

23 Creation: Science and Scripture

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I was only eleven years old, and even now remember the perfumed smell of the rich cedar smoke as it drifted through the small and seemingly circular room of the log hogan. It was January, the Navajo reservation was cold and uninviting, and the warmth of the hogan was enticing after walking nearly a quarter of a mile from the truck. In the semi darkness of the fire it seemed like a dream as I stood with the silent members of the Navajo family. I watched in the heat of the haze-filled room as the local shaman or “medicine man” squatted close to the open flame. The colored sand slipped through his fingers, and as if by magic formed an intricate circular design on the earthen floor. This sobering experience made a lasting impression in my mind as I was told when we left the home that the sand painting represented the world, light and darkness, male and female, and the creative forces used in their formation. I will never forget the reverie like feeling as I stepped out of the “white man’s” world into an alien environment filled with myth and ritual.

Years later as an undergraduate I began to realize that certain motifs continue to surface in the sea of cultural myth. The most common “myth” in all societies recapitulates elements of the cosmic creation (i.e., the cosmogonic myth) and the formation of mankind by the gods. “This cosmogonic myth serves a single ritual purpose: to connect the two realities of heaven and earth. The process of bringing the visible and invisible worlds into a relationship with each other may be accomplished through the metaphor, symbol, and allegory” of the creation.¹ Knowing that the scriptures contain three accounts of the creation, one must ask those terrible questions, because myth, in a ritual setting, addresses the origins of humanity. It describes the “Golden Age” without death and sin, followed by the introduction of mortality. History is no more than a record of mankind’s attempt to find and acquire the glorious pristine era of the past and understand the onslaught of evil to stop that progression. It sometimes seems that all of world history is nothing more than the details of the battle between the forces that seek to establish an earthly Zion and the evil that seeks to create a spiritual black hole of wickedness.

Why Creation Epochs?

In the study of ancient languages, cultures, and religions, ‘creation myths’ persistently and frequently show up in the ancient documents. Because of their frequency, certain questions naturally follow: *Why are the creation accounts found everywhere? Why are they in every culture? And why are these creation myths repeated so often in an ancient temple setting? What makes the cosmology so important to a people or culture? Why does it show up so often in ancient cultures? What is the relationship between God, the cosmos, and humanity?* These questions are not original. The nostalgia for our beginning lies within every person, religion, and culture. The origin of the world and mankind is the primary focus of the myths of creation found in all cultures of ancient origin. The word “myth” as originally defined means the *true story of a beginning*. Myth is something real, something that happened *ab-origine*: that is, before origins, before our time, or the

1. Heinberg, Richard, *Memories and Visions of Paradise* (Los Angeles: Jeremy P. Tarcher Inc, 1989), p.15.

time of the first time. Mircea Eliade, though non-LDS, defines the term “myth” in words that make sacred connections to the Temple and our creation narratives.

Myth narrates a sacred history; it relates an event that took place in primordial Time, the fabled time of the “beginnings.” In other words, myth tells how, through the deeds of Supernatural Beings. A reality came into existence. . . . Myth then is always an account of a “creation” it relates how something was produced, how it began to be. Myth tells only of that which really happened, which manifested itself completely.²

Today the word myth is most often used as a synonym for ‘fable’, a false or fictitious story. As used in this chapter, “myth” will mean the true story of something *real*, especially in regards to the creation epoch.

Researcher and author Barbara Sproul opens her excellent collection of ancient creation stories and myths from around the world with this introductory paragraph about creation accounts:

The most profound human questions are the ones that give rise to creation myths: Who are we? Why are we here? What is the purpose of our lives and our deaths? These are central questions of value and meaning, and, while they are influenced by issues of fact, they are not in themselves factual questions; rather, they involve attitudes toward facts and reality.³

The most important issues faced in mortal life are addressed most directly by the creation accounts found in scripture and the Temple. Understanding these things can provide the observant student an endowment of power, which accompanies the knowledge of important and eternal truths found in these creation epochs. The Western Culture, education, evolutionary theory, and even business have forced thoughts about the creation of our physical world out of the mind of the natural man. The commandment to ‘keep the Sabbath day holy’ was instituted to *remember and rehearse the creation*. (i.e. man’s relationship with God, his fellow man, and the environment in which he must work out his salvation).

12 And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,

13 Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily my *sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between me and you* throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you.

14 Ye shall keep the sabbath therefore; for it is holy unto you: every one that defileth it shall surely be put to death. . .

15 Six days may work be done; but in the seventh is the sabbath of rest, holy to the Lord: whosoever doeth any work in the sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death.

16 Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the sabbath, to observe the sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant. [and the “perpetual covenant” is the connection to the creation]

17 *It is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed.* (Exodus 31:12-17)

2. Eliade, Mircea, *Myths, Rites, Symbols*, Edited by Wendell C. Beane and William G. Doty, Vol. 1, (Harper & Row, Publishers, New York; 1976), p.3.

3. Sproul, Barbara, *Primal Myths*. (HarperCollins, New York, 1991), p. 1, Introduction.

Speaking of keeping the Sabbath a Holy day, the Lord affirms the “perpetual covenant” and blessing of obedience connected to the covenant of the Sabbath, which is directly connected to the creation accounts found in scripture. In the Doctrine and Covenants, the blessing of remembering the Sabbath of creation is explained:

16 Verily I say, that inasmuch as ye do this, [keep the Sabbath day Holy] the fulness of the earth is yours, the *beasts of the field* and the *fowls of the air*, and that which climbth upon the trees and walketh upon the earth;

17 Yea, and *the herb*, and the good things which come of the earth, whether for food or for raiment, or for houses, or for barns, or for orchards, or for gardens, or for vineyards;

18 Yea, all things which come of the earth, in the season thereof, are made for the benefit and the use of man, both to please the eye and to gladden the heart;

19 Yea, for food and for raiment, for taste and for smell, to strengthen the body and to enliven the soul. (D&C 59:15-19; see also Isaiah 58:13, 14)

Sproul again explains the need for a connection to the creation, even for modern man:

“Without it (the creation myth), we cannot determine what things are, what to do with them, or how to be in relation to them. The fundamental structures of understanding what myths provide, even though in part dictated by matter and instinct, are nevertheless essentially arbitrary because they describe not just the real world of fact but our perception and experience of that world.⁴

Any endowment of power from on high that would come from myth and ritual must then contain the elements of the creation and our Heavenly Father's dealings with our first parents. A better understanding of man's role in the cosmos and creation will provide the knowledge one needs to achieve salvation while here on earth. These myths about the creation are not dogmas, but narratives that “describe the work of God and characterize their mutual relations... which are expressive of the relation between God and man.”⁵

The man of archaic societies who focused so much on the creation myths, was attempting to make and keep a connection between himself, his world, and the world of the Gods. Mircea Eliade, the father of the History of Religion, speaks of a power that comes from the ‘rituals of recitation’ of the works of the Gods at the creation of the world. The western culture has basically stripped from modern man the ability to make the necessary connections from this world to the world of the Gods through ritual. Understanding the works of God, especially the relationship of good and evil, gives man a power over all creation. Knowing how something came to be—and that would include Satan and evil—can give us power to control it, and to overcome undesirable influences that exist in the world God created. Knowledge is an endowment of power. Speaking of this endowment of power through knowledge, Eliade surmises that to the man of the ancient cultures (and even the LDS culture):

...the essential thing is to know the myths. [the true story of one's beginning] It is essential not only because the myths provide him with an explanation of the World and his own mode of being in the World, but above all because, by recollecting the myths, by reenacting

4. Sproul, Barbara C. in *Primal Myths, Creating the World* (New York: Harper and Row, 1979) p. 2,

5. Pedersen, Johns, in his article "Wisdom and Immortality" in *Wisdom in Israel and in the Ancient Near East*, Ed. M. Noth and D. W. Thomas, Sup. *Vetus Testamentum* Vol III (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1955) pp. 243-244.

them, he is able to repeat what the God, the Heros, or the Ancestors did ab origine. ...For knowing the origin of an object, an animal, a plant, and so on is equivalent to acquiring a magical power over them by which they can be controlled, multiplied, or reproduced at will. ...In most cases it is not enough to know the origin myth, one must recite it; this, in a sense is a proclamation of one's knowledge, and displays it. But this is not all, He who recites or performs the origin myth is thereby steeped in the sacred atmosphere in which these miraculous events took place. ...By reciting the myths, one reconstitutes that fabulous time and hence in some sort becomes "contemporary" with the events described, one is in the presence of the Gods. ...By "living" the myths, one emerges from profane, chronological time and enters a time that is of a different quality, as "sacred" Time at once primordial and indefinitely recoverable.⁶

The ritual repetition and recitation of the creation epoch, the works of God, and the activities of the first man, symbolically places the initiate in the presence of the Gods and in an environment of "real time". That means one is connected in the present tense with the events and characters that 'created' the world and life as it is known today. Knowledge is power, and with an understanding of *the relationship that exists between God, man, and the environment in which man must live and work out his salvation, the individual obtains a power over the natural evils of life and the dark door of death.* There is a particular structure and function to these creation epochs, which Eliade explains, along with the answer to why it is central in all ancient cultures. In the quote below Eliade explains the 'endowment of power' that comes through the knowledge of, and ritual participation in, the creation of the world and God's involvement with the first man. Defining comments will be placed within this text surrounded by [brackets].

