

Other alleged parallels are short summaries of something that is told elsewhere in detail. Some of these might be compared to a modern "newspaper lead." It is customary in our newspapers to give a brief summary of an entire story in the first sentence or two. Then the account again begins at the beginning and describes the events in detail. Thus an introductory summary, or sometimes a concluding summary, is occasionally found in Hebrew literature.

Aside from such alleged brief parallels, longer types are found which might be designated as complete parallels and interwoven parallels. We shall look first at the alleged complete parallels.

It is stated in many books that the Bible begins with two distinct and contradictory accounts of creation. It is said that there are two parallel accounts of the genealogy from Adam to the time of the flood. It is said that there are two parallel accounts of Abraham calling his wife his sister and as a result getting into difficulty from which he has to be rescued by divine intervention. Actually, there are not nearly so many parallels of this type as the general statements made in critical books would lead one to suppose.

Most of the parallels of this type consist of instances where, according to the critics, two contradictory accounts of the same thing had become sufficiently confused that the redactor thought them to be different events and therefore included both accounts. The critics say that it is inconceivable that two different events that are so similar could have occurred. In many of these instances our answer is to say that, given similar characters and similar situations, similar events not only may but often do occur. Even aside from any such natural cause, coincidences are far more common in ordinary life than most people realize.