

Jesus Christ and the Everlasting Gospel

Jesus Christ is the Living Christ & Central to all human history

Lessons 1 & 2



In what ways has the Savior influenced all who have lived or will live on earth?

His Influence & The purpose of the record

“As we commemorate the birth of Jesus Christ two millennia ago, we offer our testimony of the reality of His matchless life and the infinite virtue of His great atoning sacrifice. None other has had so profound an influence upon all who have lived and will yet live upon the earth” (“The Living Christ: The Testimony of the Apostles,” Ensign or Liahona, Apr. 2000, 2).

John 20:30–31; 1 Nephi 6:4; 2 Nephi 25:23, 26

“We cannot depend on the testimonies of other people. We need to know for ourselves. President Gordon B. Hinckley said, ‘Every Latter-day Saint has the responsibility to know for himself or herself with a certainty beyond doubt that Jesus is the resurrected, living Son of the living God’ (“Fear Not to Do Good,” Ensign, May 1983, 80).

“The source of this sure knowledge and firm conviction is divine revelation, ‘for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy’ (Revelation 19:10). We receive this testimony when the Holy Spirit speaks to the spirit within us. ... The core of this testimony will always be the faith in and the knowledge of Jesus Christ and His divine mission” (“The Power of a Personal Testimony,” Ensign or Liahona, Nov. 2006, 38).





How have you seen others bear witness of Jesus Christ through their actions?

See Alma 18.18



As you think about the world you live in, what can we do so our witness and testimony of the Savior can have an impact on others?

Jesus Christ was foreordained to be our Savior

Abraham 3:24–27; 1 Peter 1:19–20





What is your name?

“I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt you say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.”

-Exodus 3.14

Students often ask, what does this mean? What does God mean when he says, “I AM THAT I AM?”

Frank Moore Cross explains that “the accumulated evidence ... strongly supports the view that the name Yahweh is a causative imperfect of the Canaanite-Proto-Hebrew verb hwy, ‘to be.’ Therefore, the divine name Yahweh, according to this view, literally means “He who causes to be” or even “He who procreates.” (Frank Moore Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic*, p. 65.)

Jehovah – Yahweh: A Being Who Acts

There are so many ways to look at this divine name, but I do like the idea that God is portrayed as a being who acts. In Exodus 3, we see in God's name the idea that God is one who brings things into being. He creates, he is the one who causes things to be. This brings to mind the discussion that Lehi has with Jacob when he tells Jacob that there are two types of beings: those who act, and those who are acted upon. God sent us here to earth to learn how to be the type of being God is. We need to learn to act, and not to be acted upon. (2 Nephi 2:26)

The Name

Moses says: May I say who sent me? He asks for God's name. The Israelites will want to know who has sent me, and God replies with a sentence, "Ehyeh asher ehyeh." This is a first person sentence that can be translated, "I am who I am," or perhaps, "I will be who I will be," or perhaps, "I cause to be what I cause to be." We really don't know, but it has something to do with "being." So he asks who God is, God says, "I am who am I am" or "I will cause to be what I will cause to be." So Moses, wisely enough, converts that into a third-person formula: okay, he will be who he will be, he is who he is, "Yahweh asher Yahweh." God's answer to the question of his name is this sentence, and Moses converts it from a first-person to a third-person sentence: he will be who he will be; he is who he is; he will cause to be, I think most people think now, what he will cause to be, and that sentence gets shortened to "Yahweh." This is the Bible's explanation for the name Yahweh, and as the personal name of God, some have argued that the name Yahweh expresses the quality of being, an active, dynamic being. This God is one who brings things into being, whether it's a cosmos from chaos, or now a new nation from a band of runaway slaves. But it could well be that this is simply God's way of not answering Moses' question. We've seen how the Bible feels about revealing names, and the divine being who struggled and wrestled with Jacob sure didn't want to give him his name. So I've often wondered if we're to read this differently: Who am I? I am who I am, and never you mind. (Christine Hayes, open Yale Courses, lecture 7, chapter 5, Descriptions of God in the Bible.)

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A Being Who Acts

2 Nephi 2.14-16

“At the first organization in heaven we were all present and saw the Savior chosen and appointed and the plan of salvation made, and we sanctioned it” *(Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith [2007], 209).*



“Think of it: in our premortal state we chose to follow the Savior Jesus Christ! And because we did, we were allowed to come to earth. I testify that by making the same choice to follow the Savior now, while we are here on earth, we will obtain an even greater blessing in the eternities. But let it be known: we must continue to choose to follow the Savior. Eternity is at stake, and our wise use of agency and our actions are essential that we might have eternal life” (“Agency: Essential to the Plan of Life,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2010, 25).



Pre-mortal covenants

All of the myriads of mortals who have been born on this earth chose the Father's plan and fought for it. Many of us also made covenants with the Father concerning what we would do in mortality. In ways that have not been revealed, our actions in the spirit world influence us in mortality. (Dallin H. Oaks, *Ensign*, Nov 1993, 72)

Pre-mortal covenants

Most of us have wondered about what occurred in the premortal world and how it relates to our existence here. We should be acquainted with the truth that knowledge of the premortal life was restored that we might fulfill our responsibilities as children of God.

The Lord has revealed that a grand council was held in that pre-earth world where we exercised our agency regarding the plans presented. The major proposition in the accepted plan of salvation provided for an earth life where each person could work out his eternal salvation.

Pre-mortal covenants

John A. Widtsoe provides insight to an earth-life responsibility made in that premortal world which is of great importance. He highlights a contractual agreement we made concerning the eternal welfare of all of the sons and daughters of the Eternal Father:

“In our preexistent state, in the day of the great council, we made a[n] ... agreement with the Almighty. The Lord proposed a plan. ... We accepted it. Since the plan is intended for all men, we became parties to the salvation of every person under that plan. We agreed, right then and there, to be not only saviors for ourselves but ... saviors for the whole human family. We went into a partnership with the Lord. The working out of the plan became then not merely the Father’s work, and the Savior’s work, but also our work. The least of us, the humblest, is in partnership with the Almighty in achieving the purpose of the eternal plan of salvation.”

(David. B. Haight, “The Worth of Souls,” *The Utah Genealogical and Historical Magazine*, Oct. 1934, p. 189.)