These creation myths and epochs:

(1) Constitute the History of the Acts of the Supernaturals; [the Gods and the first man].
(2) Are considered to be absolutely true (because it is concerned with realities) and sacred (because it is the work of the Supernaturals [Gods]); (3) Are always related to a "creation," it tells how something came into existence, or how a pattern of behavior, an institution, a manner of working were established; this is why myths constitute the paradigms for all significant human acts: (4) Teach that by knowing the myth, one knows the "origin" of things and hence can control and manipulate them at will; this is not an "external," "abstract" knowledge but a knowledge that one "experiences" ritually, either by ceremonially recounting the myth or by performing the ritual for which it is the justification; (5) In one way or another allow one to "live" the myth, in the sense that one is seized by the sacred, exalting power of the events recollected or re-enacted. "Living" a myth, then, implies a genuinely "religious" experience, since it differs from the ordinary experience of everyday life. The "religiousness" of this experience is due to the fact that one re-enacts fabulous, exalting, significant events, one again witnesses the creative deeds of the Supernaturals; one ceases to exist in the everyday world and enters a transfigured, auroral world impregnated with the Supernaturals' [Gods] presence. What is involved is not a commemoration of mythical events but a reiteration of them. The protagonists of the myth are made present, one becomes their contemporary. This also implies that one is no longer living in chronological time, but in the primordial Time, the Time when the event first took place. ...To re-experience that time, to re-enact it is often possible, to witness again the spectacle of the divine works, to meet with the Supernaturals and relearn their creative lesson is the desire that runs like a pattern through all the ritual [Temple]

6. Eliade, Mircea, *Myths, Rites, Symbols*, Vol. 1, pp. 5, 6.

reiterations of myths. In short, myths [the Temple] reveal that the World, man, and life have a supernatural origin and history, and that this history is significant, precious and exemplary. . . .⁷

The summary offered as this quote concludes distills the purpose of these creation myths or epoch accounts, and why they are rehearsed and re-enacted in ancient and modern Temples. This endowment of knowledge ‘reveals,’ in the words of Eliade, ‘that the world, man, and life, have a God-given origin and history, and that this history is significant, exalting, and exemplary.’

LDS Temple rituals are often participated in by patrons as a matter of rote responsibility and action. Many participants of an endowment of power seek nothing other than the feel-good feeling resulting from; “that’s what I should do” because “that’s what I’m told to do.” For some, the creation account that is repeated and rehearsed in Temples is often nothing more than just that. Many members talk and even boast of their calling to “work” in the Temples and exult in how spiritually blessed they feel, which are legitimate feelings that all should seek. Though spiritually satisfied in their Martha-like service, many fail to see the purpose for which Temples were established: to teach light and truth, endowing the initiate and patron with the power of knowledge.

Some self-described scholars and individuals seek with a spiritual zeal to find symbols behind every door and in every nook of the Temple and its surrounding grounds. There are symbols that exist, but only so far as the scriptures and God has revealed. Some symbols seen in the temple are nothing more than decoration and architectural detail. Nobody knows the meaning of a symbol except the person who created it, or required it to be made. If the origin of the symbol is not known, then every interpretation could be correct; conversely, every interpretation could potentially be wrong. All temples are constructed to maintain sacred space so that *revealed knowledge*—not hidden and subtle symbols—could be taught. The Lord delights in plainness, not the gnostic secrecy that can only be found by a select few.

The sacred knowledge provided in the Temple, reveals an ‘endowment of power’ to those seeking light and truth. The real message of this endowment power is found not in the symbols and metaphors, but in the message that is clearly taught and plainly explained as God creates the world. What happens to the first man and woman happens to everyone. The plan of salvation and exaltation that was prepared for the first parents through the Atonement of Jesus Christ is the same for all today. Sometimes the forest cannot be seen because of the trees. The message of the creation epoch will often remain *unseen*, because so many books have shrouded the real and fundamental meaning of the endowment searching beyond the mark in symbols, metaphors, opinions, and private interpretations. These authors seek to explain Temple symbolism to the ‘lay member’ who has not been trained for a ministry of metaphor and symbol. If a knowledge of symbol, metaphor, architecture, ancient cultures, or education is necessary to understand the *information presented* in the Temple, then spiritual perfection is forever out of reach. Not only would the ‘lay member’ fail terribly, but God would be partial toward the learned, blessing only those who have been trained to understand metaphor and symbol.

There are some members on the other end of the spectrum who take the creation epochs so literally that they employ the information presented as finite detail to explain all the works of God in this

7. *Ibid.* pp. 6, 7.

physical environment. They think to hold all science and religion to the details of creation as presented, failing to realize that even though the creation accounts are presented in a scriptural account, they are still ritual in purpose. These zealots suppose that the concepts and descriptions found in the creation account are literal and must be accepted as the unquestioned truth of the timetable of creation. For example, some hold to the idea that the ‘six days’ of creation are six twenty-four hour periods that conform to our understanding and standard of time. Others have determined that these six days were in reality six thousand years, based on the belief that one day with God is *as* a thousand years.

The trend by many is to surmise that all of creation and the world in which we live, with mountains, fossils and fossil fuels, dinosaurs, cave dwellers and mountains and canyons etc. were created in the six thousand years before Adam is placed on the earth. They believe that the earth and its solar system is no older than twelve thousand years. Some members spend an inordinate amount of time and money trying to prove their interpretation of the scriptural creation epoch in order to bring scientific and religious communities around to their point of view. Not surprisingly, they tend to be partial to the single creation account that best substantiates their theories. If life is a probationary state, then sin is the misuse of time. These zealous fundamentalists, in their dogged failure to comprehend the true purpose of the creation accounts, unwittingly limit their own understanding and vision.

There are four primary accounts of the creation used in the church. These are: Moses, Genesis, Abraham, and the Temple accounts. Each differs in significant ways because they are presented for a particular reason and from a particular point of view, which will be explained in detail later in this chapter.

The creation accounts found in Moses and Abraham are written accounts of their endowment of power (not just the ritual but the reality). Abraham, in the first four verses of the first chapter, explains in his colophon that he was seeking for light and truth and the blessings of the fathers. Abraham then spends the rest of the record explaining how he received his endowment from the fathers. Both Moses and Abraham include a creation accounts because the creation epoch is a required element in the endowment of power that they are receiving. The *Pearl of Great Price* is truly that, as it records the knowledge that these prophets and patriarchs received from God as they were blessed with the light, truth, and the blessings that they had been seeking. It is from these texts that our most sacred rituals and ordinances are derived for those willing to live a higher law in order to receive further light and truth.

Relationships

The scripture are replete with the purpose of the creation. The Lord declares to Moses: “this is my work and my glory—to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man” (Moses 1:39). This statement establishes a purpose for the creation of the universe as well as the heavens and the earth, making a connection between the creation and the salvation of man. If this connection between the work and glory of God and the physical environment exists, one might reasonably ask 'why' the creation accounts exist. Is it so that man might have a ‘scientific explanation’ about the world around him? Or does it exist in order to establish an understandable relationship? The creation epochs are not detailed enough to be considered a scientific treatise of any sort, so we must

consider the likelier possibility that they are included in ritual and scripture in order to *establish a relationship*: a relationship between God, man, and the environment in which mankind will live.

To assume that the creation accounts found in scripture are meant to (or could be used to) establish scientific fact is foolish. While these accounts contain truths, even some orderly scientific truths, they are not written to become a point of scientific discussion, argument, theory, or fact. Wherever a creation account exists in the ancient world, it is presented in the framework of an ordinance or initiation and is meant to establish a relationship between God, man and the environment in which man will exist.⁸ That means it doesn't address the environment that existed before the earth was fit for man (more about this later). If one were to approach the creation epochs looking to prove the theory of intelligent design to the scientific community that God exists “with disregard of their possible ritual and cultic settings, it may lead to the most fearful misinterpretations.”⁹ This lone and dreary world is the created environment in which mankind will need to learn and work out their own salvation in ‘fear and trembling’ (Mormon 9:27). Creation accounts exist to help us understand relationships, not science. They establish that God is the creator of the world and consequently our lives, lifestyles, and livelihoods, reinforcing our understanding that without God, nothing is possible.

The scriptures can enlighten our understanding about the creation of the earth. Addressing *marriage* and the potential of *children*, the Lord creates another connection between creation and mankind, linking the two together.

16 Wherefore, it is lawful that he should have one wife, and they twain shall be one flesh, and all this that the earth might answer the end of its creation;

17 And that it might be filled with the measure of man, according to his creation before the world was made. (D&C 49:16-17)

The Prophet Isaiah teaches the same thing in the Old Testament as he purposely explains why the creation accounts exist and were given to the Children of Israel through Moses. This same account is found in our Book of Moses and is recounted in the Pearl of Great Price for the same reason that Isaiah infers.

18 For thus saith the Lord that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited: I am the Lord; and there is none else. (Isaiah 45:18)

Like Isaiah, Nephi, the son of Lehi, also concludes as did Isaiah that there is a connection between the creation and the salvation of mankind, as he states: “Behold, *the Lord hath created the earth that it should be inhabited; and he hath created his children that they should possess it*” (1 Nephi 17:36).

These few scriptures explain that the Creation accounts that are rehearsed and explained *in history and in ordinance* exist to establish a purpose of creation and a relationship between God, man, and the environment in which man will live. The definition of “man” is that being who is created in the image and likeness of God and *who has the potential to become like God*.

8. I. Engnell, "Knowledge and Life in the Creation Story" in *Supplements to Vetus Testamentum* (1955) vol. III p. 105, 106.

9. *Ibid*.

Creation Epochs and the Endowment of Power

The 1828 dictionary defines the word ‘endowment’ as:

“That which is given or bestowed on the person or mind by the creator; gift of nature; any quality or faculty bestowed by the creator...Natural vigor of intellect is an endowment of the mind.”

The Endowment of Power lies not in any ordinance but in knowledge. The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that “a man can be saved no faster than he gains knowledge”, which is echoed in the Doctrine and Covenants:

He that keepeth his commandments receiveth truth and light, until he is glorified in truth and knoweth all things. (D&C 93:28)

That which is of God is light; and he that receiveth light, and continueth in God, receiveth more light; and that light groweth brighter and brighter until the perfect day. (D&C 50:24)

Without a change of character, there is no power in the ordinances of salvation or exaltation. An individual could participate in every priesthood ordinance the church has to offer and not one ordinance has any power to force the reality of the ordained blessing unless the person, by using their agency, has changed their character to become worthy of that reality. Alma explains the purpose of Melchizedek ordinances:

Now these ordinances were given after this manner, that thereby the people *might look forward* on the Son of God ... it being his order, and this that they *might look forward* to him for a remission of their sins, that they might enter into the rest of the Lord (Alma 13:16).

