

Book of Moses Essay #23: Enoch, the Prophet and Seer: Enoch's Prophecy of the Tribes (Moses 7:5–11, 22)

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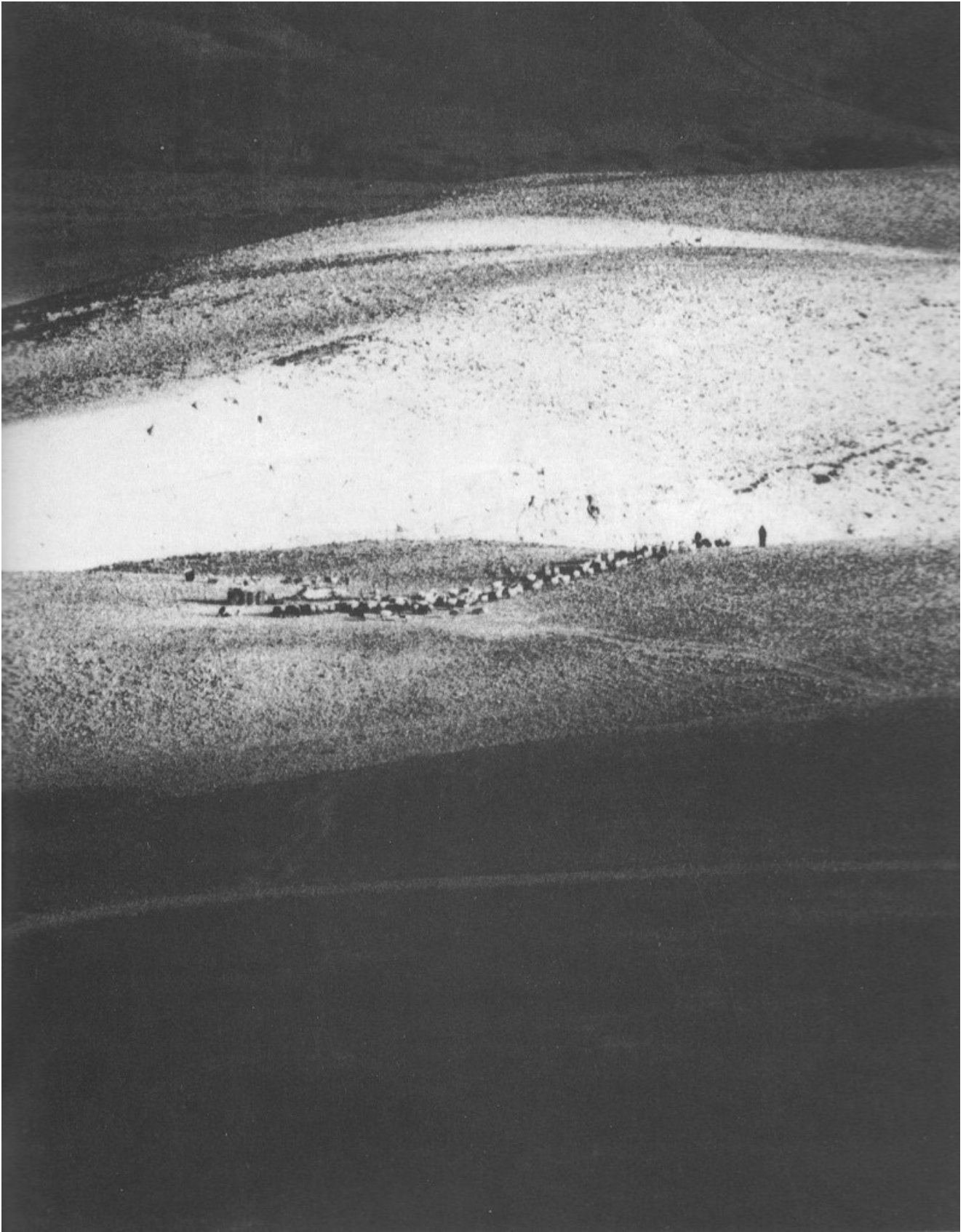
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Kazuyoshi Nomachi: Judean Hills^[1]

