

ENDOWED WITH POWER

THE PURPOSE OF CREATION ACCOUNTS

IN THE BEGINNING

Temples and Creation Epochs

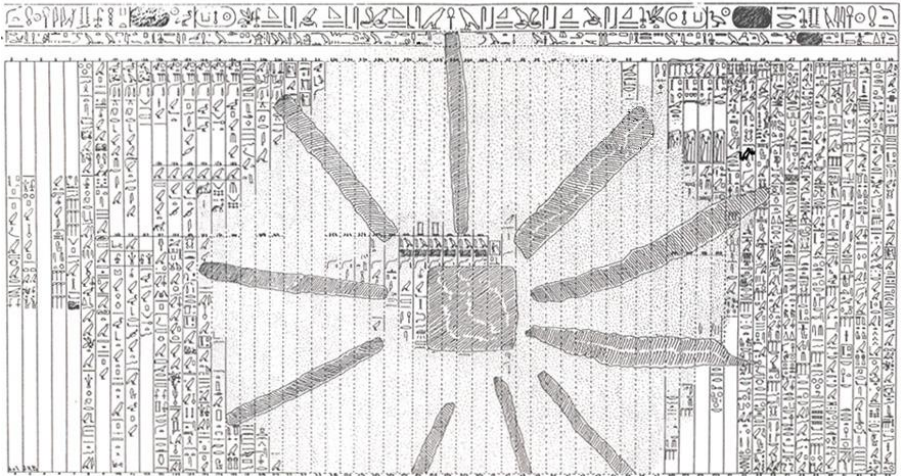
I was only eleven years old, and even now remember the perfumed smell of the rich cedar smoke as it drifted through the small and seemingly circular room of the log Hogan. It was January, the Navajo reservation was cold and uninviting, and the warmth of this traditional home was enticing after walking nearly a quarter of a mile from the truck. In the semi darkness of the fire it seemed like a dream as I stood in the shadows 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 unfamiliar environment filled with myth, ritual and truth.

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 clear 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 that surround the

creation and origins of humanity as 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 its 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 in Babylon.

Shabaka Stone

The Shabaka Stone is considered the oldest written document in the world. It is an Egyptian temple drama dating to over 3000 B. C. (or b.c.e.) which also makes it the oldest written religious instruction.ⁱⁱ Inscribed on a large stone, the text outlines what is sometimes the called ‘Memphite Theology’ from the Temple of Menes at the ancient city of Memphis and was performed as a play which included stage



directions and dialogue. This drama, presented in the first ancient temples, focused on the pre-earth council of gods and the creation of the earth, and details the first conflict between the two sons of the creator over which son should rule the new creation, and the choice being made in favor of the God’s ‘most beloved son’. It explains that the world was created by the power of the ‘word’ of God, and how evil begins because of the choice of son-ship. In this text, as in other ancient epochs, the god finishes the creation and ponders the choice of which divine son to place in charge of the new world. The wicked

son tries to usurp the authority bestowed upon the favored or "most beloved son" of the God of creation seeking throughout time to destroy the chosen son of God and mankind's potential of exaltation. This is the same motif which is outlined in Moses chapter four, which Joseph Smith would have known nothing about. The question that might arise is: why was this information about the creation so important to the mind of the ancient man that it needed to be rehearsed in ancient Egyptian temples, and why is a knowledge of creation accounts so essential to the life of modern humanity today?

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? And of course: Why does the LDS culture have four creation accounts unlike traditional Christianity? Why is the creation epoch repeated and rehearsed in every Temple session? What are we expected or supposed to learn from them? Are these creation accounts meant to describe scientific fact or are there other more important purposes, like relationships between God, man and mankind and the world that man must live?* 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 recorded time or history, or the "*time of the first time*" as described in Egyptian religious literature. 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.ⁱⁱⁱ

Today the word myth is most often used as a synonym for ‘fable’, a false or fictitious story. However, in this work the term "myth" will mean the true story of something real, especially in regards to the creation epochs and the origin of humanity.

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.^{iv}

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 and purpose of recounting and remembering these epochs out of the minds of modern humanity. Relationships with God, mankind and the environment, which all must endure and ‘work out’ a temporal and spiritual salvation, is the reason creation accounts and epochs are written, and rehearsed in scripture. These creation accounts are found in the traditions and the myths of ancient cultures and performed in sacred ceremonies, sites and temples in antiquity.

Endowment of Power

The 1828 dictionary defines the word ‘endowment’ as the Prophet Joseph might understand it:

“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.”

