

lr-ot-01
Introductory Lesson and/or Old Testament Lesson #1
“This Is My Work and My Glory”
(Moses 1)
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(Before beginning the actual study of the Bible, particularly the Old Testament, it would be good to take time to reconfirm testimonies of these works as a whole. Thus, I have included some additional material here, at the beginning, which, if used for a class, could be used for an entire introductory session. (In Sunday School, there are always more Sundays than there are lessons.) Otherwise, I hope this background material will serve in some way as inspiration for teachers or students, as they begin their study of the Old Testament and the Bible.)

In the beginning of a study of the Bible and the Old Testament, one of the most important things to know is that these works truly are the Word of God. [Even if there are some mistranslations].

I. The amazing overall unity of the Bible confirms it to be the Word of God.

- A. An English Professor at the University of Toronto shows the Bible is set up in a giant U form, giving it an overall unity.* For its beginning and end contain the very same elements: That is, it begins in “Genesis” with how a Bridegroom and his Bride are brought together; how they lose their special paradise with its marvelous features. And it ends in “Revelation” with how a greater Bridegroom redeems them both --- human bridegroom and human bride symbolically becoming as the Lord’s Bride; and how in the end, that Ultimate Bridegroom and His Ultimate Bride inherit a Far Greater Paradise, with the same special features as that once lost --- all greatly magnified.
- B. Frye also pointed out that not only do the beginning and end contain these same themes, but these themes pervade the whole of the work. This testifies that the Bible was all written under the influence of the Spirit, even though its beginning, its internal contents, and its final pages were all written centuries apart.
- C. The real truth goes beyond Frye’s insights. For the Bible is not structured as a U, but as a giant Chiasm --- in a great X form. Not only do the end and the beginning fit into the same pattern, but its central portion, the advent of Christ, serves literally as a CROSS, where the destiny of all mankind is reversed, and similar events of the first centuries are repeated in the later centuries. (A repetition of similar elements after a great CROSS is the pattern which forms all chiasmus).

[I have tried to work out a detailed version of how this X form can be seen. I know it is flawed, however, and look forward to when Jesus comes and manifests its true particulars. In the meantime, you will find the best that I can do on www.lenethread.com, “Christ’s Wondrous Works”. Click on “Proof the Bible Is not Just Myth”].

In the meantime, I am including a much simpler outline below:

(Note: The first half of the chiasm is found in the Old Testament, mostly in Genesis. The second half of the chiasm repeats Bridegroom imagery which is fulfilled by Christ. The end of the Chiasm is mostly in John’s

“Revelation,” which places **the bulk of Christ’s fulfillment at His Return. Therefore, one of the reasons it is difficult to see the chiasmic form in clarity is because much of it still lies in the future!**

We see below how the same elements, given on the left in *Genesis*, are paralleled on the right in *Revelation*. Remember, Adam served as a figure for Christ in some ways, particularly as Bridegroom. (Romans 5:14). The turning point, or X, or reversal of destiny, occurs at the Advent of Christ, because of His Atonement. I suggest the reader go down the left side, then up the right side, then compare sides.

<i>Genesis</i>	<i>Revelation</i>
A. A Bounteous Paradise (Eden) (Genesis 2:8-17)	A’ A Far Greater Paradise (Revelation 21-22)
B. Tree of life; Fountain of waters (Gen. 2:9-10)	B’ More Fruits from Tree; Greater Fountains (Rev. 22:1-2)
C. Bridegroom reigns (Gen. 2:15)	C’ Bridegroom to reign (Rev. 19:11-16)
D. Bride comes from Bridegroom’s side to be One (Gen. 2:21-24)	D’ Bridegroom brings Bride to His side/One (Rev. 19:7; 21:2; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17)
E. Bride takes Bridegroom’s name (Gen. 2:23)	E’ Bride to take Bridegroom’s name (Rev. 22:4)
F. Bride eats forbidden fruit (wine from grape?) ** (Gen. 3:1-6)	F’ Bride drinks cup of consummation ** (Mark 14:25; Rev. 19:9)
G. Bride to be cast out of God’s presence (Gen. 3:6,23)	G’ Bride to re-enter God’s presence (Rev. 21:2-3)
H. Bridegroom takes on Bride’s guilt (Gen 3:6, 17)	H’ Bridegroom to bear Bride’s stains (Rev. 19:13, 15)
I. Bridegroom (Jehovah) provides covering garments (Gen 3:21)	I’ Bridegroom to provide glorious garments (Rev. 19:8)
J. Bridegroom and Bride cast out (Gen. 3:23-4)	J’ Serpent to be cast out (Rev. 20:2-3)
K. Bridegroom covenants Home & Seed*** (Gen. 13:14-16)	K’ Bridegroom prepares Home *** (John 14:2; Rev. 3:21)
L. Israel receives covenants (Gen. 15)	L’ Israel will again receive covenants (Romans 11:26-36)
M. Bride (Israel) is unfaithful (Ezekiel 16:8, 38)	M’ Bride (Gentiles) will be unfaithful (Romans 11:21-25)
Q. Bridegroom promises covenant with Gentiles (Shown in Book of Ruth)	Q’ Bridegroom covenants with Gentiles (Acts 10:34, 47)

X The Atonement

**Christ comes, as Bridegroom, and fulfills all Bridegroom symbolism.
Bridegroom offers covenant to Israel; Bridegroom purchases Bride with sacrificial blood of
His at-one-ment.**

The Fate of Mankind is reversed.

II. The world in general, most not believing the Old Testament material came from the Lord, are in confusion as to where it did come from.