Having concluded his teachings on the plan of salvation,^[2] “from that time forth Enoch began to prophesy ... unto the people.”^[3] Already, in Moses 6, we are provided with subtle linguistic evidence that Enoch was acting as a prophet when he “spake forth the words of God.”^[4] Note that the meaning of the word “prophet” (Hebrew *nabî*) is either “one called” or “one who calls forth”—i.e., “one who speaks forth” (cf. Akkadian *nabû[m]*).^[5] That’s also what the Greek translation *prophētēs* (whence our English word *prophet*) means: “one who speaks forth” or “a proclaimer or expounder of divine matters or concerns that could not ordinarily be known except by special revelation.”^[6]

Put another way, more than a *foreteller* a prophet is a *forthteller*.^[7] If a prophet can be described as a “speaker, herald, or preacher,”^[8] that description particularly fits the context of Enoch’s activities as a “preacher of righteousness”^[9] descended through a line of “preachers of righteousness.”^[10] In “speaking forth” the Lord’s prophets must testify of Jesus Christ and call the people to repentance as part of the doctrine of Christ, both of which Enoch does.^[11]

Like Moses and the brother of Jared,^[12] Enoch spoke with the Lord “even as a man talketh one with another, face to face” (Moses 7:4).^[13] Notably, each of the three major works of Enoch pseudepigrapha contain stories of Enoch’s activities in heaven. In *1 Enoch* 14, Enoch is taken up into heaven and kneels before the throne of God.^[14] *2 Enoch* 22:5 more closely echoes the wording of Moses 7:4 (“stood before my face”), when the Lord says: “Be brave, Enoch! Don’t be frightened! Stand up, and stand in front of my face forever.”^[15] In *2 Enoch* 22:1, Enoch similarly relates: “I saw the view of the face of the Lord.”^[16] Because of the significance of the fact that Enoch is allowed to see God’s face, in *2 Enoch* he is given the title “Prince of the Divine Face.”^[17]

In Moses 7:5–12, we learn that Enoch was shown (in capsule form) “the world for the space of many generations,”^[18] a vision that stops short of Noah’s Flood. In the present *Essay* we discuss this limited vision of the tribes. In subsequent *Essays*,^[19] we will describe Enoch’s “Grand Vision.” In this latter vision, which starts in Moses 7:20, Enoch saw God’s work on the earth from beginning to end.^[20]

Enoch’s Prophecy about the Tribes of Canaan and Shum

In Enoch’s “vision of the tribes,” contained in verses 5–8, he was told to prophesy about the war that would come among the two peoples of Canaan and Shum. In verses 9–12, he is called to teach repentance and baptism to other peoples besides Canaan lest they suffer a similar fate.^[21] We are not aware of any direct parallels to this two-part account in ancient Enoch literature, however we can conjecture some things about the background of these verses from a knowledge of the Old Testament and the ancient Near East.

The tribe of Shum. With respect to the brief reference to the first tribe of Shum in verse 5, Richard Draper, Kent Brown, and Michael Rhodes point out the joint reference to the “people of Shum” and the “valley of Shum” as a precedent for naming places after a notable ancestor in this account.^[22] They suggest that the name “is likely a variant of Shem, itself meaning ‘name’”^[23] (cf. Akkadian *šumu[m]*, “name; son”).^[24] There are many mentions in the early chapters of Genesis of peoples who lived in tents.^[25]

The tribe of Canaan. As to the second tribe seen in vision, Draper et al. conclude that the “people of Canaan” mentioned in verse 6 are “not the same as ‘the seed of Cain.’”^[26] Although both groups were ostracized because of skin pigmentation,^[27] their tribal names are of different origin.^[28] Neither should the people of Canaan or the descendants of Cain be confused with the people of “Cainan.”^[29] Cainan, Enoch’s great-grandfather, and others of the “people of God ... dwelt in a land of promise,”^[30] which Enoch had referred to during his preaching mission as “a land of righteousness unto this day.”^[31]

The similar-sounding names of “Canaan” and “Cainan” mentioned in close proximity within the Book of Moses follow the same pattern of wordplay elsewhere in the corresponding Genesis chapters. For example, it is no coincidence, according to Hugh Nibley, that the descendants of the Sethite ancestors of Enoch “run in seven lines with almost the same names [as the descendants of Cain]. But,” he continues, “they are read differently as if you were punning on them, like twin names. This is a typical trick. The Egyptians do it all the time.”^[32]

Whether there is meant to be any connection between these antediluvian Canaanites and the later group of the same name that inhabited the area of Palestine is unknown. The first mention of “Canaan” in the Bible is as the name of the son of Ham, who was the son of Noah.^[33] The “Canaanites” mentioned in Abraham 1:21–22 are said to have been Ham’s descendants, but no explicit connection is made between them and the land of “Canaan” where Abraham was commanded to go when he left Ur of the Chaldees.^[34]

