

Moses 1 — The Visions of Moses — Endless, the Only Begotten, the Confrontation with Satan, and the Work and the Glory

Moses 1: Moses caught up to an exceedingly high mountain in the wilderness; revealed to Joseph Smith in June 1830 as a restoration of the prologue lost from Genesis. Mosaic setting c. 1450 BC (BoM-aligned scriptural chronology; some scholars argue c. 1280 BC).

The Pearl of Great Price does not open with the Creation. It opens one step earlier — with the briefing Moses received on a mountain before he ever wrote “In the beginning.” Restored by Joseph Smith in June 1830 as the very first piece of his work on the Bible, Moses 1 is the missing front porch of Genesis: the prophet’s call stated before the record begins. In forty-two verses God names himself Endless, the title Only Begotten appears centuries before John, a mortal prophet faces down Satan and wins, the heavens open to worlds without number, and it all lands on nineteen words the whole Restoration hangs on.

Insights

- 1:1–2 — the mountain.** Moses is “caught up” and transfigured: *the glory of God was upon Moses; therefore Moses could endure his presence*. God does not dim himself to a safe wattage — he raises the man up so he can survive the nearness. You must be lifted before you can look.
- 2:16 — the Only Begotten.** *Thou art in the similitude of mine Only Begotten... full of grace and truth* — John 1:14, almost word for word, spoken to Moses long before John was born. The premortal Christ, named as plainly as scripture ever names him.
- 3:10 — man is nothing.** When the glory withdraws, Moses crumples and learns in the hollow afterward what he missed at the summit: *man is nothing, which thing I never had supposed*. The most credentialed man alive is the one most surprised by his own smallness.
- 4:13–16 — the confrontation.** Satan demands worship; Moses answers not by talking himself up but by repeating the name God just gave him — *where is thy glory, that I should worship thee?* — then *get thee hence, Satan*. He wins not by strength but by covenant. It takes three rebukes; the adversary rants and yells, because volume is weakness, not authority.
- 5:39 — work and glory.** *This is my work and my glory — to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man*. God is not glorified by applause but by finished work — and the work is our coming home. Verse 39 is the answer to verse 10: nothing in ourselves, the point of the cosmos in covenant with him.
- 6:141 — a text that predicts its own return.** Moses is told his words will be taken out of the book and that God will “raise up another like unto thee” to restore them. The chapter you are reading was one of the lost parts — prophesying its own loss and recovery. It came true by existing.

Hebrew Word Studies

har gavoah me'od / kavod (הַר גְּבוּאָה מְעוֹד / דְּכָבֵד) — **an exceedingly high mountain / glory, weight vv. 1–2.** Two anchor words here. The mountain is *har gavoah me'od* — and that little *me'od*, “exceedingly,” is the same intensifier behind Genesis 1:31’s “very good.” But the word to sit with is *kavod*, “glory.” Its root means *weight*. That’s not a metaphor we’re imposing; it’s right there in the Hebrew. When Israel lost the ark, the baby was named Ichabod — “the glory (*kavod*) has departed” (1 Sam. 4:21). So when the text says God’s glory came upon Moses, it’s saying something heavier than “it got bright.” God’s presence has actual weight, more than a mortal frame can bear — unless that frame is itself clothed in the same weight first. You see the same logic at Sinai, where Moses’ face comes down shining (Ex. 34:29), and on the Mount of Transfiguration (Matt. 17:2), and in Paul’s promise that we’re “changed... from glory to glory” (2 Cor. 3:18). The Restoration says it flat out: “no man has seen God at any time in the flesh, except quickened by the Spirit of God” (D&C 67:11). Moses climbed; God came down; and the meeting needed both. That’s the doctrine — you have to be lifted before you can look.

ein-sof / olam va'ed (אֵין-סוֹף / עוֹלָם וָעֶד) — **no-end / forever and ever v. 3.** Two ways the Hebrew tradition reaches for this. *Ein-sof*, “no-end,” is the name later Jewish mystics used for the unbounded God — the formal term isn’t in the Old Testament, but the idea sure is (“from everlasting to everlasting thou art God,” Ps. 90:2). And *olam va'ed*, “forever and ever,” is the standard biblical phrase for unending time (“the LORD shall reign forever and ever,” Ex. 15:18). What Moses 1 does is fuse them: God has no beginning, no end, and — this is the part that matters — neither do his *works* (v. 4). Here’s where it pays off. Years later the Lord explains a hard verse with exactly this logic: “Endless punishment is God’s punishment... for Endless

is my name" (D&C 19:6–12). The suffering isn't infinite in length — it's *God's*, and he is Endless. The adjective comes from the noun. His punishment is endless because *he* is Endless. You can't read D&C 19 right without Moses 1:3 standing behind it.