An Endowment of Power does not lie exclusively in any ordinance but more so in knowledge. The Prophet Joseph Smith taught, “a man can be saved no faster than he gains knowledge” (*TPJS*, p. 217) which is forcefully 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)

Character, Ordinances, and Creation

It is often thought that when speaking about a ‘Temple Endowment’ or ‘Endowment of Power’, one is speaking of ordinances that might be saving or exalting in nature which may only be officiated in Latter-day Temples. It first should be reviewed what an ordinance is, its purpose, and the inherent power within that ordinance. There are different types of ordinances as well as different definitions. There are ordinances of a ritual nature that are necessary for salvation or exaltation such as: baptism, washings, anointings, sealings, perhaps the conferring of priesthood authority, sacrament and a few others. There are also ‘settings apart’ that are sometimes considered ordinances, these are not saving or exalting in nature or scope and are used to set apart and individual to a specific calling with a blessing. The word ‘ordinance’ defined most often in the dictionary has reference to ‘law or laws’, like “city ordinance 123”. In scripture the word ‘ordinance’ is used to refer to both a ‘saving ordinance’ and law or commandment. For instance, to which definition should one look or use, as they might read about those who: “have strayed from mine ordinances, and have broken mine everlasting covenant” (D&C 1:14-15). This verse probably has reference to changing or straying from God’s laws. It should be stated that without a change of character,

there is no power in the ordinances of salvation or exaltation. An individual could participate in every ‘required priesthood ordinance’ the Church has to offer and no ordinance, singularly or collectively, holds any power to force the reality of the ordained blessing upon the individual. The power and reality of every ordinance lay exclusively within the person on the receiving end of the ordinance, that is, if they are faithful. The power is in their agency to change their character in such a way to become worthy of the promised reality, for ‘God will not control the agency of man’ (*TPJS*, p. 187). Because the priesthood ordinances are connected to agency, Alma explains the real purpose that lies behind 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).

As all things bear record of Christ (Moses 6:63). Alma explains that the Melchizedek ordinances provide *the hope of a future reality*. Ordinances are to ‘*to look forward*’ to that reality connected to the Atonement of Christ. To restate, the real power of the ordinance lies not in the priesthood holder who performs the ordinance or in the ordinance itself, but in the agency of the individual who receives the ordinance or ordained blessing. The power of the ordinances lay in the individual choice to change one's character in a way that will foster the relationship with God, His Son and the Atonement which is needed to make the ordinance a reality. Paul states that no matter how many gifts of the spirit one may have, if that person does not have the character of charity they have failed in their salvation (1 Cor. 13). The Savior taught that if those who have not developed the character to love one another as He loved, then they cannot be considered a disciple and are as the unbeliever (John 13:34-35). King Benjamin tries to convey the same thought about the importance of one's ‘power of character’ in the process of salvation.

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)

Putting off the ‘natural man’ is change and called repentance in scripture. Repentance is simply the process of changing one’s character. You stop doing one thing and start doing something different and better.

Knowledge

Strategic to the process of salvation and character change is the acquisition of knowledge. Mormon, like Joseph Smith, links salvation with knowledge as he writes that the Lord will provide all who desire, “knowledge unto the salvation of our souls” (3 Nephi 5:20). Joseph Smith teaches, “no man can be exalted but by knowledge” (*TPJS*, p. 357) and “without knowledge we cannot be saved” (*TPJS*, p. 217). The Prophet further explains that, ‘the principle of knowledge is the principle and power of salvation’ (*TPJS*, p. 297, 306) and that ‘we can be saved no faster than we gain knowledge’ (*TPJS*, p.217). 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 Prophet Joseph Smith taught this concept in relation to an endowment of knowledge and character change:

A man of God, should be endowed with wisdom, knowledge, and understanding, in order to teach and lead the people of God. (*TPJS*, p. 311)

He will endow you with power, wisdom, might and intelligence, and every qualification necessary; while your minds will expand wider and wider, until you can circumscribe the earth and the heavens, reach forth into eternity, and contemplate the mighty acts of Jehovah in all their variety and glory. (*TPJS*, p.163)

You need an endowment, brethren, in order that you may be prepared and able to overcome all things; (*TPJS*, p.91)

The relationship we have with God places us in a situation to advance in knowledge. (*TPJS*, p. 354)

We consider that God has created man with a mind capable of instruction, and a faculty which may be enlarged in proportion to the heed and diligence given to the light communicated from heaven to the intellect; and that the nearer man approaches perfection, the clearer are his views, and the greater his enjoyments, till he has overcome the evils of his life and lost every desire for sin; (*TPJS*, p. 51)

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 rehearsed in Temples and found in Latter-day scripture. One's relationship with Deity is the fundamental concept that King Benjamin is trying to convey to his people. He is not explaining how God created the world but why and how this created environment affects each person and their communion with their creator. Notice the creation motif throughout the passage below as he connects creation and relationships.