The cursing of the land of Canaan. Enoch’s prophecy that the land of the Canaanites “shall be barren and unfruitful” is a “measure for measure” form of punishment that will continue indefinitely (“the barrenness thereof shall go forth forever”^[35]). Because the Canaanites will wickedly conspire to exterminate the people of Shum and take their land, their own land will be cursed. The curse and its murderous provocation parallel the experience of Cain on a larger scale.^[36]

The curse of barrenness recalls the prophecy of Enoch to the sinners in *1 Enoch* 100:11:^[37]

And every cloud and mist and dew and rain will testify against you;

for they will all be withheld from you, so as not to descend upon you,

and they will be mindful of your sins.

Note that this prophecy about the unfruitfulness of the land is in direct contrast with the Lord's promise given in Exodus 23:26 to the Israelites who were to be given their own land of Canaan: "There shall nothing cast their young, nor be barren." In 2 Peter 1:8, following a list of godly virtues, is a similarly worded promise of a spiritual nature: "if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Enoch also prophesies that "none other people shall dwell there but the people of Canaan."^[38] This is a second contrast to the later Israelites in their land of Canaan. The Israelites were told that the other peoples inhabiting the land would be driven out "little by little"^[39] rather than all at once. Subsequent events make it clear that the Israelites were never successful in possessing the entire land for themselves alone.^[40]

The prophecy that "the Lord shall curse the land"^[41] of the people of Canaan is again reminiscent of the story of Cain.^[42] This is an explicit contrast to Moses 7:17, where the Lord is said to have "blessed the land" on behalf of the people of God.

The "blackness" of the people of Canaan. Of significance in connection with the "much heat" that was to come upon the land, is the mention that a blackness "came upon" the children of Canaan.^[43] The description that this blackness "*came upon*" them seems to contradict the conjecture that these people inherited dark skin because they were of the lineage of Cain.^[44] Hugh Nibley's explanation of the Arab concept of *aswad* (black) verses *abyad* (white) is of interest here: those Arabs who live out in tents in the heat are called "black" while those who live in the shelter of stone houses in the city are seen as "white."^[45] Also of interest is the fact that "black" and "white" in Arabic can be used to refer to levels of moral cleanliness and purity.^[46] Indeed, such a distinction is found in 3 *Enoch* 44:6, where Rabbi Ishmael is shown the spirits suffering in *Sheol* and comments that "the faces of the wicked souls were as black as the bottom of a pot, because of the multitude of their wicked deeds."^[47] Thus, the more straightforward modern assumption that the blackness of the children of Canaan refers to a difference in skin pigmentation is not an automatic given.

In Moses 7:22, we similarly find the mention that "the seed of Cain were black." Commenting on the *Animal Apocalypse* of 1 *Enoch* in which Cain is depicted as a "black calf,"^[48] George Nickelsburg concludes that "the color of the bulls ...—like their species—is symbolic. Adam's whiteness suggests his purity, and ... at the very least, the black or dark color attributed to Cain foreshadows his murder of Abel (cf. Job 6:16, of the treachery of Job's enemies)."^[49] With specific reference to the so-called "mark of Cain,"^[50] it is not a straightforward matter to decode the nature of the "mark" or "sign" (Heb. *ôṭ*):^[51]

Though readers have often assumed that the mark was a dark skin, the text of the verse itself fails to give warrant for any particular conclusion about the nature of the mark given to Cain. Nor is the verse explicit about whether the mark was passed on to his descendants.^[52] Of possible relevance to this question is Moses 7:22 which states that “the seed of Cain were black.”^[53] Allred, however, finds even this statement inconclusive, arguing that it could be a figurative expression referring to “those who followed Cain in his wicked practices,” referring to them “in the same manner that the Jews were called the children of the Devil.”^[54] Similarly, Goldenberg has argued that, as with the four horsemen of Revelation 6:1–8, the blackness of individuals depicted in *1 Enoch* and in other ancient Near Eastern sources is used in a purely symbolic fashion to represent evil and exclusion from the covenant community.^[55] He conjectures that beliefs about Cain’s skin becoming black were the result of textual misunderstandings.^[56]