The ordinances provide *the hope of a future reality*, ‘to look forward’ to that reality. To reiterate, the real power of the ordinance lies not in the priesthood that performs the ordinance or in the ordinance itself, but in the agency of the individual that receives that ordinance. The power of the ordinances lies in the individual choice to change one’s character in a way that will foster the relationship with God that is needed to make the ordinance a reality.

For the natural man is an enemy to God, and has been from the fall of Adam, and will be forever and ever, unless he yields to the enticings of the Holy Spirit, and *putteth off the natural man and becometh a saint through the Atonement of Christ the Lord*, and becometh as a child, submissive, meek, humble, patient, full of love, willing to submit to all things which the Lord seeth fit to inflict upon him, even as a child doth submit to his father. (Mosiah 3:19)

Repentance is simply the process of changing one’s character. The more an individual knows and understands about their life, surroundings, and potential, the more perfect will be the decisions and actions, all of which are reflected in the character and nature that is developed.

The creation accounts are rehearsed in scripture ritual and ordinances to establish character-changing relationships. King Benjamin makes this connection between the change of character and the creation accounts in a way that defines the purpose of these creation accounts in the temple and scripture.

20 I say unto you, my brethren, that if you should render all the thanks and praise which your whole soul has power to possess, *to that God who has created you*, and has kept and preserved you, and has caused that ye should rejoice,

21 I say unto you that *if ye should serve him who has created you from the beginning*, and *is preserving you* from day to day, by *lending you breath*, that ye may live and move and do according to your own will, and even supporting you from one moment to another—I say, if ye should serve him with all your whole souls yet ye would be unprofitable servants.

22 And behold, *all that he requires of you is to keep his commandments*; and he has promised you that if ye would keep his commandments ye should prosper in the land;

23 And now, in the first place, *he hath created you, and granted unto you your lives, for which ye are indebted unto him*.

24 And secondly, he doth require that ye should do as he hath commanded you; for which if ye do, he doth immediately bless you; and therefore he hath paid you. And ye are still indebted unto him, and are, and will be, forever and ever; therefore, of what have ye to boast?

25 And now I ask, can ye say aught of yourselves? I answer you, Nay. *Ye cannot say that ye are even as much as the dust of the earth; yet ye were created of the dust of the earth; but behold, it belongeth to him who created you.* (Mosiah 2:20-25)

The real endowment of power, then, is knowing and understanding the concepts that King Benjamin taught, as well as other key doctrines of life and salvation. This knowledge that endows one with power over mortality might be summarized in a few simple statements:

- That God lives,
- That God created this world for mankind,
- That our separation from God can be reversed,
- That we have an eternal nature and spirit,
- That there is a plan of progression toward God,
- That there is a purpose to this life that endures past death,
- That our potentials are as limitless as God's,
- That the trials of mortality have purpose and are necessary,
- Where evil comes from and how to control it,
- That death is not an end but a beginning, and
- That a Son of God, provides an Atonement and resurrection.

Knowing the truth of these things endows an individual with a power over this mortal life of sin, suffering, death and evil. This life changing knowledge can provide the joy and happiness of redemption and the hope of a better resurrection, establishing a purpose in life that will motivate us to want to return to the presence of God. To understand the power this knowledge imparts, imagine how one would navigate this temporal sphere without it. The longing to understand the meaning of life is universal. In the creation accounts one begins to find the answers. For this reason all ancient cultures had creation epochs that gave them a place in this world and a relationship with the creator, and an understanding that what the first man did and experienced, all mankind must

do. Hence, the purpose of the ritual repetition is to realize and remember that divine and eternal relationships exist between God and man, and to understand the potential of life in the immortal world of the Gods.

The three pillars of the Gospel are The Creation, The Fall and The Atonement, which also happen to be the primary messages the creation accounts ritually convey. In short, *God's work and message in scripture is not to provide a scientific treatise on the creation, but to furnish the spiritual (not scientific) truths needed to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man.*

Creation

The Doctrine and Covenants teach that an eternal truth is a “knowledge of things as they are, and as they were, and as they are to come” (D&C 93:24). This definition of truth implies that to have a complete, or a more perfect understanding of truth, one must comprehend all aspects and points of view in all timeframes; i.e., the past, present, and the future of a particular truth.

In the Latter-day Saint world, there are four ‘creation accounts’ that are considered scripture or inspired. They are found in Genesis, Moses, Abraham, and the Temple. The creation account in Moses is the ‘inspired version’ of Genesis, prepared by Joseph Smith; therefore, the three accounts considered here will be Moses, Abraham, and the Temple. These three accounts are remarkable in that they present different points of view in origin and presentation. The creation account found in Moses, written for the Children of Israel, and what God did for them presents the creation as a historical event that happened in the past: “*Things as they were*”. The Temple account presents the creation as something that is happening right now, real time, in the present tense, or “*Things as they are*.” Patrons symbolically become the man Adam and the woman Eve, participating in the events and ordinances that are discussed in ‘real time’. Abraham records the creation epic from a view of the intelligent spirit before the creation has taken place. It is something that has not yet happened and is yet to come: “*Things as they are to come*.” Thus these three creation accounts present the reader with scriptural points of view of the creation from all three time frames: *as they are* (the Temple), *as they were* (Moses), and *as they are to come* (Abraham). Seen from these three perspectives, the reader will come away with a fuller, more accurate understanding than could be obtained from focusing on a single account. Using one account at the exclusion of the others could easily lead to errors. Each account differs in key ways, owing to their respective points of view, but all are true and correct.

Remember, these three accounts are not meant explain the science of creation. Nor are they written to explain or even imply how long it took to create the world. They were given to mankind as part of an ordinance and an initiation, and always show up in this context. Each creation account begins with the general geologic information (water and dry land) and then moves into the astro-geologic (the sun, moon and stars) creation. These geologic and astro-geologic creations are generally defined as the creation of the “heavens and the earth.” This creation of the heavens and the earth are mentioned as fundamental facts without any detail about how, when, or how long the geologic and astro-geologic creation took place, forming the general framework or setting for what follows. As the biologic creation begins (the creation of the plants, fowls, fish and land animals), the detail, though sparse, is expanded a hundredfold compared to the generality of ‘heavens and earth.’ This

expansion in discussion and detail is found in scripture for a specific reason and is connected to the structure and purpose of ‘myth and ritual’ as described previously in this chapter.

Geological Creation

Of the three creation accounts in the church, there are two readily available in scripture. Readers and researchers tend to focus on the account in the Book of Moses (inspired version of Genesis) in preference to the account in the Book of Abraham, which is unfortunate because the Book of Abraham account is better, more complete, and provides a better understanding of the creation than that of Moses. The Abrahamic account will be the main focus in this chapter because of its point of view and the expanded detail.

Remember that Moses is writing for the stubborn Children of Israel. His account is trying to establish a relationship between them, their God and the world in which they lived. He is teaching them about the creation as something that happened in the past. That being the case, it is rehearsed in such a way that the necessary connection that should exist is established. This basic understanding is required to begin a relationship with God for the advancement of their salvation (D&C 84:19-24).

It’s in the details that the Abrahamic account enlarges and clarifies one’s understanding. Moses speaks of God in the singular; Abraham refers to Gods in the plural. This is an insight recognized and confirmed by Joseph Smith. Moses speaks of the “first day”; in Abraham it is rendered as the “first time”, eliminating the concept of 24 hours or 1,000 years as a period of creation. These and other key refinements of detail can clarify our understanding of the creation. Abraham and Joseph Smith provide a number of insights into the creation by the “Gods” and the council of which they are a part. The statements of Joseph imply that at the head of the council are those who created the geological and astro-geological creation, seemingly independent of the biological creation that took place much later. Joseph Smith states that “In the beginning the head God called together the Gods and sat in grand council to bring forth the world.”¹⁰ Decisions were made and “the head God organized the heavens and the earth”¹¹ and then, “the heads of the Gods appointed one God for us.”¹²

The Gods begin with the creation of the Heavens and the Earth as a general aspect of the creation—the framework, so to speak; not one of the “days or times” of the creation account. Letting the scriptures speak for themselves may require an open mind that is unencumbered by the thoughts and traditions of the past.

The events in the first five verses are discussed in a general and informative way, introducing the creation account. To view these first five verses from a ‘textual studies’ point of view, one might recognize the colophonic (content summary) character of these verses. This is easily seen in verse one of Moses. This first verse is the ‘summary’ of what is to follow—the ‘trailer’, if you will, and the title of the text: “*God formed the heavens and the earth.*” Period. Statement of fact, introduction, and title.

10. *TPJS*, 1843-44, p. 348.

11. *Ibid.* 1843-44, p.372

12. *Ibid.*

The first five verses of both Abraham and Moses seem to be the colophon (the introduction and explanation of what is coming up) for the creation account that begins in verse six of each record. This will be seen in greater detail below with the introduction of the sun, moon and stars as the *causation* of light and darkness. Keeping in mind that these creation accounts are for the purpose of establishing a relationship between God, man, and the world in which man will live. Therefore it should not be surprising that, the environment or elements in which man will *not* live (the heavens and an empty and desolate earth) are addressed in a general fashion, as in the astro-geologic creation that follows. These elements are general because they are always there and were there before any man was placed here.

Abraham 4	Moses 2
<p>1 And then the Lord said: Let us go down. And they went down at the beginning, and they, that is the Gods, organized and formed the heavens and the earth.</p> <p>2 And the earth, after it was formed, was empty and desolate, because they had not formed anything but the earth; and darkness reigned upon the face of the deep, and the Spirit of the Gods was brooding upon the face of the waters. (Abraham 4:1-2)</p>	<p>1 And it came to pass that the Lord spake unto Moses, saying: Behold, I reveal unto you concerning this heaven, and this earth; write the words which I speak. I am the Beginning and the End, the Almighty God; by mine Only Begotten I created these things; yea, in the beginning I created the heaven, and the earth upon which thou standest.</p> <p>2 And the earth was without form, and void; and I caused darkness to come up upon the face of the deep; and my Spirit moved upon the face of the water; for I am God. (Moses 2:1-2)</p>

In verse one Abraham adds information about this geologic creation as he states that the Gods “organized and formed,” whereas Moses states “I created” (remember Moses is writing for the Children of Israel). In verses 2 Abraham explains that ‘*after*’ the earth was created it was “*empty and desolate*” while Moses reports that the “earth was without form and void.” Moses in verse two states that “my spirit moves upon the face of the water” while Abraham states that the “Spirit of the Gods was ‘brooding’ upon the waters.” The word “brood” as used here conveys a different emotion or meaning than “my Spirit moved” upon the waters. To ‘brood’ means to watch over, to incubate, while protecting, preparing, and nurturing, like a hen might do over her eggs.