ben yachid / demut / chen ve'emet (בֶּן יָחִיד / תּוֹמָד / חֵן וְעֵמֶת) — **only/unique son / similitude, likeness / grace and truth v. 6.**

Three phrases, and together they're basically the prologue of John's Gospel hiding in Hebrew. *Ben yachid*, "only son" — it's the word from the binding of Isaac, "take now thy son, thine only son" (Gen. 22:2), which the Greek Old Testament renders *monogenēs*, "only-begotten." *Demut*, "likeness" — straight out of Genesis 1:26, "in our image, after our likeness." And *chen ve'emet*, "grace and truth" — that's the Sinai self-portrait, "abounding in goodness and truth" (Ex. 34:6). Stack them: Moses is made in the *likeness* of the *only Son*, and that Son is *grace and truth* in person. Which means every prophet, Moses included, is a kind of small echo of the one original — patterned on him, never replacing him. When the Restoration gives us "I, John, bear record that I beheld his glory, as the glory of the Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth" (D&C 93:11), it's not inventing language. It's restoring a phrase the Old Testament already carried and lost.

ein-davar / koach tiv'i (אֵין-דָּבָר / יִעֲבֹט חֵץ) — **nothing (no-thing) / natural strength vv. 9–10.** *Ein-davar* is the Hebrew for "nothing" at full strength — literally "no thing." *Koach tiv'i* is plain natural vigor, your ordinary mortal strength, the kind that drained out of Moses and then came back after a few hours. Here's the careful point, though, and the chapter will insist on it: Moses is "nothing" by *comparison*, not in some absolute sense. He's created and he's beloved — God just called him "my son" twice. What he hasn't got is anything God didn't give him. His natural strength returns; the *recognition* stays. King Benjamin teaches the same humility — God awakens us "to a sense of your nothingness, and your worthless and fallen state" (Mosiah 4:11) — and the Lord supplies the other half of the truth in the same breath as a warning: "remember the worth of souls is great in the sight of God" (D&C 18:10). Both are true at once. Know your nothingness without his love and you fall into despair; know his love without your nothingness and you drift into pride. Moses, face down on that mountain, is learning to hold both.

ben adam / ben Elohim / bidmut (בֶּן אָדָם / בֶּן אֱלֹהִים / בִּדְמוּת) — **son of man / son of God / in the similitude vv. 12–13.** The fight in this scene is a fight over a name. Satan calls Moses *ben adam*, "son of man" — true enough, but he means it small. Moses answers with *ben Elohim*, "son of God" — the title from Job, where "the sons of God" shout for joy at the creation (Job 38:7). And he grounds it in *bidmut*, "in the similitude," reaching straight back to what God told him in verse 6: he's in the likeness of the Only Begotten. Here's what I'd want you to catch. Moses doesn't win the argument by talking himself up. He doesn't say "I'm a prophet, I'm Pharaoh's grandson, I'm the deliverer." He just repeats back the title God gave him five minutes earlier. That's the whole technique — and it's exactly what Christ does in the wilderness, answering every temptation not with cleverness but with "it is written... it is written... it is written" (Matt. 4). You don't negotiate with the adversary's labels. You answer from the name God already gave you.

ra'ad / charadah (רָעָד / חֲרָדָה) — **trembling / shaking, fear-quake vv. 20–21.** When Moses finally commands him "in the name of the Only Begotten," Satan goes out "with weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth" — *trembling*. The Hebrew has strong words for that kind of involuntary shaking: *ra'ad*, the trembling that seized the chiefs of Edom (Ex. 15:15), and *charadah*, the sudden panic that fell on an army (1 Sam. 14:15). Here's the doctrine, and it's a relief to know it: Moses is not stronger than Satan. He never was. What changed the contest is that Moses is in covenant with someone who is. James lays out the exact sequence — "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you" (James 4:7) — and notes, almost dryly, that even "the devils also believe, and tremble" (James 2:19). Moses doesn't overpower the adversary. He puts himself *under* God, and it's that submission that makes the adversary shake. The power was conferred, not earned.

olamim / bidmi'ata (עֲלָמִים / בִּדְמִי'אָתָא) — **worlds, ages / for my own sake/purpose vv. 29–33.** *Olam* is the Hebrew word that holds both "world" and "age" — space and time in one breath. Put it in the plural, *olamim*, and you get exactly what the New Testament says when it reaches for the same idea: God "made the worlds" (Heb. 1:2), and "the worlds were framed by the word of God" (Heb. 11:3) — both translating a plural. And "for mine own purpose" — the Lord makes the worlds *for his own sake*, on his own prerogative. Put it together and you get a cosmos that is theocentric, not anthropocentric. The universe isn't centered on us; it's centered on him, and we're shown that it is. Paul says the same: "all things were created by him, and for him" (Col. 1:16). When Joseph translates Abraham a few years later, Abraham gets the very same tour of the heavens (Abr. 3) — two prophets, shown the same God-centered cosmos. There's a *b'reshit*, an "in the beginning," for every world, and the Lord is in all of them.