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 is found not only in the ordinances, but knowing and understanding the concepts that King Benjamin taught above about the relationship between things created and the creator. A fundamental facet when participating in a Temple Endowment is learning and understanding what is being taught via the creation account. Second Nephi Chapter Two is Jacob's endowment of power given him by his aging father Lehi, shortly before his death. This particular chapter could be titled 'The Doctrine of the Temple' as it not only lists but also outlines and explains the most important doctrines that should be learned in modern Temples. This knowledge that endows one with a power over mortality might be summarized in a few simple statements. The statements listed below are insights imparted during the narrative of an endowment session and augment the same doctrines found in 2 Nephi Chapter Two. Think of the influence and power that this knowledge might provide a person over the trials of mortality. Ponder how this endowment of *Temple Knowledge* could shape and change one's personal life through a faithful understanding of these eternal truths coupled with the corresponding Temple ordinances they present a glorious hope of a future reality.

- That God lives,
- That God created this world for mankind,
- That our separation from God is temporary,
- That every individual has an eternal nature and spirit,
- That every spirit existed before birth and will continue to exist after death,
- That there is a plan of salvation and 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 are temporary, have purpose and are necessary,
- Where evil comes from and how to control it,
- That death is not an end but a beginning, an event we live through,
- That an exalted and glorious life is possible after death, and

- That a Son of God provides an Atonement and resurrection.

Having knowledge of these things endows an individual with a power over this mortal life of sin, suffering, death and evil that many seek but may never find. This life changing knowledge can provide the joy and happiness of redemption and the hope of a better resurrection during the most difficult trials of life. This knowledge establishes a purpose of life that will motivate and instill a desire to return to the presence of God. These elements of belief will provide a power of hope to ‘act in futurity’ in our day-to-day lives. To better understand the tremendous power this knowledge imparts, take a moment and try to imagine how one would navigate this temporal sphere without knowing these things. The longing to understand the meaning of life is inherent and universal. Only in the creation accounts does one begin to find the answers. For this reason almost every ancient culture had and rehearsed creation epochs that visually (through drama) ritually (through ordinance and participation) and understanding, gave them a place in this world and a relationship with their creator. Creation epochs reveal an understanding of what the first man experienced when cast out of the presence of God into the lone and dreary world. These are the same things that mankind must face when entering into mortality. Hence, the purpose of the ritual repetition is to comprehend and remember that divine and eternal relationships exist between God and man in this life, reminding each spirit of the things they once knew about their ‘first estate’ and their eternal potentials.

The purposes of Temples are explained by the Lord in the Doctrine and Covenants as a place to learn and participate. Faith is a participatory action based on the knowledge of accepted truth.

13 For a place of thanksgiving for all saints, and for a *place of instruction* for all those who are called to the work of the ministry in all their several callings and offices;

14 That they may be *perfected in the understanding* of their ministry, *in theory, in principle, and in doctrine*, in all things pertaining to the kingdom of God on the earth, the keys of which kingdom have been conferred upon you.
(D&C 97:13-14)

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 cover and 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 truths needed to bring to pass the relationships necessary between God and man to achieve the character development that will lead to the exalted state of the immortality and eternal life of man.

Relationships

The scriptures 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. This often quoted verse in Moses is frequently overlooked as the introduction and purpose of the creation account that follows by subtly declaring that the purpose of this text is to convey the concepts of relationships. If this connection between the work and glory of God and the physical environment really exists, one might reasonably ask, 'why' does this creation account exist? Is it so that man might have a ‘scientific explanation’ about the world around him? Or, does it exist in order to establish the relationship (the work and glory) God might have with mankind? 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.

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 exists.^v 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 or that that God exists “*with disregard of their possible ritual and cultic settings, it may lead to the most fearful misinterpretations.*”^{vi}

This lone and dreary world is the created environment in which mankind must learn and work out their own salvation in ‘fear and trembling’ (Mormon 9:27). Creation accounts exist to help better understand salvation through relationships, not science. They establish that God is the creator of the world and consequently our lives, lifestyles, and livelihoods, trials, tribulations and sufferings have purpose, while reinforcing our understanding that without God, nothing is possible.

The scriptures enlighten our understanding about the purpose of the creation. Addressing marriage and the potential of children, the Lord establishes a primary purpose and connection between the creation of the earth 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 [the earth] 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 which 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 of the earth 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 passages explain that the creation accounts found in scripture, explained in history and in ordinance, are repeated to establish a connection between the creation narrative and a

relationship between God, and man. 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.*

The Sabbath of Creation- A Sign from the Lord

There is one of the Ten Commandments that historically takes a primary position among the others in the Old and New Testaments, which is to ‘keep the Sabbath day holy’.

