

274.1: A Tale of Two Cities (OT Gospel Doctrine Lesson 5 Updated)
"If Thou Doest Well, Thou Shalt Be Accepted"

Productive School

- I. Learning with Enoch
 - a. God who weeps
 - b. Awareness, empathy, and hope
 - c. Seeking and building Zion
- II. Cain and Abel
 - a. Admitting dysfunction, familial and otherwise
 - b. Humility and pride
 - c. Spirit and letter of the law
 - d. Who is the master?
 - e. Correcting Cain traditions
 - f. Bonus thoughts: A tale of two cities: Enoch, Cain, and quality of life

Productive School

Learning with Enoch

The god who weeps: Fulness of joy equals fulness of sorrow, a vulnerable, accessible God

Learning from Enoch (I feel particularly close to Enoch) Loss of innocence, learning about the pain of the world, increasing empathy, letting it sink in, then regaining hope and perspective. (Moses 7:41 And it came to pass that the Lord spake unto Enoch, and told Enoch all the doings of the children of men; wherefore Enoch knew, and looked upon their wickedness, and their misery, and wept and stretched forth his arms, and his heart swelled wide as eternity; and his bowels yearned; and all eternity shook.

44 And as Enoch saw this, he had bitterness of soul, and wept over his brethren, and said unto the heavens: I will refuse to be comforted; but the Lord said unto Enoch: Lift up your heart, and be glad; and look.

New Jerusalem: 7:63 And the Lord said unto Enoch: Then shalt thou and all thy city meet them there, and we will receive them into our bosom, and they

shall see us; and we will fall upon their necks, and they shall fall upon our necks, and we will kiss each other;

God who weeps

Awareness, empathy, and hope

Seeking and building Zion (caring about each person as a whole human, practicing love, nurturing covenantal relationships of closeness) In sum, loving our neighbor as ourselves

Cain and Abel

Admitting dysfunction, familial and otherwise

Humility and pride (humility delights in what is on its own merits, pride is inflexible and comparative; humility delights in excellence and goodness; pride needs to be better than others, as President Benson pointed out)

Spirit and letter of the law (Abel and Cain's sacrifice: working within systems and expectations as they are, training our souls, effecting change in organic integrated ways as possible)

Who is the master? ("sin lieth at the door" learn where we can be trusted, work to increase that, but also be humble and know where we need extra help and discipline)

Correcting Cain traditions: <https://www.lds.org/topics/race-and-the-priesthood?lang=eng>

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was **restored** amidst a highly contentious racial culture in which whites were afforded great privilege.

The justifications for this restriction echoed the widespread ideas about racial **inferiority that had been used to argue for the legalization of black "servitude"** in the Territory of Utah.¹⁰ According to one view, which had been promulgated in the United States from at least the 1730s, blacks descended from the same lineage as the biblical Cain, who slew his brother Abel.¹¹ Those who accepted this view **believed that God's "curse" on Cain was the mark of a dark skin.** Black servitude was sometimes viewed as a second curse placed upon **Noah's grandson Canaan as a result of Ham's indiscretion toward his father.**¹²

Today, the Church disavows the theories advanced in the past that black skin is a sign of divine disfavor or curse, or that it reflects unrighteous actions in a premortal life; that mixed-race marriages are a sin; or that blacks or people of any other race or ethnicity are inferior in any way to anyone else. Church leaders today unequivocally condemn all racism,

past and present, in any form. (This paragraph is especially important to share. If this paragraph was the only new things shared in all wards, it would do a great deal of good)

Bonus thoughts: A tale of two cities: Enoch, Cain, and quality of life (Zion is a community based on gospel principles; Cain is presented as the founder of urban living. The author of these accounts seems to have believed that urban life distances us from God, whereas a pastoral life, being a shepherd, helps keep us close to God and the gospel. It is worth thinking about consumerism, the race to keep up, which often leads to debt, vs. a simpler life, giving up some luxuries for sustainable living, focusing on experiences and wellness, relationships, etc)

274.2: A Tale of Two Cities (OT Gospel Doctrine Lesson 5, Sunday School) [“If Thou Doest Well, Thou Shalt Be Accepted”](#)

Containing some of the most sublime verses in LDS scripture, these chapters also present a study in contrasts.

