

Moses 4 — Give Me Thine Honor — the Council, the Serpent, and the First Promise of Christ

Moses 4: the premortal council and Lucifer's rebellion; Satan in the serpent; the Fall of Adam and Eve; the protoevangelium of the bruised heel; the coats of skins. The chapter that uniquely opens with the heaven behind Genesis 3.

Moses 4 does not start in the garden. Genesis 3 opens with the serpent already in the branches; Moses 4 rolls the camera back to the scene behind it — a council in heaven, before the world, where two plans were offered and one being was cast out. The temptation in Eden isn't the beginning of the conflict; it's a later chapter in a war that began before the earth was made. Four things land here that no other passage holds together: the council, the adversary's true aim, the first promise of Christ, and an Eve read almost opposite to the tradition.

Insights

- 1. 4:1-2 — the two plans.** Lucifer's pitch even sounds righteous — I'll save everyone — until the last clause: *give me thine honor*. The Only Begotten's plan has no "I" in it: *thy will be done, and the glory be thine*. The Father chose the one who wanted nothing for himself. It's Gethsemane's "not my will but thine" spoken before the world began.
- 2. 4:3 — what the adversary is after.** *Satan... sought to destroy the agency of man*. Not just misery, not just sin — the power to choose itself. Which means every time you keep your agency under pressure, you defeat him at the one thing he wanted. And his reach runs only as far as "as many as would not hearken" — no farther.
- 3. 4:12 — Adam was with her.** *She... did eat, and also gave unto her husband with her*. Adam was present and ate knowingly — "Adam was not deceived" (1 Tim. 2:14). Not the seduced fool of the old picture. And Eve's step is read not as the great seduction but as courage toward a necessary threshold — "Adam fell that men might be" (2 Ne. 2:25).
- 4. 4:21 — the first promise of Christ.** Buried in the curse on the snake: the seed of the woman will *bruise thy head* while the serpent bruises only his *heel*. The cross is the wounded heel; the resurrection is the crushed head. And "seed of the WOMAN" — traced through her, not a father — is the first quiet whisper of the virgin birth.
- 5. 4:27 — God clothes his children.** His children are ashamed and exposed, and he doesn't lecture — he *clothes* them. A coat of skins costs an animal its life: the first death in the story is a sacrifice God performs with his own hands. Substitution is established in Eden, before any altar or law.
- 6. 4:28-29 — the expulsion as mercy.** The flaming sword looks like the harshest moment and is actually the kindest. Eating the tree of life while fallen would have made the Fall permanent. Sending them out keeps the door to redemption open — "a time to repent" (Alma 12:24).

Hebrew Word Studies

helel ben-shachar / hinneni (לְהֵל בֶּן־שַׁחַר / הִנֵּנִי) — **shining one, son of dawn / here am I vv. 1, 3.** Two words worth knowing. *Helel ben-shachar*, "shining one, son of dawn," is the name behind Isaiah 14:12 — the only place the pre-fall Lucifer is named in the Old Testament. The Latin Bible translated *helel* as *lucifer*, "light-bearer," and that's where we got the name. There's a bitter irony in it: the light-bearer becomes the one who deceives by darkness. And *hinneni*, "here am I" — that's the holy word. It's what Abraham says when God calls at the binding of Isaac (Gen. 22:1), what Moses says at the bush (Ex. 3:4), what Isaiah says at his call: "Here am I; send me" (Isa. 6:8). It's the disciple's yes. And look what Lucifer does with it — he says the exact words, "here am I, send me," and then ruins them with "give me thine honor." The same sentence that is the prophet's surrender becomes the rebel's grab. The difference between the two isn't the words. It's the last clause. Paul saw the same move: "Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light" (2 Cor. 11:14). The counterfeit uses the real words.

