

OLD TESTAMENT GOSPEL DOCTRINE CLASS

Green Mountain 1st Ward, Lakewood, Colorado

10 January 2010

Page 1

Lesson 2: "Thou Wast Chosen Before Thou Wast Born", Abraham 3; Moses 4:1-4

Introduction

...the Lord had shown unto me, intelligences that were organized before the world was ...among all these were many of the noble and great ones

FOREORDINATION

The scriptures become more meaningful to us when we apply their teachings in our lives. To do this, often we must put ourselves in the place of ancient prophets and their followers. However, in **Abraham 3:22-28**

we do not have to put ourselves in someone else's place because these verses are about important events in which we participated. These events took place during our premortal life. Foreordination is God's

premortals ordination of his spirit children to fulfill certain missions during their mortal lives. This lesson is about the premortal life, when many spirits were foreordained to do important things for Heavenly Father.

Abraham learns that in the premortal life many spirits were foreordained to their mortal missions.

- **Abraham 3:11-12, 22-23 and D&C 138:53-57**

In the vision recorded in **Abraham 3**, the Lord showed Abraham the Council in Heaven that was held before the earth was created. Latter-day prophets have indicated that the Council in Heaven was a series of meetings rather

than a single meeting. All of us, as spirit children, or "intelligences", were in attendance as Heavenly Father presided over the meeting. Some were designated as being "*noble and great*

ones". Abraham was among those so designated. In various places at various times, prophets have explained that the "*noble and great ones*" included all of the prophets and other Church leaders while some

Lesson Highlights

- **Abraham learns that in the premortal life many spirits were foreordained to their mortal missions.**
- **Jesus Christ was chosen in the Council in Heaven to be our Savior; we chose to follow him. Lucifer (Satan) and the spirits who followed him were cast out of heaven.**

A study of this lesson will help us understand the doctrine of foreordination and our own responsibility to help build up the kingdom of God and bring souls to Christ.

Next Week

#3 The Creation (Moses 1:27-42; 2-3)

Jesus Christ is fulfilling his role as our foreordained Savior. We must decide to follow him if we are to fulfill our foreordained missions on this earth at this crucial time preceding His Second Coming.

"Even before they were born, they, with many others, received their first lessons in the world of spirits and were prepared to come forth in the due time of the Lord to labor in his vineyard for the salvation of the souls of men." (D&C 138:56)

Gospel Doctrine Notebook

Record your thoughts on the teachings discussed in this lesson.

In addition to foreordaining the prophets to their callings, God foreordained many "other choice spirits" to help build up his kingdom in different ways. What might you have been foreordained to do?

How does it help you to know that you chose to follow Jesus Christ in the Council in Heaven? How will you apply this knowledge in the future?

explanations have included all Melchizedek priesthood holders as part of this group. In 1918, President Joseph F. Smith's vision of the spirit world included a vision of some of these "noble and great ones" including his father, Hyrum Smith, the Prophet Joseph Smith, Brigham Young, John Taylor, and Wilford Woodruff.

Abraham 3:23. Abraham was foreordained before the world was formed, he was "chosen before [he] was born".

As previously mentioned, foreordination is God's pre-mortal ordination of his spirit children to fulfill certain missions during their mortal lives. However, foreordination did not guarantee that Abraham, Joseph Smith, and

others would become prophets. Even though a person is foreordained to a calling, that calling is dependent on the person's worthiness and willingness to accept it.

D&C 138:56. In addition to foreordaining the prophets to their callings, God foreordained many "other choice spirits" to help build up his kingdom in different ways.

President Ezra Taft Benson taught: "**God has held you in reserve to make your appearance in the final days before the second coming of the Lord. Some individuals will fall away; but the kingdom of God will remain intact to welcome the return of its head—even Jesus Christ. While our generation will be comparable in wickedness to the days of Noah, when the Lord**

cleansed the earth by flood, there is a major difference this time. It is that God has saved for the final inning some of His strongest children, who will help bear off the kingdom triumphantly. ...

"... Make no mistake about it—you are a marked generation. There has never been more expected of the faithful in such a short period of time than there is of us" (The Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson [1988], 104–5).

We can help ensure that we are fulfilling our foreordained callings by living the gospel, studying our patriarchal blessings, and seeking personal revelation. To fulfill these callings, we must be willing and worthy. (See also D&C 58:27–28.)

Jesus Christ was chosen in the Council in Heaven to be our Savior; we chose to follow him. Lucifer (Satan) and the spirits who followed him were cast out of heaven.

• Abraham 3:24–28 and Moses 4:1–4

Abraham 3:27, Moses 4:1–2. During the Council in Heaven, two spirits offered to assume the responsibilities of being the Savior for the Father's spirit children. Their offers differed significantly. Jesus wanted to follow Heavenly Father's plan and give him the glory. Lucifer wanted to follow his own plan and take the glory for himself.

The choice of the Father is recorded in **Moses 4:2–3**. Father chose Jesus 1) because of his obedience, devotion, and the selflessness of his motives, and 2) because Satan rebelled, disobeyed, sought to destroy the principle of free agency, and selfishly desired power.

Because we are now in mortality and possess bodies, it is obvious that we chose to follow Christ and the Father's plan that he presented in the Council in Heaven.

Abraham 3:26 refers to the terms *first estate* and *second estate*. *First estate* refers to the premortal life, and *second estate* refers to our mortal life. We kept our first estate by choosing to follow Jesus Christ instead of Lucifer. Each of us received the opportunity to be born on earth because we kept our first estate.

If we are faithful and obedient in this second estate, we "shall have glory added upon [our] heads for ever and ever." We keep this second estate by following the commandments, developing a Christlike personality, and enduring to the end.

Moses 4:3, Abraham 3:28, Revelation 12:7–9, D&C 29:36–37. Each of these verses reveals the fate of Satan and his willing followers. As a result of their choices, they were cast out of heaven and were prevented from possessing mortal bod-

ies of their own. Their eternal progression was stopped.

Moses 4:4 tells us what the spirits who followed Satan are doing today. They try to deceive and tempt men and make them captive to evil. Some of us in this estate accept their temptations and give up our freedom.

Abraham 3:24–25 promises that we will be tested in our willingness to follow the commandments. We must prove our faithfulness through our attitudes and actions. Notice that the scripture indicates that it will be seen "if they will do *all things whatsoever the Lord their God shall command them.*"