“And they (the Gods) said: Let there be light; and there was light.” (Abraham 4:3; Moses 2:3 “God”)

Abraham 4	Moses 2
<p>4 And they (the Gods) comprehended the light, for it was bright; and they divided the light, or caused it to be divided, from the darkness.</p> <p>5 And the Gods called the light Day, and the darkness they called Night. And it came to pass that from the evening until morning they called night; and from the morning until the evening they called day; and this was the first, or the beginning, of that which they called day and night. (Abraham 4:4-5)</p>	<p>4 And I, God, saw the light; and that light was good. And I, God, divided the light from the darkness.</p> <p>5 And I, God, called the light Day; and the darkness, I called Night; and this I did by the word of my power, and it was done as I spake; and the evening and the morning were the first day. (Moses 2:4-5)</p>

Both, Abraham and Moses speak of the light being divided from the darkness. However, Abraham informs us that the Gods “**caused** it to be divided”, implying that there were laws, action, and obedience taking place. Verse 5 of each text explains that the division of light and darkness needed a designation, but in Abraham's account it was not necessarily meant to be a time period. “From evening to morning it was called night” and from the “morning to the evening it was called day.” This became the beginning of the use of the terms “day and night.” Moses implies that the introduction of light and darkness was the “first day”, whereas Abraham states that this division was the “beginning” of that which was called day and night. The terms “day and night” are designations of light and darkness, and were never meant to be time periods of either 24 hours or 1,000 years.

In the next few verses, the creation of the sun, moon and stars is introduced. Keep in mind the distinctions that were made above in verses 4-5 of Abraham about light and darkness, day and night, and pay attention to the word “*caused*” in connection to the division between the light and darkness.

Abraham 4	Moses 2
<p>14 And the Gods organized the lights in the expanse of the heaven, and caused them to divide the day from the night; and organized them to be for signs and for seasons, and for days and for years;</p> <p>15 And organized them to be for lights in the expanse of the heaven to give light upon the earth; and it was so.</p> <p>16 And the Gods organized the two great lights, the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night; with the lesser light they set the stars also;</p> <p>17 And the Gods set them in the expanse of the heavens, to give light upon the earth, and to rule over the day and over the night, and to cause to divide the light from the darkness. (Abraham 4:14-17)</p>	<p>14 And I, God, said: Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven, to divide the day from the night, and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and for years;</p> <p>15 And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth; and it was so.</p> <p>16 And I, God, made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night, and the greater light was the sun, and the lesser light was the moon; and the stars also were made even according to my word.</p> <p>17 And I, God, set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth,</p> <p>18 And the sun to rule over the day, and the moon to rule over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness; and I, God, saw that all things which I had made were good; (Moses 2:14-18)</p>

Only from one point in space does it appear that our sun and moon are the same size. When viewed from the earth, and in the same arc, the sun and the moon appear to be the exactly the same size. One to rule the day and another to rule the night. Coincidence or design?

Viewing the introductory verses of both accounts in parallel columns allows one to see the differences within the texts and provides for a better understanding of how the lights that were set in the firmament became the 'cause' of the separation. Abraham again gives the best account, but the vocabulary is revealing in both accounts. God creates the sun and moon (lights in the expanse) and then sets the earth spinning which then *causes* light to be "divided" from the darkness.

Abraham 4	Moses 2
<p>3 And they (the Gods) said: Let there be light; and there was light.</p> <p>4 And they (the Gods) comprehended the light, for it was bright; and they divided the light, or <i>caused it</i> to be divided, from the darkness.</p>	<p>3 And I, God, said: Let there be light; and there was light.</p> <p>4 And I, God, saw the light; and that light was good. And I, God, divided the light from the darkness.</p>

Reviewing these accounts to this point, it is implied by the text itself that the first five verses of Abraham 4 and Moses 2 are the introduction of the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the introduction of light by the sun and darkness because of the earth rotation. As explained, the *cause* of the separation of light from the darkness is the introduction of the sun, moon and stars in verses 14-17 of Moses. The heavenly luminaries are in place “for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and for years” (*rotations*) and with this placement, there can be the division of “light and darkness” and the ‘day and night’ that is introduced in verse 5 of Moses 2, and Abraham 4. The creation and placement of the sun, moon and stars becomes the ‘*causation*’ of the phrase “let there be light” (i.e. division between light and darkness), in the introductory verses 3 and 4 of the corresponding chapters.

Abraham 4	Moses 2
<p>14 And the Gods organized the lights in the expanse of the heaven, and <i>caused them to divide the day from the night</i>; and organized them to be for signs and for seasons, and for days and for years;</p> <p>17 And the Gods set them in the expanse of the heavens, to give light upon the earth, and to rule over the day and over the night, <i>and to cause to divide the light from the darkness.</i></p>	<p>14 And I, God, said: Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven, <i>to divide the day from the night</i>, and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and for years;</p> <p>18 And the sun to rule over the day, and the moon to rule over the night, and <i>to divide the light from the darkness</i>; and I, God, saw that all things which I had made were good;</p>

Many teachers have been asked: “When God said, before the sun was created, ‘Let there be light,’ what was the source of the light?” What these accounts are establishing: In the very beginning the Gods created the heavens and the earth, and in the heavens they placed the sun and moon and stars to give light to the earth. They then spun it around so that part of the time it was light and part of the time it was dark, and the Gods call the light ‘day’ and the darkness they called ‘night’. This is intentionally general as the creation of these elements is the same and will be same throughout the existence of the earth. Every 24-hour period there is day (light) and night (darkness). There is a heavenly expanse with a sun and a moon and stars. There is an earth with dry land to walk on and there is water. There is a sun, a moon and stars to see each day. The general geologic and astral-geologic creation must be in place to continue the preparation of the earth for mankind.

Because there are always those who cannot let go of a belief in the six days of creation, the proverbial 'dead horse' must continue to be beat. It just doesn't matter if it took six days, six thousand years, six million years, or six billion years. These accounts are not meant to set the scientific community straight, and are *not* lessons in science, physics, biology or astronomy. The creation epochs exist to establish individual spiritual relationships between Deity, the cosmos, and mankind. To think that science should be reconciled to scripture—or scripture to science—based on these scriptural accounts, is not only narrow-minded but a waste of time. One is sure to miss the beautiful forest of relationships when the trees of interpretation are blocking the real view. These creation accounts are not meant to establish scientific facts for the fundamentalist, or fundamental fiction for the scientist. Any endeavor or argument to *prove or disprove* the creation accounts via scientific process, theory or inquiry is also a waste of time and effort. The details are not there, nor are they meant to be found within the texts.

To review, the purpose of the creation accounts is to establish the relationship between God, man, and the environment in which he is to live and die as he works out his own salvation. It is always rehearsed in the context of an ordination or initiation, and provides the framework or setting for an endowment of power, which is the knowledge needed for the process of salvation and exaltation.

Biological Creation

Given that the creation epochs found in scripture are rehearsed to establish a relationship between God, man, and the environment man will live in, the descriptive rehearsal of the biological creation (plants and animals) must have the same fundamental purpose. In other words, the flora and fauna introduced are described as being created '*for the use of man.*' These are the plants and animals that will be on the earth *when Adam is placed on it*, when it is prepared for him and his posterity. This biological creation is not talking about anything that could not coexist or that lived before the earth was prepared for Adam, Eve and their posterity.

19 For, behold, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the air, and that which cometh of the earth, *is ordained for the use of man for food and for raiment*, and that he might have in abundance. (D&C 49:19)

16 Verily I say, that inasmuch as ye do this, the fulness of the earth is yours, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the air, and that which climbth upon the trees and walketh upon the earth;

17 Yea, and the herb, and the good things which come of the earth, *whether for food or for raiment, or for houses, or for barns, or for orchards, or for gardens, or for vineyards;*

18 Yea, *all things which come of the earth, in the season thereof, are made for the benefit and the use of man, both to please the eye and to gladden the heart;* (D&C 59:16-18)

10 And again, verily I say unto you, all wholesome herbs *God hath ordained for the constitution, nature, and use of man—*

12 Yea, flesh also of beasts and of the fowls of the air, *I, the Lord, have ordained for the use of man with thanksgiving;* nevertheless, they are to be used sparingly; (D&C 89:10, 12)

These verses make it clear that the fruit trees and herbs, the fish and fowls, and all manner of beasts and life on earth that are described in the creation accounts are those that will be on the earth when

it is prepared for the introduction of the man Adam into the new world. Thus, the biological creations recounted in Moses and Abraham includes only the plants and animals that will be on the earth during the time Adam and his posterity will possess it. Beyond knowing about the general creation of the heavens and the earth, there is no need to know about the plants and animals that might have lived prior to the advent of Adam *to establish the necessary relationships* these accounts are intended to forge. Therefore, the creation accounts would *not by nature* and should *not by purpose* include that which may have existed before it was prepared for Adam. *Nor do these creation accounts limit life to that which is described within the text.*

Remember, “Mankind” is defined and limited to *those beings that are created in the image and likeness of God and have the potential to become like God.* It is an important distinction when considering the varieties of life that this earth may have supported before the advent of man.

How Long?