Consistent with this view is al-Kisa’i’s report of a tradition that Lamech (the son of the Sethite Methuselah—not to be confused with the Cainite Lamech of Moses 5:43–54) married Methuselcha, a descendant of Cain. Though mentioning the fact that there was “enmity that existed between the children of Seth and the children of Cain,” the story implies that there was nothing in their outward appearance that would identify them as being of different lineages, since Lamech had to tell her his parentage explicitly. Described in wholly positive terms, Methuselcha was said in this tradition to have become the mother of Noah.^[57]

It is not clear at all from the biblical text or the Book of Moses text that the *’ôt* had anything to do with skin color. What the biblical and Book of Moses texts do both suggest, however, is that the *’ôt* constituted a form of divine protection, “lest any finding [Cain] should kill him.”^[58] In other words, even in enacting divine justice upon Cain for his premeditated fratricide, the Lord, who “is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil,”^[59] found a way to also administer divine mercy to one who had been a “son” by covenant, but had defected to perdition. There is no evidence that the *’ôt* was something genetically transmissible to Cain’s posterity. It was an act of mercy to Cain himself. Moreover, that this was not a genetic or generational “mark” or “sign” appears to be consistent with the doctrinal “saying” in Moses 6:54 that “the Son of God hath atoned for original guilt, wherein the sins of the parents cannot be answered upon the heads of the children.”

Enoch’s Teachings to the Other Tribes

In Moses 7:9, Enoch has a vision of “the land of Sharon, and the land of Enoch, and the land of Omner, and the land of Heni, and the land of Shem, and the land of Haner, and the land of Hanannah, and all the inhabitants thereof.” Here is what can be said about the names that are mentioned in the verse:

- *Sharon*. "Sharon" appears as a place name in the Bible in 1 Chronicles 5:16, 27:29; Song of Solomon 2:1; Isaiah 33:9, 35:2, 65:10.
- *Enoch*. Presumably this place was not named after the prophet, but rather after Enoch, the son of Cain.^[60]
- *Omner*. "Omner" appears in the Book of Mormon as the personal name of one of the sons of Mosiah.^[61]
- *Henri*. This name does not appear elsewhere in scripture.
- *Shem*. Besides being the name of Noah's son,^[62] "Shem" is the name of a land in the Book of Mormon.^[63] It is also used as a personal name in Mormon 6:14.
- *Haner*. This name does not appear elsewhere in scripture.
- *Hanannah*. This name does not appear elsewhere in scripture.

Apparently the "people" to which Enoch was commanded to preach included the groups named above, but not the people of Canaan.^[64] These groups were told to "Repent, lest I [the Lord] come out and smite them with a curse."^[65] The requirement that the people repent or be cursed is found throughout Scripture. For example, the commandments given to Israel in Deuteronomy 28 include blessings and cursings conditioned on obedience. The result of continued rebellion is destruction or death.^[66]



Details of a statue in St. Stephan's Platz, Vienna, Austria with plaques for the God the Father (Creator), God the Son (Redeemer), and God the Holy Spirit, 2003^[67]

In verse 11, the people are instructed to "baptize in the name of the Father, and of the Son, which is full of grace and truth, and of the Holy Ghost." The instructions to repent and be baptized should be compared to the guidelines that the Lord gave to Adam regarding the teaching of his children.^[68] Although Moses 6:52 states that baptism should be performed in the name of the Son and in verses 57–59 God refers to the Son and the Spirit in His

explanation of spiritual rebirth, Moses 7:11 marks the first example of using titles of all three members of the Godhead in the baptismal ordinance as is done in the Church today.^[69]

Moses 7:12 concludes Enoch's prophecy, stating that "Enoch continued to call upon all the people, save it were the people of Canaan." The restricted scope of Enoch's ministry outlined here is in contrast to the universal extent of the teachings of the "preachers of righteousness"^[70] that preceded him. There is no explanation for why the people of Canaan are excluded from Enoch's preaching. Following the narrative, we may suppose that the reason may be due to their acts of violence against the people of Shum.^[71]

Conclusions

The interesting interlude in these verses continues to echo themes in the Enoch literature as well as the Old Testament. Enoch's prophecy to the tribes is a bridge between his teachings on the plan of salvation and the events that led to the establishing of Zion. His warning leaves the people without excuse, allowing them to choose either to participate in the devastating events of "wars and bloodshed" among the wicked or to dwell with the Lord and "his people ... in righteousness."^[72]

This article is adapted and expanded from Bradshaw, Jeffrey M., and David J. Larsen. *Enoch, Noah, and the Tower of Babel. In God's Image and Likeness 2*. Salt Lake City, UT: The Interpreter Foundation and Eborn Books, 2014, pp. 105, 130–133.

