

[Lesson 2](#): “Thou Wast Chosen Before Thou Wast Born” (See L2 [Study Guide](#))

Purpose: To help us understand the doctrine of foreordination and our own responsibility to help build up the kingdom of God and bring souls to Christ.

- Read [Abraham 3:22-28](#) and identify important truths that are revealed.

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

- Read [Abraham 3:11-12, 22-23](#) and [D&C 138:53-57](#). †1. Joseph Smith
Modern prophets “have indicated that the Council in Heaven was a series of meetings...” (*Lesson Manual*)

†2. Elder Bruce R. McConkie

- Read [Abraham 3:23](#). What does it mean to be foreordained?
Did foreordination guarantee that Abraham, Joseph Smith, and others would become prophets?
What is the relationship between foreordination and agency?

“In addition to foreordaining the prophets to their callings, God foreordained many ‘other choice spirits’ to help build up his kingdom in different ways.” (*Lesson Manual*)

What do you think are some parts of your foreordination?

†3. President Ezra Taft Benson

How can we be sure that we are fulfilling our foreordained callings? (See also [D&C 58:27-28](#).)

How can spiritual promptings help us fulfill our foreordained mission in life?

†4. “Make a play for Tom!”

2. 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.

†5. Elder James E. Talmage

- Read [Abraham 3:27](#) and [Moses 4:1-2](#).

How did the Savior’s offer differ from Satan’s offer?

†6. Elder Neal A. Maxwell

- Read [Moses 4:2-3](#). How are we at times influenced by Christ and at times by Satan?

Why did Heavenly Father choose Jesus Christ to be our Redeemer?

- Read [Abraham 3:26](#). “*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.” (*Lesson Manual*)

What blessings will we receive if we keep our second estate? How can we keep our second estate?

- Read [D&C 138:57-59](#).

†7. Elder Elray L. Christiansen

†8. Elder John A. Widstoe

- Read [Moses 4:3](#); [Abraham 3:27-28](#); [Revelation 12:7-9](#); [D&C 29:36-37](#).

What happened to Satan and his followers?

- Read [Moses 4:4](#). What are Satan and his followers doing now?

†9. Elder Jeffrey R. Holland

What are some ways that Satan and his followers try to limit or destroy our agency?

What can we do to recognize and resist their efforts?

How does it help you to know that you chose to follow Jesus Christ in the Council in Heaven?

Next Week: L3: The Creation; [Class Member Study Guide](#).

(You can download a free LDS Institute manual at: [Old Testament Manual: Religion 301 and 302](#).) † •

†1. **Joseph Smith:** “Every man who has a calling to minister to the inhabitants of the world was ordained to that very purpose in the Grand Council of heaven before this world was. I suppose that I was ordained to this very office in that Grand Council.” (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, 365)

†2. **Elder Bruce R. McConkie:** “There were many meetings, conferences, councils and schooling sessions held among the Gods and their spirit offspring in pre-existence. Among other things, at these various assemblages, plans were made for the creation and peopling of this earth and for the redemption and salvation of the offspring of Deity.” (*Mormon Doctrine*, 163)

†3. **President Ezra Taft Benson:** “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).

†4. **“Make a play for Tom!”:** “Brother Val Lewis recalled a time during high school when he was asked to be captain of one of the intramural touch football teams. He got to choose the first player and felt the strong impression: *Choose the worst player*. He received this prompting each time it was his turn to choose. He was a seminary student with a strong testimony. He had also felt the promptings of the spirit before and trusted them. For these reasons, he did as he was told and chose the worst player available, each time it was his turn to choose a player.

Brother Lewis was an excellent football player and, in the first game, carried the ball every time. They lost that game badly. Following the game he seriously questioned the promptings he'd received and said, "Heavenly Father, I did what you told me, but we're a pretty bad team. I'm not sure the promptings I felt were from you. What should we do to become a good team?"

After listening closely he felt a prompting: *Make a play for Tom!* So he did. In their very next game, the

defense left Tom wide open because they considered him to be such a poor player, but he caught brother Lewis's pass for a touchdown and went on to make several more. Tom was ecstatic. There was a beam in his face that had never been there before. They won that game and Brother Lewis began making more plays for more players and they all began to discover skills no one knew existed.

That first game turned out to be the only game they lost, and they played thirty games. Their final record was 29 wins and 1 loss and they won their class championship.

(Val Lewis told this story in our High Priest's quorum. He worked at the Rancho Seco nuclear power plant and had formerly been a bishop. I obtained his verbal permission to retell it.)

†5. **Elder James E. Talmage:** “We have heretofore shown that the entire human race existed as spirit-beings in the primeval world, and that for the purpose of making possible to them the experiences of mortality this earth was created. They were endowed with the powers of agency or choice while yet but spirits; and the divine plan provided that they be free-born in the flesh, heirs to the inalienable birthright of liberty to choose and to act for themselves in mortality. It is undeniably essential to the eternal progress of God's children that they be subjected to the influences of both good and evil, that they be tried and tested and proved withal, ‘to see if they will do all things whatsoever the Lord their God shall command them.’ Free agency is an indispensable element of such a test.” (*Jesus the Christ*, 17)

†6. **Elder Neal A. Maxwell:** “If the Lord were to show His power as some expect power to be used—which is virtually unthinkable—mortals would experience, among other things, prompt punishment rather than divine long-suffering. God would then stop all human suffering and silence all opposition to His work. In countless ways He would control the adverse effects of agency merely to prove that He was all-powerful. But He would not be all-loving for in effect He would have derailed His plan of happiness! The enforced cooperation would not produce illuminated individuality but an indistinguishable ‘compound in one’ (2 Nephi 2:11). We would then be back to that proposal of enforced ‘salvation’ rejected so long ago (Moses 4:1).” (*Not My Will, But Thine*, 91)

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†7. **Elder Elray L. Christiansen:** “God has created us and has made possible this earth life. But here and now you and I are in the process of molding the future, and in that sense we are our own creators. My friends, what you are to be you are now becoming. What you do here actually determines what you will be there. You, then, have had a divinely-planned beginning. You may, if you will meet the conditions prescribed by God, obtain a divinely-designed and glorious destiny.” (*BYU Speeches of the Year—1964*, 7)

†8. **Elder John A. Widstoe:** “Death must be viewed as a portal to a new and a greater life, in which man, possessed of new experiences and a material as well as a spirit body, may continue eternally the exploration of the inexhaustible universe and gain never-ending education and never-ending advancement. Under the law of progression, the imperishable man may move onward more rapidly and fully than ever before. Every natural power of man on earth will be retained, improved and perfected, with others added. The power to accept or to reject, to gain knowledge and to use it wisely, will be keener than before. This is the Third Estate and the last estate of man. It is an eternal life of action, increase and progress.” (quoted in *Doctrines For Exaltation*, 215-216)

†9. **Elder Jeffrey R. Holland:** “A life without problems or limitations or challenges – life without opposition in all things, as Lehi phrased it – would paradoxically but in very fact be less rewarding and ennobling than one which confronts – even frequently confronts – difficulty and disappointment and sorrow. As beloved Eve said, were it not for the difficulties faced in a fallen world, neither she nor Adam nor any of the rest of us ever would have known the joy of our redemption, and the eternal life which God giveth unto all the obedient. So life has its oppositions and its conflicts, and the gospel of Jesus Christ has answers and assurances. (“[The Peaceable Things of the Kingdom](#),” *Ensign*, Nov. 1996, 84)

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