The Book of Abraham is again the text of choice as it presents a better view of the biological creation and how it took place as the earth was 'prepared' for Adam and his posterity. The scriptures presented below clearly imply that the plants and animals that will accompany Adam and his posterity during their temporal sojourn were prepared, ordered, and 'organized'. Abraham clearly describes the works of the Gods and the preparation of the earth to sustain the necessary flora and fauna for mankind. How long could the preparatory period be? As long as need be, states Abraham, for “the Gods watched those things which they had ordered until they obeyed” (Abraham 4:18).

11 And the Gods said: ***Let us prepare the earth*** to bring forth grass; the herb yielding seed; the fruit tree yielding fruit, after his kind, [*while mankind is on it*] whose seed in itself yieldeth its own likeness upon the earth; and **it was so, even as they ordered.**

12 And **the Gods organized the earth to bring forth** grass from its own seed, and the herb to bring forth herb from its own seed, yielding seed after his kind; and the earth to bring forth the tree from its own seed, yielding fruit, whose seed could only bring forth the same in itself, after his kind; and **the Gods saw that they were obeyed.** (Abraham 4:11-12)

The time it might take to prepare the earth to bring forth the grass, herb, and the fruit trees that will be on the earth when Adam is placed upon it is indeterminable. The account in Abraham makes it clear that the Gods were *preparing* the earth for the plants that would be used by mankind. Once ordered, prepared, and organized, the “Gods saw that they were obeyed”; that is, they watched to know that their plan was good and was going to work for the benefit of mankind. The length of this preparation period could be as long as was needed to prepare the soil with the necessary organic material (carbon based life) that would make the ground fertile and thus prepared for the plants (and animals) that would be used by man. Below, the Gods address Adam's needs as they organize the plants that will be available to him:

And the Gods said: Behold, *we will give them* every herb bearing seed that shall come upon the face of all the earth, and every tree which shall have fruit upon it; yea, the fruit of the tree yielding seed to them we will give it; it shall be for their meat. ...and all these things shall be thus organized (Abraham 4:29-30).

The preparation of the earth continues for the animals that will be *on the earth* during the time that Adam and his posterity will inherit this environment.

20 ...abundantly the moving creatures that have life; and the fowl, that they may fly above the earth in the open expanse of heaven [*while mankind is on it*].

21 And **the Gods prepared the waters...** And the Gods saw that they would be obeyed, and that their plan was good.

24 And **the Gods prepared the earth to bring forth the living creature after his kind,** cattle and creeping things, and beasts of the earth after their kind; and it was so, as they had said.

25 And **the Gods organized the earth to bring forth the beasts after their kind,** and cattle after their kind, and every thing that creepeth upon the earth after its kind; [*while mankind is on it*] and **the Gods saw they would obey.** (Abraham 4:20-21; 24-25)

There are two key questions that arise from these verses: 1) What preparation was needed; and 2) How long did that preparation take?

Given that the soil would need to be rich and fertile enough to sustain the plant life that man and his animals would require for sustenance, the soil would need to be prepared with all manner of organic material and minerals. Organic material within the soil implies that there had been 'carbon based' life (plants and or animals) that lived and died over a long period of time as the soil was readied for Adam's use.

Death before the Fall?

The *traditions* in the LDS community have created the belief that nothing, including plants or animals, died before the fall of Adam. In reality, the scriptures teach that Adam and Eve were immortal, rather than all life forms. The only life form that could transgress, sin, or fall from the presence of God is that creature who has the potential to become like God (Adam and his posterity). That means that nothing less than man can fall. The brute beast, for example, can fulfill the measure of its creation and reach its full potential without a knowledge of the plan of salvation. This applies to all lower forms of life that are incapable of sin because they are ruled and act by instinct.

The first traditional argument that there was no death of anything before the fall is based on the assumption that the whole world (the physical sphere called earth) was in a "*terrestrial*" state and that fell from the presence of God (which was somewhere near Kolob) when Adam partook of the fruit, hence causing the "fall" of the earth and Adam. This tradition is not scriptural (remember the standard), only conjecture and opinion. For this to be true, the fall of the earth itself would, of scriptural necessity, include not only our solar system but also our universe, as the sun, moon, constellations, and stars were set in their position before man was ever created, for "signs and for seasons, and for days and for years" (Abraham 4:14; Moses 2:14).

This tradition is founded upon an interpretation of one passage of scripture that seems to imply that there was no death before the fall. It is upon this one verse that the traditions and opinions have been built:

22 And now, behold, if Adam had not transgressed he would not have fallen, but he would have remained in the garden of Eden. And all things which were created must have remained in the same state in which they were after they were created; and they must have remained forever, and had no end. (2 Nephi 2:22)

At first look it is easy to see why the tradition of 'no death before the fall' gained a foothold. But when studying the scriptures there are sometimes words that need to be examined within the context. For example, when the word "therefore" is read, one should discover what therefore is "there for." The greatest need is to find out within the context *who* is being spoken about; that is, who *'they'* are (or might be) within a given text. It is only in the context of the scripture that these discoveries might help explain the inspired, written word. Scripture is the best commentary on scripture and is more reliable and sound than the respected arm of flesh. Even Joseph Smith stated that his "key" to studying the scriptures and that was to "try and discover the question that provoked the response or answer from the Lord."¹³

In 2 Nephi 2:22 there are three places where the word "they" is used. The key to understanding this passage and its meaning is to *discover who "they" are*. This can only be done by examining the context of the verses in question (below). The passage is somewhat lengthy but should be seen in its entirety for a better understanding of who "they" are. The *object of discussion*, from beginning to end, is Adam and Eve. The scene opens with *Adam and Eve* partaking of the forbidden fruit.

2 Nephi 2:19-25

19 And after ***Adam and Eve*** had partaken of the forbidden fruit
they were driven out of the garden of Eden, to till the earth.

20 And
they have brought forth children; yea, even the family of all the earth.

22 And now, behold, if ***Adam*** had not transgressed
he would not have fallen, but
he would have remained in the garden of Eden.

And all things which were created must have remained in the same state in which
they were after
they were created; and
they must have remained forever, and had no end.

23 And
they would have had no children; wherefore
they would have remained in a state of innocence, having no joy, for
they knew no misery; doing no good, for
they knew no sin.

24 But behold, all things have been done in the wisdom of him who knoweth all things.

25 ***Adam*** fell that men might be; and men are, that they might have joy. (2 Nephi 2:19-25)

13. TPJS, p. 276.

This passage recounts not only the consequences of Adam and Eve partaking of the forbidden fruit, but also what might have been had they not transgressed. There is only one “object” of discussion in this passage of verses (19-25) and that object of discussion is Adam and Eve. The “they” of verse 23 without question is Adam and Eve, and therefore must be the same “*they*” referred to in verse 22—*not* all plants and animals.

In matters of scripture interpretation, all have agency and the freedom to form their own conclusions or adopt and adapt them from favorite commentaries or the statements of general authorities. But nonetheless, the scriptures remain the best commentary on the scriptures.

It should be kept in mind that the ‘sanctification’ at the end of creation, i.e. the Sabbath day, does not take place until after it has been fully prepared for the man Adam and described as ‘good’ (Abraham 5:3; Moses 2:31-3:3). As mentioned in scripture, the ‘sanctification’ at the culmination of creation *could be* the beginning of a time without death. However, this process did not take place until after *all was prepared* for those who have the potential to become like God (Adam and his posterity). Thus the “Gods prepared the earth” to bring forth the plants and animals that will live upon the earth through the duration of humankind, and when thus prepared, and finished, they blessed it. The earth, once prepared for man, does not limit or eliminate the possibility of the death of plants or animals that might exist before the earth is ready for man. These plants and animals, possessed of a spirit, would need to be free to act for themselves in the ‘sphere’ in they are placed, with a physical body created such to allow their spirit to fulfill the measure of their creation and reach the full potential (intelligence) of their spirit.

Therefore, the life and death of plants and animals before the fall could be part of the preparation of the earth for Adam, while also giving them a time, place, and purpose to live. Time (as we know it) is limitless when the “Gods prepared the earth to bring forth” the plants and animals that will be on the earth while Adam and his posterity are here. How long might it take to prepare the necessary organic material on the earth? The obvious answer: As long as needful; as long as it takes. The creation epoch in the Book of Abraham allows for this open-ended timeline. Not just six days, or six thousand years: for the “Gods prepared the earth” for the plants and animals that would be on the earth with Adam, and “they watched until they saw that they would be obeyed” and then the Gods moved forward. Relationships, not science, are the purpose of the creation accounts.

Something else to consider: The definition of death before the fall—including the time Adam and Eve are in the Garden—is uncertain, for the bark on trees is composed of dead cells; likewise the hair and nails and claws of the animals are composed of discarded cells. Did the plant life that was consumed by Adam and Eve and the animals in their environment die as it was consumed? The second that any fruit is ripe, it begins to rot and die. The flowering plants that need to bud, blossom, and then produce ‘seed in themselves’ must die to do so. If there were no death, there could be no growth, for the growing process requires death and change.

The scriptures present a clear picture of only a few things pertaining to death before the fall. The main clear and sure doctrine is Adam and Eve's immortality in the presence of God before they partook of the forbidden fruit.

The Doctrine and Covenants teaches that by the command of God, there was no death (for mankind) after the fall for at least three generations (see Moses 5:2-13).

42 But, behold, I say unto you that I, the Lord God, gave unto *Adam and unto his seed, that they should not die as to the temporal death*, until I, the Lord God, should send forth angels to declare unto them repentance and redemption, through faith on the name of mine Only Begotten Son. (D&C 29:42)

Age After Age

Elder James E. Talmage delivered an address in the Tabernacle in August, 1931 that was published in the “Deseret News” and then created into a pamphlet by the church to be distributed throughout the wards and stakes. It was again published for the members in “The Instructor” in 1965.¹⁴ According to Elder Talmage's understanding, this important talk addresses the idea and doctrine of death before the fall. Speaking of the fossil record of plants and animals that were once living organisms, and the fossil fuels of coal oil and gas, Elder Talmage stated that this fossilized carbon based life “*lived and died, age after age, while the earth was yet unfit for human habitation.*”¹⁵

Talmage notes that life and death before the fall is a vital part of the earth's preparation for the advent of man. He posits that even the fossil fuels needed to already be in the earth and ready to use when Adam was placed on it, so that he could progress as fast as his intellect and righteousness might allow. This discourse by Talmage supports the interpretation that there must have been death before Adam, just as the fossil record testifies. Again the *creation accounts are for relationships not details*. They establish no sure facts about the earth between the general creation of the heaven and the earth and the arrival of Adam, other than to confirm that it was prepared for him with the plants and animals that will co-exist with him. Adam, as Talmage points out, was the first man and the first flesh on the earth that *has the potential to become like God*. That's what sets man apart from all other creatures. That means that all else falls into the realm of the plant or animal kingdoms that could have lived and died before Adam. This concept is especially important to keep in mind in any discussion or deliberation over dinosaurs and cave dwellers (mistakenly called ‘cave man’).

