a history of the revelation of God's will to man, not to the same persons, but a revelation of God's law given to divers persons for their benefit, yet not for theirs alone, but for all whom the word may reach. The statement of this revelation is so interwoven with the results to mankind of their reception or rejection of the message that it awakens human sympathies as the story runs. This would not be the case were the Bible and Book of Mormon confined to sermons, laws, parables, and psalms from which the human was almost entirely removed. I have often thought what a dreadful time the little Arab boys must have in learning the Koran. There is nothing in it that appeals to child nature. With us,

no wise Sunday school teacher makes his class read year by year from the Doctrine and Covenants and from nothing else. That is the hardest of all our sacred books for youthful minds to find pleasure in. There are no stories in it like those of Joseph and David, or of Nephi and the sons of Helaman, or like that of the wonderful ministry of Christ among the Nephites. It is this feature, that the men and women of the Bible and of the Book of Mormon were so much like our-

selves, that gives added strength to God's word contained therein. We learn lessons through their experience often without sensing it, lessons, which, to many would not be so easily learned if they simply came to us in the shape of "Thus saith the Lord, thou shalt not covet," or whatever the law might be. The Bible and Book of Mormon reach men's hearts in the same way, they teach, both precept and example, by direct instruction and indirect narrative.

THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

To most of the young among this people, the beliefs and teachings of the Christian sects in regard to the solemn ordinance of the Lord's Supper are unknown.

Indeed, so accustomed have our children become to the Sabbath sacrament that they think little about it, and pay it no more reverence than they do the singing and speaking.

Visitors at our services are shocked at the carelessness manifested by the Latter-day Saints in the observance of this ceremony.

Wherever the blame for this may lie, whether with priests or people, parents or children, it is not the province of this article to enquire.

Rather shall we pursue a brief inquiry as to the teachings of the Bible and the accepted beliefs of Catholics and Protestants in regard to the Lord's Supper.

Matthew, Mark and Luke all give substantially the same account of the Lord's Supper; the guest chamber was prepared at the Pass-over season, Christ and His disciples entered and sat at table. Then, Jesus blessed and brake the bread, and passing it to His disciples, said, "Take, eat; this is my body." Then He took the cup, gave thanks (blessed it) and passed it saying, "Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." This is the account given by Matthew and Mark. Luke adds that after breaking the bread and blessing it, Jesus said: "This is my body which is given for you; this do in remembrance of me."

Paul in giving an account of the same occurrence says, "Jesus, the same night in which He was betrayed, took bread; and when He