Further Reading

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Endnotes

[1] In A. Feyerick *et al.*, Genesis, p. 127.

[2] Moses 7:1.

[3] Moses 7:2.

[4] Moses 6:47. See also Moses 6:42.

[5] Scholarly debate tends to revolve around whether the term *nabî* conveys an active or passive meaning. L. Koehler *et al.*, Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon (HALOT 1994), p. 661 note that *nabî* “may have an active sense, ‘speaker, herald, preacher’ or (more probably) a passive sense ‘one who has been called.’” Whether the meaning of *nabî* is ultimately active or passive, the word is certainly related to the Akkadian verb *nabû(m)*, originally Old Akkadian and Old Assyrian *nabāum*, with the active meanings “to name; nominate; decree”; “name” (persons, things, places); “invoke” (deity) and the noun *nabû(m)*, a contraction of *nabium*, with the passive meanings “called, authorized person” (i.e., of a king) (J. Black *et al.*, Concise Dictionary of Akkadian (CDA), pp. 228-229).

[6] F. W. Danker *et al.*, Greek-English Lexicon p. 890.

[7] See, e.g., *Bible Dictionary* (Latter-day Saint Edition of the Holy Scriptures, 2013 ed.), s.v., “Prophet,” 708-709:

It was ... the prophet's duty to denounce sin and foretell its punishment and to redress, so far as he could, both public and private wrongs. He was to be, above all, a preacher of righteousness. When the people had fallen away from a true faith in Jehovah, the prophets had to try to restore that faith and remove false views about the character of God and the nature of the divine requirement. In certain cases prophets predicted future events, such as the very important prophecies announcing the coming of Messiah's kingdom; but as a rule a prophet was a *forthteller* rather than a *foreteller*. In a general sense a prophet is anyone who has a testimony of Jesus Christ by the Holy Ghost.

[8] L. Koehler *et al.*, Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon (HALOT 1994), pp. 661-662.

[9] Compare Moses 6:41 to Moses 6:23.

[10] Moses 6:22-23.

[11] Moses 6:23, 27-30, 47-68; 7:10-12. On Enoch's testimony of Jesus Christ, see Moses 6:52, 54, 57; 7:11; on repentance, see especially vv. 23, 27-29, 50-53, 57; 7:10-12.

[12] Cf. Moses 1:2: "And he saw God face to face, and he talked with him, and the glory of God was upon Moses"; Exodus 33:1: "And the Lord spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend." Regarding the brother of Jared, see Ether 3:4-20. See also D. Bradley, *Lost 116 Pages*, pp. 236-238; B. A. Gardner, *Second Witness*, 6:191-194, 199-210.

[13] See also J. M. Bradshaw, *God's Image 1, Commentary Moses 1:2-a*, p. 44; J. M. Bradshaw *et al.*, *God's Image 2, Commentary Moses 6:68-a*, p. 84. Cf. L. E. Dahl *et al.*, *Lectures*, 2:55, p. 51: "Enoch, the brother of Jared, and Moses ... obtain[ed] faith in God, and power with Him to behold him face to face."

[14] G. W. E. Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 1*, 14:8-24, pp. 257, 267.

[15] F. I. Andersen, *2 Enoch*, 22:5 [J], pp. 136, 138.

[16] *Ibid.*, 22:1 [J], p. 136.

[17] See A. A. Orlov, *Enoch-Metatron*, pp. 153-156.

[18] Moses 7:4.

[19] Beginning with *Essay #25*.

[20] See J. M. Bradshaw *et al.*, *God's Image 2, Commentary Moses 7:20-a*, p. 137.

[21] Moses 7:7-11. On the themes of repentance in the Enoch tradition, see *Essays #10, 11* and *13*. On the subject of baptism and the Son of Man, see *Essays #14-20*.

[22] R. D. Draper *et al.*, *Commentary*, p. 115.

[23] *Ibid.*, p. 115.

[24] CDA, 385-386.

[25] E.g., Genesis 4:20; 9:21; 12:8.

[26] Moses 7:22.

[27] See Moses 7:8, 22.