The Spiritual Creation

The LDS tradition of a “spiritual creation”, derived from the creation narrative in Moses, holds that the spiritual creation is the creation of the animating spirit of every living thing before it is created physically. Although contrary to scripture and the statements of Joseph Smith, this tradition has become the accepted LDS view, largely on the strength of the narrative hint in Moses, even though it conflicts with Abraham's more expansive account. Abraham is seeing the creation from a pre-earth and pre-creation point of view, as he describes being in the council of heaven and being chosen as one of the 'great and noble spirits' prepared to be a priesthood and patriarchal leader (Abraham 3:22-23). Abraham expands upon and clarifies what Moses is just hinting at, while LDS

14. Talmage, James E., Address Delivered in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, Utah Sunday, August 9, 1931, Titled “The Earth and Man” This address was originally published in the “Deseret News,” Nov. 21, 1931; subsequently published as a pamphlet by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1931; later published in “The Instructor,” vol. 100, no. 12 (Dec. 1965), pg. 474-477; continued in vol. 101, no. 1 (Jan. 1966), pg. 9-15.

15. *Ibid.*

commentaries run rampant with explication that neglects the explanation found in the Book of Abraham.

Moses' account of the so-called 'spiritual creation', which has become the traditional doctrine:

5 And every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew. For I, the Lord God, *created all things, of which I have spoken, spiritually, before they were naturally upon the face of the earth.* For I, the Lord God, had not caused it to rain upon the face of the earth. And I, the Lord God, had *created all the children of men; and not yet a man to till the ground;* for in heaven created I them; and there was *not yet flesh upon the earth,* neither in the water, neither in the air; (Moses 3:5)

It is easy to see how the traditional notion of "spiritual creation" was derived from this one verse. Abraham, however, provides us with a better understanding. The creation account presented in the Book of Abraham, and especially chapter five, specifically addresses the 'spiritual creation' as *the planning meeting of the Gods that were in counsel about the creation of the earth.* In his account, Abraham may not only be recording the work of the Gods in the creative process, but he could also be seeing and describing the grand counsel of heaven where the plan of salvation and exaltation is presented to all the spirits that are to come to this earth. Abraham chapter three ends with an account of this Grand Counsel choosing the future spiritual leaders (the "noble and great ones") from amongst the spirits that were to come to this world. This takes place prior to the beginning of the creation epic in chapter four. Chapter five offers the expanded version of the spiritual creation hinted at in Moses 3:5. The corresponding verse in Abraham of the spiritual creation found in Moses 3:5 is Abraham 5:3. However, Abraham's discussion of the spiritual creation includes verses 2-5, which provides a better understanding of what the spiritual creation really encompassed.

Abraham 5	Moses 3
<p>2 And the Gods said among themselves: On the seventh time we will end our work, which we have counseled; and we will rest on the seventh time from all our work <i>which we have counseled.</i></p> <p>3 And the Gods concluded upon the seventh time, because that on the seventh time they would rest from all their works which they (the Gods) <i>counseled among themselves to form; and sanctified it.</i> And thus were their decisions <i>at the time that they counseled among themselves to form the heavens and the earth.</i></p> <p>4 And the Gods came down and formed these the generations of the heavens and of the earth, when they were formed in the day that the Gods formed the earth and the heavens, (Abraham 5:2-4)</p>	<p>2 And on the seventh day I, God, ended my work, and all things which I had made; and I rested on the seventh day from all my work, and all things which I had made were finished, and I, God, saw that they were good;</p> <p>3 And I, God, blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it; because that in it I had rested from all my work which I, God, had created and made.</p> <p>4 And now, behold, I say unto you, that these are the generations of the heaven and of the earth, when they were created, in the day that I, the Lord God, made the heaven and the earth,</p>
<p>5 According to all that which they had said concerning every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew; for the Gods had not caused it to rain upon the earth <i>when they counseled to do them,</i> and had not formed a man to till the ground</p>	<p>5 And every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew. For I, the Lord God, created all things, of which I have spoken, spiritually, before they were naturally upon the face of the earth. For I, the Lord God, had not caused it to rain upon the face of the earth. And I, the Lord God, had created all the children of men; and not yet a man to till the ground; for in heaven created I them; and there was not yet flesh upon the earth, neither in the water, neither in the air;</p>

As seen above, Abraham makes clear that what is really going on is the planning meeting (Council) of the Gods that were in counsel about the creation of the earth (a super activity), not a "spiritual creation" of all things to be physically created later, as tradition holds. The word 'counseled', as Abraham uses it, conveys deliberation, instruction, direction, and guidance.

Accepting the premise that the creation accounts are provided to establish a relationship between God, mankind, and the environment in which man must live and work out his salvation *opens the door* for a better relationship between science and religion. Death before the fall is no longer an issue. Likewise, the amount of time to prepare the earth for Adam and his posterity can be as long as needed.

With this understanding then, the thorny questions about cave dwellers and dinosaurs can be explained without scriptural problems. The Abrahamic creation epoch opens possibilities that cannot be seen through the traditional cosmological view found in the Book of Moses alone. The

only scientific issues not accepted within the scriptural standard are the commonly accepted theories about the evolution of man and animals (addressed later in this chapter).

Spirits

Scriptures teach that all living creatures have a spirit, which animates their physical body, giving life to the organized elements of the earth. The Doctrine and Covenants teach that the spirit and body are in the likeness of each other:

...that which is spiritual being in the likeness of that which is temporal; and that which is temporal in the likeness of that which is spiritual; the spirit of man in the likeness of his person, as also the spirit of the beast, and every other creature which God has created. (D&C 77:2)

A spirit that is in the ‘likeness’ of their physical body animates the bodies of man and beast. This also has a bearing on the theory of evolution, which claims to adapt the physical attributes of a creature into a different form. If evolution could change the physical body, then the spirit must also be reformed or changed through evolution. This is incompatible with our understanding that ‘every man, every creeping thing, and every animal’ has a spirit in the likeness of their physical bodies.

Every spirit must be free to act within its created and assigned environment. The Doctrine and Covenants speaks of the free nature of the spirit and the agency that must exist. The Lord states, “All truth is independent in that sphere [environment] in which God has placed it, to act for itself, as all intelligence [spirits] also; otherwise there is no existence” (D&C 93:30). Thus a spirit, in its body, must be capable of fulfilling the measure of its creation and reaching its full potential. The Lord has taught in scripture and through the Prophet Joseph Smith that spirits are eternal and were not created, but have and will exist forever.

18 ...if there be two spirits, and one shall be more intelligent than the other, yet these two spirits, notwithstanding one is more intelligent than the other, *have no beginning; they existed before, they shall have no end, they shall exist after, for they are gnolaum, or eternal.* (Abraham 3:18)

29 Man was also in the beginning with God. Intelligence, or the light of truth, *was not created or made, neither indeed can be.* (D&C 93:29)

There are two theories concerning the intelligence of spirits. The first is the ‘globular theory’ in which all spirits are in a pool and the larger the amount of intelligence that is used the greater the potential the spirit might have (these theories have been taught in almost every LDS educational venue and class). The second theory, more in line with scripture, is the individual intelligence of spirit. This would teach that each spirit has the intelligence to be what it is capable of becoming. In other words, there are spirits that can only be man, and spirits that can only be monkeys; likewise cows, dogs, or even beetles.

If the spirit exists, it must at some time receive a body and a temporal life, and have the opportunity to live and die, and have seed in itself to reproduce after its kind in order to fulfill the measure of

its creation. Therefore, the spirit must have the physical body that would allow that spirit to act and react in the environment or ‘sphere’ in which it is placed. As an example, the spirit of a dog, with which all are familiar, is able to love, protect, play, run, and jump. Man’s best friend even has a personality that can display love, affection, and bonding. If that same spirit were placed in the body of a beetle or bird, the dog spirit would not be able to reach its full potential and fulfill the measure of its creation.

As stated earlier, the body a spirit is placed in must be capable of fulfilling the measure of its creation and reaching its full potential. This would extend to man, who has the potential to become like God. With that potential, he must be created in the image of God *because the measure of his creation is to become like God*, who is an exalted man.

Before Adam

Anything manlike that lived prior to Adam is less than man—and does not have the potential to become like God, who is an exalted man. The monkey, only a few chromosomes different from man, is still not a man. A cave dweller, genetically closer to man than monkey, is still not the offspring of God with the potential to become like God. Every being that is less than man is animal and cannot act upon their environment, but must react to, or be acted upon by that environment. For man it is possible to travel, live in space, walk on the moon, live under the oceans or on the ice caps of the poles, creating a habitation in a less hospitable environment. Anything less than man is not capable of living in an environment which is not suited to the requirements of its body. The penguin would die in the desert, just as the lizard would quickly freeze in Antarctica. Mankind alone has the capability to act upon his environment and make it habitable.

The cave dweller, with his intelligence of spirit, could react to his environment in limited ways: the creation and use of a few tools, living in caves or forming crude shelters, making coverings from animal skins, etc. However, as all anthropologists will explain, this lasted throughout their time and tenure on earth (about 40,000 years). There was no change, no progression, no language, and the new theory now is—no evolution. The explosion of language, metallurgy, recorded history, farming and more, began with the first man Adam and his posterity, for whom the earth was prepared.

