

# Scripturally-Based Historical & Social Cyclical Tendencies

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## IN AD 2101 WAR WAS BEGINNING



Figure 1 - War as an effect of the human cyclical nature

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In the beginning, there was Agency. Then Man was placed on the earth. Next, Woman. And then came there more men and women. But there was still and would always be Agency.

We read about this agency in the standard works. The outcomes of agency are very polarized, starkly equating to only two choices we can make over the duration of our lifetime. Either we can choose to follow the Lord or we can choose the only other option, opposition. This duality of choice crops up in other areas as well, which can be regarded as polarized subsets of this overall polarized choice.

And now, as I said unto you, that because ye were compelled to be humble ye were blessed, do ye not suppose that they are more blessed who truly humble themselves because of the word? (Alma 32:14).

When we oppose the Lord, the message becomes blatantly obvious: We can be humbled, or we can be compelled to be humble - and it seems the latter case happens with greater frequency. When we are humble and submit to the Lord, we are blessed. Providence's blessings are manifest in prosperity, protection, peace, joy, and even worldly success. However, we cannot reap bounteous blessings when we oppose the Lord.

There is a law, irrevocably decreed in heaven before the foundations of this world, upon which all blessings are predicated—And when we obtain any blessing from God, it is by obedience to that law upon which it is predicated (D&C 130:20-21).

We read of many instances in the LDS standard works where the Lord's covenant people learned the harsh lesson that is compelled humility. When the Lord's saints wax haughty, stiff-necked, prideful, or just plain forgetful, they become iniquitous, wicked, ripe for destruction, and oppose the Lord. The Lord then tries to save them through the

only method left – tough love. This love is manifest in famine, pestilence, wars, rumors of wars, bondage, and above all, degradation of the arrogant human spirit. This compelled humility has been manifest in cyclical patterns which have impacted and continue to impact mankind both historically and socially. Thus, a parallel can easily be drawn from the bygone cyclical patterns in the standard works to the events of our day.

An obvious cyclical tendency arises in the Book of Judges – aptly named the Cycle of Apostasy. The people were in bondage. They were compelled to be humble.

They repented and cried unto the Lord for deliverance. The Lord raised up twelve judges – e.g. Barak and Gideon – to deliver the covenant people. The people once again knew freedom.

They were blessed and prospered until

they became great in their own eyes, forgot the Lord, opposed Him, and apostatized.

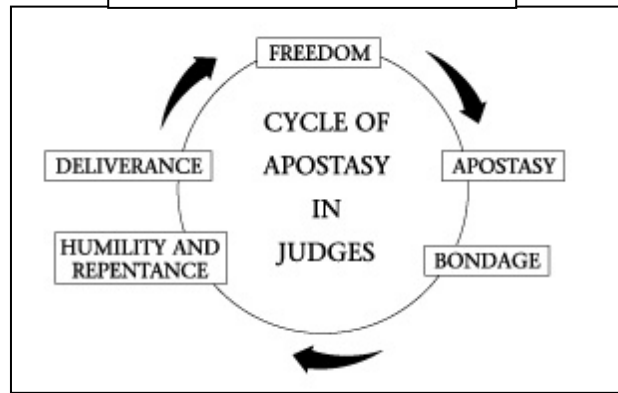
This reoccurring theme is shown in Fig. 2. The human tendency to cycle from humility to pride and back again is seen in the Book of Mormon as well.

Gordon B. Hinkley said about the Book of Mormon:

“No other written testament so clearly illustrates the fact that when men and nations walk in the fear of God and in obedience to his commandments, they prosper and grow, but when they disregard him and his word, there comes a decay that, unless arrested by righteousness, leads to impotence and death” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1979, 10; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1979, 8).

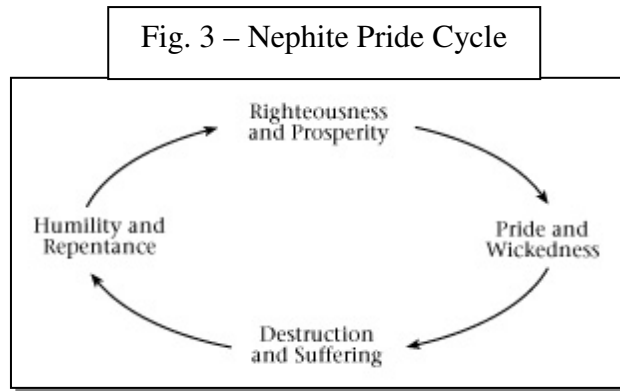
This statement should come as a great warning to us because we – as Americans – populate the same land as the Nephites and Lamanites. This choice land comes with a responsibility and a price, a price we witness firsthand in the Pride Cycle found in the

Fig. 2 – Cycle of Apostasy



Book of Mormon. This cycle is much like the Cycle of Apostasy; compare Fig. 2 with Fig. 3. The Nephites experience righteousness and prosperity. Some become more rich than others, and the inequality of wealth distribution leads certain factions to believe that they are superior to those with less.

Corruption, pride, and wickedness inevitably ensue. Then comes the “compelling.” Because the pride flowed from the inequality, the Lord allows the Nephites to be overrun by



other nations, and their accumulated wealth to be dispersed. They fight wars, are killed or put into bondage, and lose all that would have made them proud. They yearn for freedom. They are humbled, remember the Lord, and repent. The people become righteous and the Lord is then able to bless them with freedom and prosperity.

Some may say that the chronological events of our day parallel the events from the Book of Mormon, and some go as far as to chart us somewhere around the war chapters of Alma or the beginning of Helaman. Regardless, our own nation has undergone similar human cycles. Much of the following is conjecture, but from a scripturally-based point of view, these points are valid to consider.

The southern states of the United States of America had accumulated wealth on the backs of others, namely slaves. What at first they did view as morally wrong had become a way of life, and what had easily been dismissed as a necessary evil was now becoming an accepted practice. People had begun calling wrong right, and were attempting to change the fundamental truth *All men are created equal in the sight of God.*

Not only that, they had begun persecuting one of the righteous factions in their midst, i.e. those of the LDS faith. We see that a people becomes ripe for destruction when they expel the more righteous from their cities. This point is illustrated in Nephi when the people of Ammonihah expel the Christian believers (Alma 32). Ammonihah is then visited with horrific destruction. For the Southerners, that price of horrific destruction was paid during the Civil War. After the war, the Southern economy was in shambles. The people lost their accumulated wealth and were brought low, compelled to be humble.

Another cycle we see in American history is the crime and licentiousness of the early 1920s. Surprisingly enough, there was a problem with nudity in movies, and sexual liberation was becoming more and more prevalent. We also see forms of white supremacy and anti-Semitism. Is it any surprise that the rollicking '20s were followed by Black Tuesday and the Great Depression of the '30s? The economy suffered for a decade. The people of America were reduced to a state of extreme poverty.

Our nation has experienced a compelled humility in other ways. When we oppose the Lord, we lose his protection. In 1993, there had been a previous attack on the World Trade towers, but the outcome was considerably less devastating than the tragedy of 2001. Perhaps the Lord extended His protection because we were, as a whole, more righteous in 1993.

From all this, we should understand that bad things may still happen to good people, but extreme wickedness calls for extreme measures. If we will not listen to the silent nudgings of the Holy Spirit, then perhaps the only way we can be brought to a remembrance is through a devastating circumstance. Especially as inhabitants of the American continent, if we reject the Lord and progress to a state of “past feeling,” there is

nothing that can be done to humble us and we will be swept off the American continent like the Nephites of old. Let us humble ourselves to escape the effects of divine humiliation.

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