[28] R. D. Draper *et al.*, *Commentary*, p. 115. Other than a possible allusion in a JST addition to Genesis 9:26, there is no explicit connection in scripture made between the "seed of Cain" (i.e., "who were black") and the people of Canaan mentioned in Moses 7:8 (i.e., "there was a blackness came upon all the children of Canaan"). See J. M. Bradshaw *et al.*, *God's Image 2, Commentary Moses 7:22-b*, p. 139; *Commentary Moses*

6:17-c, p. 54; Commentary Genesis 9:26-b, p. 142.

[29] Moses 6:17.

[30] Moses 6:17.

[31] Moses 6:41.

[32] H. W. Nibley, *Teachings of the PGP*, 20, p. 249. Cf. H. W. Nibley, *Enoch*, p. 178; G. J. Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, pp. 123–124.

[33] Genesis 9:18.

[34] See Abraham 2:1–4.

[35] Moses 7:8.

[36] Moses 5:36.

[37] G. W. E. Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 1*, 100:11, p. 503.

[38] Moses 7:7.

[39] Exodus 23:30.

[40] J. M. Bradshaw, *Did Joshua “Utterly Destroy”*.

[41] Moses 7:8.

[42] Moses 4:23.

[43] Moses 7:8.

[44] See J. M. Bradshaw *et al.*, *God’s Image 2*, Commentary Moses 7:22-b, p. 139.

[45] H. W. Nibley, *Teachings of the PGP*, p. 282.

[46] See Z. M. Ibrahim *et al.*, *Diversity*, p. 78.

[47] P. S. Alexander, *3 Enoch*, 44:6, p. 295.

[48] G. W. E. Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 1*, 85:3–5, p. 364.

[49] *Ibid.*, p. 371 n. 3–10.

[50] See Moses 5:40.

[51] J. M. Bradshaw, *God’s Image 1*, 5:40-c, p. 386.

[52] For arguments that the account of the mark of Cain should not be interpreted as referring to something that was passed on to future generations, see, e.g., U. Cassuto, *Adam to Noah*, pp. 227–228; C. Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*, pp. 312–313.

[53] Cf. J. Smith, Jr., *Documentary History*, 25 January 1842, 4:501. Note also the statement that a “blackness came upon all the children of Canaan,” seemingly in direct consequence of a notable act of genocide (Moses 7:7–8). See M. H. Martins, *Blacks*, pp. 10–11.

[54] A. Allred, *Traditions*, p. 49. See John 8:44.

[55] D. M. Goldenberg, *Curse*, pp. 152–154. See also manuscript versions of Moses 1:15 (S. H. Faulring *et al.*, *Original Manuscripts*, OT1, p. 84, OT2, p. 592), as well as J. M. Bradshaw, *God’s Image 1*, Commentary 1:15-a, p. 55.

[56] D. M. Goldenberg, *Curse*, pp. 178–182. For similar conclusions relating to the mark imposed upon the Lamanites in the Book of Mormon (e.g., 1 Nephi 12:23, 2 Nephi 5:21–24, Alma 3:6–19, 3 Nephi 2:14–16), see B. A. Gardner, *Second Witness*, 2:108–123; J. L. Sorenson, *Ancient*, p. 90.

[57] M. i. A. A. al-Kisa’i, *Tales*, pp. 91–93.

[58] Genesis 4:15; Moses 5:40.

[59] Luke 6:35.

[60] Moses 5:42–43, 49.

[61] E.g., Mosiah 27:34.

[62] E.g., Moses 7:9; 8:12, 27.

[63] Mormon 2:20–21.

[64] See Moses 7:12.

[65] Moses 7:10.

[66] See, e.g., Deuteronomy 11:26–28; 30:19; 2 King 22:16–19; Malachi 3:8–12; 4:5–6; Matthew 25:31–46; 1 Nephi 17:38; Jacob 2:29; 3:3; Alma 3:19; Alma 17:15; 45:16; D&C 41:1; Moses 5:25; 5:52.

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[68] Moses 6:57–59. See *Essay #14*. The reference to “the Holy Ghost, which beareth record of the Father and the Son” is also used in Moses 5:9. The use of the term “record” recalls the titles of the Holy Ghost given in Moses 6: “the record of heaven” (Moses 6:61) and “the record of the Father and the Son” (Moses 6:66). See also Moses 6:63: “all things are created and made to bear record of me.” For more on the use of the term “record” in the teachings of Enoch, see *Essay #16*.

[69] D&C 20:73.

[70] See Moses 6:23.

[71] See Moses 7:7.

[72] Moses 7:16.