I once took a class on the Old Testament at a State University. I was excited that the Professor was a famous visiting scholar because I had read some of his translations of the Dead Sea Scriptures. However, I was immediately disappointed, because he promoted his belief that the Old Testament was a collection of myths which had originated from other cultures, not from God, and not even from the Jews.

One day he was not in class at its beginning. Concerned, one of the other professors came in and took over the class. He promoted the more generally accepted theory that the Old Testament was a collection of oral stories which had come from more than one unknown Jewish source. One is called “E” because that tradition called God “Elohim.” Another is called “J”, because that tradition called God “Jehovah.” A third was called “P” because there was so much law in the some parts of the Old Testament they surely must have been written by people associated with the priestly class.

Soon the original professor came in --- just late. In a huff, he resumed his teaching, telling us that the Old Testament was just a collection of legends borrowed from other cultures, and dismissed the idea that there were any sources called E, J and P.

This illustrates the disarray in current worldly theories about the Bible. And of course, Latter-day Saints should know that “Elohim” is the name of God the Father, and “Jehovah” the name of the pre-mortal Christ. So finding both names in the same record is no evidence at all of more than once source.

Yet, I have been disturbed to find that many Latter-day Saints seem to have accepted these worldly, though conflicting, views.

III. The Bible itself, the Book of Mormon, The Pearl of Great Price and The Doctrine and Covenants, all testify the Old Testament originally did come from God and from His prophets.

- The Bible itself and tradition gives authorship to prophets of God, written through the ages. (See headings of the various books, as well as the fact that Jesus the Christ refers to the words and works of various prophets, such as Moses, Abraham, Job, etc., thus verifying their authenticity).
- The Pearl of Great Price verifies truthfulness of the Bible in Moses 2:1; Moses 6:5, 8; Abraham 1:31 by confirming God commanded His prophets to write of their days from the beginning.
- The Book of Mormon (1 Nephi Ch. 3: 20), testifies of the Bible’s source. It also confirms Jesus’ efforts to make sure full records are kept (3 Nephi 23:7-14.)
- See Doctrine and Covenants 29, 84, 107, which verify and clarify the Bible records.
- Modern revelation confirms that Moses was the author of Genesis (*BD*, p. 679).

These testimonies affirm that records were written by many ancient prophets from the beginning and later combined, as was done with the Book of Mormon.

For other supporting information of the verity of the Old Testament, as well as its value to us, see “How the Bible Came to Be,” particularly “A Testament is Established,” January 1982 *Ensign*.

Nevertheless, the Old Testament, while marvelous scripture, is not perfect because many plain and precious truths were lost. Many mistranslations and losses are now verified by scholars.

IV. The Old Testament is an essential foundation to the understanding of all other scriptures.

This was demonstrated by an experience of Dr. George A. Horton, Jr. at Brigham Young University. He was asked to interview some students from mainland China who were having problems in a requisite Book of Mormon class. They were very bright students who knew the English language well; some already had advanced degrees.

When asked why they struggled, one replied, “We do not understand what the professor is talking about.’

[Professor Horton] said, ‘Could you give me an example?’[the student] replied,... ‘Who is Adam? What is the Fall? Who is Noah? What is the Flood? Who is Abraham? What is a covenant? Who is Jehovah? What is the House of Israel? What are Gentiles? What is the Law of Moses?’ (George A. Horton, Jr., “The Old Testament: An Indispensable Foundation,” *The Old Testament and the Latter-day Saints*, p. 17).

The Book of Mormon is a powerful book. But these students were struggling with it because they did not have the foundational background ordinarily received through a knowledge of the Old Testament. This foundation would have been an immense help in their understanding.

All the scriptures which the Lord has provided for us are essential. The Old Testament is a strong foundation, from which the Lord began His witnesses to all mankind. Studying it with sincere intent will truly bless the lives of all those who do so.

V. We are blessed in the latter-days to have received additional scriptures, contained in the Pearl of Great Price, which accompanies the Old Testament, and restores vital knowledge about our origins. These can be found beginning in Moses 1.

There are at least three very important truths restored in these scriptures.

1. That Moses, and all of us, truly are children of God (Read Moses 1:1-11).
2. That Satan is real, but his influence can be overcome (Read Moses 1:12-23).

3. That God's purposes in creating man and the earth are "to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man" (Read Moses 1:39).

(It is important to recognize how it blesses us to know we truly are children of God, and to know the true purpose of God's creation). There are many worldly doctrines of why the earth and man were created. **Actually among the most unbelievable is that it all came about by chance.** [Yet, this is the one most prevalently taught].

I once took a non-member friend to the Washington D.C. Temple Open House. Our visit there, of course, led to a discussion of various beliefs. She said that her church taught that the reason God had created man was because He liked stories.

I could not help but think what a vast difference there was in God's character and purposes expressed here. How much more wonderful it was to know that God's purposes were not selfish, but of so much higher purpose: "to bring to pass the immortality and Eternal Life of man."

*Northrup Frye, *The Great Code*, (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1982).

** Some Jewish writings say the forbidden fruit was the grape. (See Hugh Nibley, *Abraham in Egypt* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1981)156. The blood of the Savior is likened to wine. It would indeed be a chiasmic reversal if the fruit first cursing mankind eventually became its instrument of salvation, through Christ.

*** Throughout centuries Israel's wedding canopies were constructed under the open air or with representations of multiple stars on its ceiling, signifying their belief that their posterity would be like stars in the Heavens. Christ has fulfilled the way to the opening of that True Covenant through temple work.