arum / yode'ei tov va-ra (אָרֻם / יוֹדְעֵי טוֹב וָרָע) — **subtle, crafty / knowers of good and evil vv. 5, 11.** *Arum*, "subtle," is the word for the serpent — and it's not always a bad word. In Proverbs it's the "prudent" man, the shrewd one (Prov. 12:23). It's natural intelligence; the serpent just bends it toward deception. And "knowers of good and evil," *yode'ei tov va-ra*, is the destination the serpent dangles — but the Bible itself uses that exact phrase for moral *maturity*: the grown can "discern both good and evil" (Heb. 5:14), where children cannot (Deut. 1:39). So here's the doctrine, and it's subtle: the serpent is right about *what* (knowing good and evil is good; it's where God was leading) and wrong about *how* (by eating the forbidden thing). He doesn't tell a clean lie. He tells a true thing and weaponizes the half he leaves out. The whole skill of discernment, from here on, is learning to separate a good destination from a corrupted road to it.

shuph rosh / aqev / zera ha-ishshah (שֹׁפֵה רֹאשׁ / אֶקֶב / זֶרַע הָאִשָּׁה) — **bruise the head / heel / the seed of the woman v. 21.**

The picture is a deliberately lopsided fight. *Shuph*, "bruise" or "strike," happens to both — but where it lands is everything. The seed strikes the serpent's *rosh*, his head — that's a killing blow. The serpent strikes only the *aqev*, the heel — a real wound, but not a fatal one. So the cross is the bruised heel: genuine, agonizing, and temporary. The resurrection is the crushed head: final. The same event is both. But the phrase to really notice is *zera ha-ishshah* — "the seed of the WOMAN." All through the Old Testament, seed runs through the father — the seed of Abraham, the seed of David. This is the one place it's traced through the woman. That's not a slip; it's a signal. The one whose lineage is reckoned through his mother and not a mortal father is the virgin-born Christ. Paul reads "seed" in exactly this pointed, singular way — "he saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one... which is Christ" (Gal. 3:16). The very first prophecy of the Savior is also, quietly, the first whisper of the virgin birth.

Apocryphal Correlations — the old books beside the restored text

Life of Adam and Eve (Latin) 12-16. The devil explains his own fall in the first person: told to worship Adam, the image of God, he refused — "I will set my throne above the stars... I will be like the Most High" — and was cast down, then hunted Adam's family out of envy. The same story as Moses 4's being who would not give honor. No critical edition until 1878, no English until the 1880s-1913 — Joseph could not have read it.

Apocalypse of Moses (Greek) 15-30. EVE narrates the Fall in her own voice — the only ancient account that hands her the microphone — naming the serpent as the devil's mouthpiece and the loss of "the glory with which I was clothed," the garment behind Moses 4's coats of skins. Greek edited by Tischendorf 1866; no English until the 1880s-1913.

Apocalypse of Moses 13. As Adam dies, Seth is sent toward Eden to beg the "oil of mercy," and is told it waits until the end of times, when the Lord will come, raise Adam, and anoint him — an ancient resurrection promise tied to Eden, the same hope Moses 4:21 plants in the crushed head.

Canon = Moses, the Bible, the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants. These are extra-canonical witnesses, not scripture; the Church takes no position on them. Read per D&C 91. The honest limit: the apocryphal Eve is penitent, NOT the celebrated trailblazer of 2 Nephi 2 and Moses 5:11 — the parallels are in the narrative details, not the theology of Eve, which is the Restoration's own.

Where the threads lead

The rebellion, gathered. Moses 4:1-4; Isaiah 14:12-15; Revelation 12:7-9; Luke 10:18; D&C 76:25-28 — the scattered biblical pieces of the war in heaven, gathered into one story in 1830-32.

The first promise of Christ. Moses 4:21; Galatians 3:16 (the seed, singular, which is Christ); Romans 16:20 (God shall bruise Satan under your feet) — the protoevangelium running to its fulfillment.

The Fall as a step up. Moses 4:12; 2 Nephi 2:22-25; Moses 5:10-11 — Adam and Eve come to count the Fall a cause for joy, because it opened the way to seed, to growth, and to redemption.

How the chapter changes the reader

Moses 4 hands you a map of the conflict you are actually in. Your temptations aren't a small private weakness; they're the local front of a war that began in a council before the world, and the adversary's real target, under every bait, is your power to choose. The two plans of that council are still your two options every day: <i>thy will be done</i> or <i>give me thine honor</i>. And under all of it runs the promise older than the rebellion it answers — the seed of the woman will crush the serpent's head — sealed that same day in coats God made with his own hands.