

Ir-ot-02
Old Testament Lesson, # 2
Thou Wast Chosen Before Thou Wast Born
By Lenet Hadley Read

- I. Knowledge of the Pre-mortal existence is a great blessing in our lives.
 - A. **Report:** Contact one or two converts ahead of time and ask them to share what a dramatic difference the perspective of a pre-mortal existence was to them when they first learned it. Have them also share how this new knowledge has blessed them?

- II. In the Pre-mortal Existence, very important councils were held, vital decisions were made, great leaders were foreordained.
 - A. **Scripture Chase:** If done right, this activity will not only review scriptures regarding pre-mortal existence and foreordination, but will demonstrate how helpful it is to have pre-chosen leaders. Divide class into groups. Give each group a scripture search assignment. Let them know it is a “race.” Give them no other help, except in half of the groups, pre-choose a leader who has been given clues to the answers. Ask these leaders to guide their group to correct answers.
 1. Suggested scripture searches:
 - a. “In what two ways was Abraham able to discover the vastness of God’s creations, and that one great star governed all others in our solar system. (Answers: Urim & Thummin. Abraham 3:1 and Voice of the Lord. Abr. 3:3)
 - b. Why did the Lord show Abraham how countless the stars or lights He had created were? (Answers: To teach him if he was faithful, his seed could be as “numberless.” Abr. 3:13-14.)
 - c. Who testified that Joseph Smith, Brigham Young, John Taylor and Wilford Woodruff were reserved to come forth in the latter days to lay the foundation for the great work of the dead. (Joseph F. Smith. See D&C 138:53-55)
 - d. Where does it tell us what happened to Satan and his followers and what they are doing now? (Moses 4:3-4)
 - e. Name at least two prophets who were personally told they were foreordained. Give scriptural citations. (Answer Jeremiah 1:5; Abraham 3:23)
 - f. What are differences between our first estate and our second estate? (Answers in Abraham 3:25-6.)

2. Have leaders give answer for groups. Find out from group how having leaders helped them.
 3. Ask if there are any questions arising from study of these scriptures. With classes' help, answer them.
- B. ? **Discussion Question.** Ask class how they have been blessed to know they or others were foreordained to do specific work before this life.
1. Remind them that as a group, latter-day Saints were set apart previously to do the great work of establishing Zion. How does this empower them?
 2. How do we feel knowing that certain *specific* responsibilities were placed upon us as individuals?
 3. How can we find out what responsibilities were laid upon us as individuals?
 - a. After discussion, point out that the three missions of the Church rest upon all our shoulders as specific missions. Write on board what those missions are.
 - b. How important is it to know one was foreordained to be a father or mother in Israel? How does this apply to current singles as well?
 4. Ask class members to share, without revealing things too sacred, how their patriarchal blessings have helped them understand their responsibilities and guided them,
 5. **Story:** Virginia H. Pearce relates that when the patriarch placed his hands upon her, any uncertainties she felt vanished. She has expressed, "The surprise and wonder of that day, but also of every other time I have read that blessing --- the startling news: He *knows* me. Heavenly Father knows *me!* She also rejoiced in knowing the Lord had a plan for her future. (Ensign, May 1994, p. 93.)
 6. Patriarchal blessings do not come from the patriarch. They come from the Lord. This was particularly verified when one patriarch, after saying to a sister, "I have a wonderful blessing for you," experienced a sudden blankness overcome him. He told her, "I was mistaken. I do not have a blessing for you. It is the Lord who has the blessing for you." The woman left and the patriarch humbly petitioned to be guided in giving her a blessing. After she returned, he gave her a blessing which spoke of certain concerns that no one other than herself had known. (James E. Faust, *Ensign*, Nov. 1995., p. 63.)
 7. How does knowing the Lord has confidence in us to fulfill responsibilities help us when feeling inadequate or discouraged?

- D. Knowing of the Pre-Mortal Existence Reassures us we are truly Free Agents.
1. Jesus Christ *volunteered* to be Our Redeemer.
 - a. Some scholars say Isaiah 9:6 contains four titles of the Savior and should be translated: “Wonderful Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.” If this is true, in what ways do you think Jesus truly was a “Wonderful Counselor?”
 - b. In what ways do the events of the Councils in Heaven before this earth was created manifest that God allows agency, and will not force any being?
 - a. If not given, guide class to such answers as:
 - i. Lucifer’s plan of force was rejected.
 - ii. The many who did not choose to follow Christ were not forced to do so, though they did suffer the consequences of their choices -- being denied bodies and being cast out of God’s presence forever.
- E. How does it help you in knowing that you chose to follow Jesus Christ in the Council in Heaven?
- F. How does knowing our Past help us in facing the Future?

Testify that knowing we chose to follow Jesus Christ in the pre-mortal existence should guide us and give us courage to choose Him and His ways again, in spite of every obstacle.