34 And *the first man of all men have I called Adam*, which is many. (Moses 1:34)

3 ...even the right of the firstborn, or *the first man, who is Adam, or first father*, through the fathers unto me. (Abraham 1:3)

16 And from Enoch to Abel...who received the priesthood by the commandments of God, by the hand of his father *Adam, who was the first man*— (D&C 84:16)

The cave dweller, without language or civilized abilities, nevertheless required a physical body that allowed his spirit (similar to man’s) to reach its full potential. Because their spirits exist and have always existed, they, like any other form of animal, needed a time and place to receive a physical body in which they could fulfill the measure of their creation and reach their full potential, whatever that might be, based on the intelligence of their spirit.

One key difference between man and beast is the human ability to *act in futurity*, as explained by the Lord in the Doctrine and Covenants.

78 That every man may act in doctrine and principle pertaining to futurity, according to the moral agency which I have given unto him, that every man may be accountable for his own sins in the day of judgment. (D&C 101:78)

This states that all men (who have the potential to become like God as descendants of Adam) have the ability to ‘act pertaining to futurity’ with a ‘moral agency’ that would make them accountable for their sins. This is speaking of an ability and necessary freedom required for mankind, and not the animal kingdom, which cannot act in futurity. Only mankind is capable of making a decision in life with no expectation of return on earth, only in futurity (at some point after death). All animal life reacts to its environment, while mankind can act upon life’s experience, making decisions that have eternal consequences. None but man is capable of comprehending the concept of a God. Who but man can ‘conceive’ of a God that cannot be seen by the natural eyes, but is known in the heart, mind, and spirit as a consequence of relationship to Him? Who but man is able to recognize spiritual impressions and make moral choices by agency and not by instinct? Who but man has the ability and potential to repent and forgive, to change their character, while making decisions that will render consequences after death?

Adam was the first being created in the image of God, that has the potential to become like God. He was created to have seed—to procreate physical bodies that can house the spirits that have prepared themselves to progress toward exaltation—spirits that are possessed of the spiritual intelligence to understand the plan of salvation and the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. By exercising faith unto repentance (which no animal can do), coupled with the grace and mercy of God, they are provided with the potential of an endowment of ‘power to become the sons of God’ (John 1:12).

As Elder Talmage explained, when Adam was placed on the earth it was perfectly prepared for him. All that he or his posterity would ever need or use was already there on the earth. All the fossil fuels, coal, oil, and gas were already in place, prepared for the time man would need them, when the first parents were placed in the Garden of Eden.

Remember, Abraham records that they, the Gods, ordered these things to be, and then *watched until they saw that they would be obeyed*. This preparatory period could take as long as was necessary, perhaps millions and millions of years. During this period, preparing for the appearance of man, the spirits and bodies of the creatures that could not co-exist with man, like the dinosaurs and, later, cave dwellers, could come and live in their turn and their time, fulfilling the measure of their creation and reaching their potential. These beings could, as Talmage explains, “live and die age after age while the earth was yet unfit for mankind.”

Once on the earth, Adam is “blessed” (Moses 2:28; Abraham 4:28) with the potential to multiply and fill the earth; blessed with the capacity to “subdue the earth” in order to carve out an inheritance for his family. He was also given the spiritual intellect to bless others through priesthood authority, having “dominion over every living thing” upon the earth. These potential blessings given to Adam in the beginning are the same blessings given to man by God as we receive the ‘blessings of the

fathers' or 'covenants of the fathers.' These consist of 'priesthood, posterity, and inheritance' in an endowment of eternal duration.

A Brief Look at Evolution

The evolutionary theory of the biological world in which man exists is just theory—and that particular theory does not seem to have scriptural support. As time progresses, it has less scientific support, too. There are many who have decided that God could accomplish His designs by way of evolution, or perhaps via a combination of creation and evolution. The argument between those who believe in evolution and those who hold fast to the scriptural account of creation will go on forever. So much of what we believe and accept is determined by who we place in authority over us, i.e. our 'sources.' Only the individual can give the authority over their beliefs to a prophet or scripture. The same is true for those who place their 'faith' in a biology professor or their own education (arm of the flesh). The authority the individual accepts (chooses) becomes the foundation for their standard of truth, no matter if it is right or wrong, and is reflected in their opinions and beliefs. The Doctrine and Covenants declare that we should “seek learning by study and also by faith” (D&C 88:118), which seems to suggest a combination of education and faith in God and his words found in scripture.

The non-evolutionary premise presented here may cause some to stop reading at this point, but the author has chosen the scriptures as his authority and standard of truth; therefore they are used as the measuring rod for truth in his research and conclusions. The scriptures rise as the bedrock, or primordial mound, from the waters of creation as a standard in doctrine and truth. Many church leaders have spoken about the scriptures and the power and place that they should take in the lives of each member in determining truth

Many who accept the theory of evolution find no incongruities or conflicts between the basic concepts and principles of evolution and scripture. When conflicts arise, the intellectual will often determine the theory of evolution to be more correct and of far more value than the 'antiquated scriptures.' Their assumption is that modern man is more qualified to determine man's relationship with his environment than the simple-minded prophets and patriarchs of old that claim to have spoken with God about the creation. History, especially recent history, should remind the best and brightest of scientists and intellectuals that trusting in the educational arm of flesh for 'non-compromised truths' is a precarious business. While science has made some great strides in explaining our world, scientific conclusions, in general, cannot be trusted for more than six months before a new theory is advanced that promises to 'end all debate.' On the other hand, scriptures are true whether one agrees with them or not. As Joseph Smith stated “one's opinion will not make the truth without effect.”¹⁶

Evolution theory demands that over time, more complex genetic mutations must develop for evolution to exist. This theory readily accepts that the animal kingdom evolved because of these mutations, but at the same time does not recognize the same process within the plant kingdom, as the mushroom should, over time, turn into the mighty redwood and Sequoia forest. Evolution is founded upon the 'law of uniformitarianism.' This law states that things that evolve always evolve at the same rate, and that this time rate must remain constant to allow for the evolution to take

16. *TPJS*, 1976, p.352.

place. Another basic premise is that there must be a need for the evolution of the parts for the creature to survive. In other words, for an eye to evolve, the creature will need an eye to see food to survive or for protection. Following this premise, during the time required for this need to evolve (which could be eyes, ears, olfactory development, teeth, limbs, etc.), the creature would have starved to death or been eaten. Another consideration often left out of the argument about evolution is that of catastrophes that could effect and nullify the law of uniformitarianism.¹⁷ Be it evolution or catastrophes, it is the genetic seed that would have to effect (or cause) a change in offspring. That is, the creature would have to produce offspring carrying a new genetic code for the changes (new eyes, limbs, tails, etc) to take place

Once science grasps a theory, there is often no letting go—professional reputations and livelihoods are often built and staked on a particular premise. There is scientific ‘fact,’ scientific theory, and scientific ego that must be overcome. This creates a ‘black hole’ where everything in a given discipline is governed only by accepted theories. This black hole often allows for no other ideas to be entertained, which in turn consumes any light and truth that might be made available by other discoveries and insights, even when the new idea might be more correct. The Darwinian black hole has consumed almost all biological sciences, and after a century, the idea of “Intelligent Design” is just now gaining ground.

In every account of the creation that is used in the church, reproduction in the animal or plant kingdom is explained as being *after* “their kind” or with “*seed in itself*.” This is done with such repeated emphasis that it would seem that the scriptures are addressing a modern need for clarity and understanding.

Abraham 4:11-12	Moses 2:11-12
<p>11 And the Gods said: Let us prepare the earth to bring forth grass; the herb <i>yielding seed</i>; the fruit tree <i>yielding fruit, after his kind, whose seed in itself yieldeth its own likeness</i> upon the earth; and it was so, even as they ordered.</p> <p>12 And the Gods organized the earth to bring forth grass <i>from its own seed, and the herb to bring forth herb from its own seed, yielding seed after his kind</i>; and the earth to bring forth <i>the tree from its own seed, yielding fruit, whose seed could only bring forth the same in itself, after his kind</i>; and the Gods saw that they were obeyed.</p>	<p>11 And I, God, said: Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, the fruit tree yielding fruit, <i>after his kind</i>, and the tree yielding fruit, <i>whose seed should be in itself</i> upon the earth, and it was so even as I spake.</p> <p>12 And the earth brought forth grass, every herb <i>yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed should be in itself, after his kind</i>; and I, God, saw that all things which I had made were good;</p>

In the Book of Abraham, the Lord makes sure in verse 12 and verse 25 that it is understood that the “*seed could only bring forth the same in itself, after his kind*.” The animal kingdom reproduced after “*their kind*” the same as the plant life. The plant life had seed in itself which “*yieldeth its own*

17. *Catastrophes and Evolution: Astronomical Foundations*, ed. S.V.M. Clube, Papers presented at the meeting of the ‘Royal Astronomical Society at Oxford’; Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1989.

likeness upon the earth” which produced “after his kind, ... whose *seed should be in itself*, after his kind.”