melakhah u-khavod / chayyei netzach (מַלְאכָה וְכָבוֹד / חַיֵּי נֶצַח) — **work and glory / life of eternity v. 39.** *Melakhah* is "work" — it's the word for what God rested from on the seventh day (Gen. 2:2). *Kavod* is the "glory," the weight, we met back in verse 2. Verse 39 welds them: God's work and God's glory are a single thing. And the goal is *chayyei netzach*, "life of eternity" — the same phrase Daniel uses for the resurrected righteous who wake to "everlasting life" (Dan. 12:2). Here's the

doctrine, and it's the warmest in the chapter: God's glory just is the act of bringing his children into the kind of life he himself lives. Theology and salvation turn out to be the same subject. And it comes in two stages — "immortality," which is resurrection, the gift handed to everyone without exception ("as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive," 1 Cor. 15:22); and "eternal life," which is exaltation, life with God, the gift that's ours to receive or refuse. The Lord is not glorified by our applause. He's glorified by our coming home.

Apocryphal Correlations — the old books beside the restored text

Apocalypse of Abraham 13–14, 19–22. Abraham ascends, rebukes the fallen angel Azazel by name mid-vision (cf. "get thee hence, Satan"), and is shown the worlds and their ages. Slavonic text unedited in the West until the 1890s; no English until 1918 — unavailable to Joseph Smith.

2 Enoch 1–22. Enoch is carried through the heavens and shown the structure of the cosmos and the "ages" — Moses' guided cosmic tour. Slavonic text unknown to Western scholarship until 1896, sixty-six years after Moses 1.

Assumption of Moses (via Jude 1:9). A lost book preserving a dispute between Michael and the devil over the body of Moses — an ancient Moses-and-the-adversary tradition. The text itself surfaced only in an 1861 Latin fragment, thirty years after Joseph restored a Moses–Satan confrontation.

Jubilees 1; 2 Baruch 4; 1 Enoch 14. The ascent pattern Moses 1 shares: a seer caught up, transfigured, shown heaven and earth, and commissioned to write. Jubilees (Ethiopic, no English until 1888) and 2 Baruch (Syriac, 1860s) were both beyond Joseph's reach.

2 Esdras (4 Ezra) 6:55–59; 14. "There are many worlds," and Ezra restores the lost books in forty days. An honest outlier: unlike the others, 2 Esdras was printed in the King James Apocrypha and so WAS available to Joseph — noted as a real parallel, not a hidden one.

Life of Adam and Eve (Latin) 12–16. Satan says he was cast out for refusing to worship Adam, the image of God — the mirror of his "worship me" to Moses. The being who withheld honor now grasps for it.

Canon = Moses, the Bible, the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants. The books above are extra-canonical witnesses, not scripture; the Church takes no position on them. We read them by D&C 91: "whoso... is enlightened by the Spirit shall obtain benefit therefrom." They illuminate. They do not bind.

Where the threads lead

The inversion of Matthew 4. Both have an exceedingly high mountain, a "son of" address, a demand to worship, a Deuteronomy 6:13 answer, and "get thee hence." But the order flips: Moses ascends in strength and meets Satan in his weakness; Christ goes down in fasted weakness and emerges in strength. The two scenes bracket the Mosaic and the Messianic.

Transfiguration across scripture. Moses 1:11; Exodus 34:29–35 (the shining face); Matthew 17:1–2 (the Mount); 2 Corinthians 3:18 ("from glory to glory"); D&C 67:11 — the creature must be quickened by the Spirit to bear the presence of God.

Worlds without number. Moses 1:33; John 1:3 and Hebrews 1:2 (created through the Son); D&C 76:24; D&C 88. A theocentric cosmos — and the same tour given to Abraham in Abraham 3, the next book.

Endless is my name. Moses 1:3; Exodus 3:14; Revelation 1:8; and D&C 19:6–12, where "endless punishment" means God's punishment, because Endless is who he is.

How the chapter changes the reader

Read slowly against your own life, Moses 1 is a map of how God shapes anyone he means to use: a real lifting; a withdrawal that teaches you what the summit could not; the adversary arriving after the high point, never before; a victory won by remembering the name God gave you, not by your own strength; and then a wider vision and a bigger commission than you began with. Call, glory, withdrawal, adversary, victory, cosmos, thesis, the charge to write. You meet the prophet on the mountain first — then he writes. And so, in a smaller key, do you.