- What do we learn by comparing Cain and Enoch? Specifically, how do they treat God and treat their fellow human beings?
- This lesson focuses especially on Moses 7. What do we learn about God in this chapter? How does Enoch respond? How do these insights apply to our lives?
- Sunday School
 - Contrasts: Cain vs. Enoch (Enoch is a bright point in a story of increasing wickedness)
 - Cain: How does he treat God? How does he treat his fellow humans? What do we learn about Cain and God from this story?
 - Enoch: How does he treat God? How does he treat his fellow humans? What do we learn about Enoch and God from this story? (Focus on Moses 7 in detail, bulk of discussion)
 - In reading, look for theses of family and adoption, and listening. Whose “spiritual children” are we? How do we choose God as our parent?
 - Discussion on the “God Who Weeps”
 - (good Sunday School approach) ask what passages move the class members, solicit their thoughts and questions.
 - Relationships with God, choices, and character (following the theme of the lesson)

274.3: A Tale of Two Cities (OT Gospel Doctrine Lesson 5, Study Notes)

"If Thou Doest Well, Thou Shalt Be Accepted"

I. Other Reading

- a. Cain and Abel narrative in literary and historical context (Why did God reject Cain's sacrifice, what themes are present in the narrative, what is Cain's mark, why does God protect Cain, etc)
- b. Life spans (genealogies have also been key in calculating the time of Eden/Creation)
- c. Enoch traditions (Bible: Genesis 5:18-24 is it, other than Jude 1:14, which ascribes an end of the world prophecy to Enoch)
 - i. 1 Enoch (300s BC- turn of era), Enoch portrayed as seer, sage, scribe priest/mediator, eschatological judge.
 - ii. 2 Enoch (only Slavonic, unsure date, life of Enoch, journey through heavens, midrash of biblical passages)
 - iii. 3 Enoch (Enoch is known as the archangel Metatron) Composed 500s-1000?

II. Study Notes

- a. Theological reflections: What do we do with this story? Abel dies then Cain is protected? What theological investments do we have for this story to be literal?
- b. Reviewing the reading with more analytical comments
- c. Secret Covenants and "Master Mahan"

Michael Quinn suggested Mahan is derived from Mahoun in Early Mormonism and the Magic Worldview, 147-148 and 208-210. (variant of Muhammad?)

III. Bradshaw says this when discussing Mahan at Moses 5:31:

- IV. "Truly I am Mahan. Draper, et al. comment: "Cain takes a new name as an indicator of his new status, also a later characteristic of righteous persons (Abram becomes Abraham;539 and so on)."540 Nibley discusses a possible etymology of the name: "The word 'secret' is sirra in Arabic; the eighth form of the verb, mustirra, means 'to hold a secret, to keep a secret.' It's the same as the Greek word sathra for secret. The Egyptian word is seshet; mesehet is 'to hold a secret.' Sether is the Hebrew word for keeping a secret (the master of the secret). So this word 'master' may not be our word 'master' at all, but 'master' means 'keeper of secret,' and 'Mahan' means 'great.' In any language, maha means 'great.' Words like magnus, mighty, might, many, maharaja; anything that's big is ma. So this could mean Master Mahan, the 'great secret keeper.' (It could be; this is just a suggestion here.)"541 Note that in OT1, "Mahan" is consistently spelled "Mahon," which suggests how the Prophet might have

pronounced the name while dictating the manuscript.⁵⁴² The spelling was changed to “Mahan” in OT2.”

Anti Masonic? Master Mahan/Mahon = Master Mason?

- a. Cain in LDS tradition
 - i. Bigfoot!
 - ii. Blackness and the Priesthood ban
- b. Reflections on human evil and goodness
- c. Concluding thoughts about what we learn about the stories of Cain and Abel and Enoch