Abraham 4:21-22, 24-25	Moses 2:21, 24-25
<p>21 And the Gods prepared the waters that they might bring forth great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters were to bring forth abundantly <i>after their kind</i>; and every winged fowl <i>after their kind</i>. And the Gods saw that they would be obeyed, and that their plan was good.</p> <p>22 And the Gods said: <i>We will bless them, and cause them to be fruitful and multiply</i>, and fill the waters in the seas or great waters; and cause the fowl to multiply in the earth.</p> <p>24 And the Gods prepared the earth to bring forth the living creature <i>after his kind</i>, cattle and creeping things, and beasts of the <i>earth after their kind</i>; and it was so, as they had said.</p> <p>25 And the Gods organized the earth to bring forth the beasts <i>after their kind</i>, and <i>cattle after their kind</i>, and <i>every thing that creepeth upon the earth after its kind</i>; and the Gods saw they would obey.</p>	<p>21 And I, God, created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, <i>after their kind</i>, and every winged fowl <i>after his kind</i>; and I, God, saw that all things which I had created were good.</p> <p>24 And I, God, said: Let the earth bring forth the living creature <i>after his kind</i>, cattle, and creeping things, and beasts of the earth <i>after their kind</i>, and it was so;</p> <p>25 And I, God, made the beasts of the earth <i>after their kind</i>, and cattle <i>after their kind</i>, and everything which creepeth upon the earth <i>after his kind</i>; and I, God, saw that all these things were good.</p>

In both accounts, following the introduction of plant and animal life, man (that being who has the potential to become like God) is introduced. Man is created in their "own image" and in the "image of the Gods" and is created from the elements of the sphere where he must be governed by natural law, even the dust of the earth. As mentioned above, the Doctrine and Covenants states that the spirit and body are alike in image: “*that which is spiritual being in the likeness of that which is temporal; and that which is temporal in the likeness of that which is spiritual; the spirit of man in the likeness of his person, as also the spirit of the beast, and every other creature which God has created.*” (D&C 77:2)

According to this passage, if the body of the beast is evolutionary then the spirit must be also. This is counter to what we are taught in D&C 93:30, that every spirit has an *intelligence* that must have the freedom “to act for itself, and the physical body must be created such to allow the individual spirit to fulfill the measure of its creation and reach its full potential.

One key deterrent to the theory of evolution is called a “law” because *it has never been seen to be otherwise in our observable universe*. Science has determined that “entropy” should be considered a “law” and not “theory”. The Law of Entropy states that everything left unto itself will digress, devolve, dissolve and decompose; moving from a state of order to disorder, and will continue to do so without the infusion of outside energy. So to move from a single cell to a multiple-celled entity of a higher form will take an energy outside of and independent of itself. To move from a less complex life-form to a more complex life-form is, according to the law of entropy, impossible.

The basic law of entropy and the newer view of “*maximum entropy*” is explained in simple terms using the loss of heat:

Swenson & Turvey provided the example of a warm mountain cabin in a cold snow-covered woods with the fire that provided the heat having burned out. Under these circumstances there is a temperature gradient between the warm cabin and cold woods. The second law tells us that over time the gradient or potential will be dissipated through walls or cracks around the windows and door until the cabin is as cold as the outside and the system is in equilibrium. We know empirically though that if we open a window or a door, a portion of the heat will now rush out the door or window and not just through the walls or cracks. In short, whenever we remove a constraint to the flow (such as a closed window) the cabin/environment system will exploit the new and faster pathway thereby increasing the rate the potential is minimized. Wherever it has the opportunity to minimize or ‘destroy’ the gradient of the potential (maximize the entropy) at a faster rate, it will – exactly as the Law of Maximum Entropy Production says. Namely, it will “select the pathway or assembly of pathways that minimizes the potential or maximizes the entropy at the fastest rate given the constraints.” Once this principle is grasped, examples are easy to recognize and show in everyday life.¹⁸

It is worth remembering that God is capable of doing whatever he wants to do. He may, if he so chooses, provide or infuse any amount of energy necessary to accomplish his work. Abraham explains that the Gods: “prepared the earth” to bring forth the living creature” and “organized the earth” to do the same, and then “watched those things which they had ordered until they obeyed” (Abraham 4:18-25) implying that if it didn’t work they might have done something else. As can be seen, these verses could be used to argue for or against evolution; however, the verses in Moses and Abraham (quoted above), state that the biological creations—plants and creatures—had ‘seed in themselves to produce **only** after their kind.’ And the Gods “*watched* ... until they were obeyed.”

These few pages are not meant to initiate an argument for or against physical evolution. The main purpose here is to explore the origin of the spirit that animates the physical body, and in particular, the human body. Physical bodies animated by the spirit must be created from the dust or from the natural elements of the ‘sphere’ in which they are placed in order to be governed by the laws of nature. Hence, Adam should be created from the “dust of the earth” on which he will dwell, to be governed by the laws that govern the elements of which his physical body is comprised. This places all mankind descending from Adam and Eve into a physical relationship we call a genetic ‘family tree,’ consisting of fathers, mothers, sons, and daughters.

The Prophet Joseph Smith, in the “Inspired Version” of the Bible (the familiar “Joseph Smith Translation”) (JST) changed the King James Version to emphasize the physical body of Adam and its relationship to the elements of the earth on which he will live. The genealogies found in chapter three of Luke’s gospel shows this change when compared with the JST.

18. <http://www.lawofmaximumentropyproduction.com/> See also: 6. Swenson, R. and Turvey, M.T. (1991). “Thermodynamic reasons for perception-action cycles. *Ecological Psychology*”, 3(4), 317-348. Translated and reprinted in *Perspectives on Affordances*, in M. Sasaki (ed.). Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1998 (in Japanese).

King James Luke 3:38	Joseph Smith Translation Luke 3:38
38 Which was the son of Enos, which was the son of Seth, which was the son of Adam, which was the son of God.	38 And of Enos, and of Seth, and of Adam, who was formed of God, and the first man upon the earth.

This creation of the “first man upon the earth”, formed from the “dust of the earth”, is a phrase and doctrinal concept used throughout the scriptures and is found in all the standard works. In the verses listed below, it can be seen that the text is *not* using similes or metaphors or words such as “like” or “as” to imply a symbolic meaning. Each statement is definite in the context of the scripture and therefore definite in the meaning and understanding.

If a statement is to be taken in a symbolic or metaphorical sense, then to whom should one look to explain the metaphor? If the symbols were not *at the very least* founded on an historical event, there could be no wrong interpretation, and probably no right interpretation either of the sure and real meaning of the symbol. If the ‘creation of man from the dust’ is just metaphor, then the scriptures are either not entirely true or God is trying to keep information from all but the learned (the ministers of metaphor and symbol). If the creation of Adam from the dust (elements) of the earth (as all scripture claims) is not true, then where will the guesswork end? We would have to ask: what else is there in scripture that we should not believe? If ‘God cannot and did not create Adam from the elements of the earth as one might make an adobe brick,’ as some have said, then the notion of a resurrection from the dust of the earth ("for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return") becomes a real concern for the believer.

Old Testament

Genesis 2:7, And the Lord God *formed man of the dust of the ground*, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.

Genesis 3:19, In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.

Job 10:9, Remember, I beseech thee, that thou hast made me as the clay; and wilt thou *bring me into dust again?*

Job 34:15, All flesh shall perish together, and *man shall turn again unto dust.*

Psalms 103:14, For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that *we are dust.*

Ecclesiastes 3:20, All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again.

Ecclesiastes 12:7, Then shall *the dust return to the earth as it was*: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.

New Testament

1 Timothy 2:13, For Adam was first formed, then Eve.

Book of Mormon

Jacob 2:21, Do ye not suppose that such things are abominable unto him who created all flesh? And the one being is as precious in his sight as the other. And *all flesh is of the dust*; and for the selfsame end hath he created them, that they should keep his commandments and glorify him forever.

Mosiah 2:25, And now I ask, can ye say aught of yourselves? I answer you, Nay. Ye cannot say that ye are even as much as the dust of the earth; yet *ye were created of the dust of the earth*; but behold, it belongeth to him who created you.

Mosiah 2:26, And I, even I, whom ye call your king, am no better than ye yourselves are; for I am also of the dust. And ye behold that I am old, and am about to yield up this mortal frame to its mother earth.

Mormon 9:17, Who shall say that it was not a miracle that by his word the heaven and the earth should be; and *by the power of his word man was created of the dust of the earth*; and by the power of his word have miracles been wrought?

Doctrine and Covenants

D&C 77:12, Q. What are we to understand by the sounding of the trumpets, mentioned in the 8th chapter of Revelation?A. We are to understand that as God made the world in six days, and on the seventh day he finished his work, and sanctified it, *and also formed man out of the dust of the earth*, even so, in the beginning of the seventh thousand years will the Lord God sanctify the earth, and complete the salvation of man. . .

D&C 138:17, *Their sleeping dust was to be restored unto its perfect frame*, bone to his bone, and the sinews and the flesh upon them, the spirit and he body to be united never again to be divided, that they might receive a fullness of joy.

Pearl of Great Price

Moses 3:7, And I, *the Lord God*, formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul, the first flesh upon the earth, the first man also; nevertheless, all things were before created; but spiritually were they created and made according to my word.

Moses 4:25, By the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, *until thou shalt return unto the ground—for thou shalt surely die—for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou wast, and unto dust shalt thou return.*

Moses 6:59, That by reason of transgression cometh the fall, which fall bringeth death, and inasmuch as ye were born into the world by water, and blood, and the spirit, which I have made, and *so became of dust a living soul*, even so ye must be born again into the kingdom of heaven, of water, and of the Spirit, and be cleansed by blood, even the blood of mine

Only Begotten; that ye might be sanctified from all sin, and enjoy the words of eternal life in this world, and eternal life in the world to come, even immortal glory;

Abraham 5:7, And the Gods formed man from the dust of the ground, and took his spirit (that is, the man's spirit), and put it into him; and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul.

Without exception, these verses and all others teach that God not only created the physical bodies, but that they were created out of the dust of the earth or sphere upon which they will live. Should we as Latter-day Saints let the scriptures speak for themselves or try to correct the word and work of God found in the scriptures.

In order to be governed by the laws of nature in a temporal state—in particular the law of entropy—the physical body must be formed from the elements of the 'sphere in which God has placed it.' The elements (dust) of the earth from which mankind is created are eternal, and therefore, by ordinance and power (contrary to entropy), the bodies of all mankind shall eventually be resurrected and inseparably connected to the spirit. "For man is spirit. The elements are eternal, and spirit and element, inseparably connected, receive a fullness of joy; And when separated, man cannot receive a fullness of joy" (D&C 93:33-34).

One dimension that is required for entropy to exist is that of "time." Without time, nothing could move from a state of order to disorder; therefore, they would remain in the "state in which they were after they were created" forever (2 Nephi 2:22). That strongly suggests that it's the absence of 'time' that distinguishes the immortal environment, as was the case with Adam before the fall: "for as yet the Gods had not appointed unto Adam his reckoning of time" (Abraham 5:13).