10 But the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates:

11 For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it. (Exodus 20:10-11)

Most scriptural analysts and teachers focus on the *acts* that may or may not be defined as keeping or making the Sabbath day holy, rather than the knowledge of *why* the Sabbath was and is Holy. To ancient and modern Israel, the commandment to ‘keep the Sabbath day holy’ was not a single mandate to rest from one’s labors, or refrain from any and all work, but the Sabbath was instituted as a reminder to remember and rehearse the creation and eternal relationships. The Sabbath is a day for thinking ‘*Temple Thoughts*’ or those things that will give each individual an endowment of knowledge, which provides a power to endure mortality with a hope of a glorious future. After the tablets of stone were brought down from Sinai, Moses later explained why the Sabbath was to be Holy and why it will become a perpetual “sign and covenant” to remember the creation.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*. [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)

Above, the Sabbath is a “sign” (mentioned twice) between man and God, that salvation comes only through Him, and explaining that the Sabbath is to become a perpetual covenant for a “sign” to remember the creation and one’s relationship to the Creator. The Lord affirms the “perpetual covenant” and blessing of obedience connected to the observance of the Sabbath, making a direct connection to the creation accounts found in scripture. In the Doctrine and Covenants, the ‘perpetual covenant’ of the Sabbath is manifested in the blessings offered mankind through the creation and love of God:

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 climbeth 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)

These passages about the Sabbath and creation epochs leave no doubt that the holiness of the ‘seventh’ day was meant to be a day set apart for one to reflect on the creation and what the creator had done and is doing for mankind. It is a day to reminisce, remind, and renew the thoughts about relationships of an eternal nature and the temporal and spiritual salvation offered to mankind by God. These are the ‘Temple Thoughts’ that should make the Sabbath Holy in one’s life. For the

same reason the Temple is dedicated sacred space where mankind might learn of the mysteries of the purpose of creation and God's love of humanity. It is a place where men and women may make covenants of obedience to laws that will foster the required change of character preparatory to entering into the presence of God. The Temple is a place to obtain knowledge that will endow the participant with a power over mortality and an exalting hope for a future life.

Ritual Repetitions

Barbra Sproul explains the need for all mankind, ancient and modern to make a connection to the creation epochs:

Without it (the creation story), 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.^{vii}

Any endowment of power from on high that would come from myth and ritual must, by its very nature, 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 help provide the knowledge one needs to achieve salvation while here on earth. These myths about the creation are not meant to be scientific or religious dogmas, but narratives that "describe the work of God and characterize their mutual relations... which are expressive of the relation between God and man."^{viii}

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, considered the Father of the History of Religion, speaks of a power that comes from the '*rituals of recitation*' that are meant to rehearse the works of the Gods at the creation of the world. The contemporary western culture has essentially stripped from modern man the ability to make the necessary connections from this mortal world to the eternal world of the Gods through ritual. This absence of ritual comprehension is a result of separating oneself and culture from the

sacred, placing a vain faith and trust in the abilities of human ingenuity. This false faith ultimately leads to the death of one's God and the self-privation of the sacred in daily life. Rituals of recitation will, at the very least, endow a spiritual understanding about the works of God, and especially the relationship of the good and evil found in nature and mankind. The repeated drama of the plans and purposes of Deity provide the initiate with an emotional and spiritual power to endure his mortal environment. Knowing how something came to be—and that would include Satan and evil—can give us power to control it, and 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 there are issues and questions (recognized or not) that inherently plague the conscious and unconscious mind of every man, in every time, and every culture. (Even the atheist has second thoughts.) These issues and questions of life are addressed best by the repeated epochs of creation found in almost every ancient culture and temple.

...the essential thing is to know the myths. [The creation epoch or 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 them, he is able to repeat what the God, the Heroes, or the Ancestors [Adam and Eve] 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.^{ix}

The ritual repetition and recitation of the creation epoch, the works of God, and the activities of the first man, symbolically places the initiate

or patron in the presence of the Gods, 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. This is why within the multiple creation epochs found in the Church, only in the ritually recited Temple narrative do the patrons become the man Adam and the woman Eve as though they are participating in real time. Knowledge is power, and with an understanding of the relationships and purposes that exists between God, man, and the environment, the individual obtains a power (mental and hopeful) over the natural evils of life and the dark door of death that is feared by believer and atheist alike. There is a particular structure and function to these creation epochs, which Eliade explains, along with the answer to why creation epochs are a central theme 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. What Adam did all must do. Defining comments will be placed within this text surrounded by [brackets].

These creation myths and accounts:

(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] 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. . .^x

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 times and Temples. Eliade concludes his assessment in the last sentence by stating: "...the world, man, and life have a supernatural origin and history, and that this history is significant, precious and exemplary" fails to realize, (because he is not a Latter-day Saint) that the 'world, man, and life also have a supernatural outcome and future'. Therefore, the knowledge of the historical work of the Gods and salvation provided by God, coupled with the hope of the exalted potential future endows man with a tremendous power over life. This endowment of knowledge is within itself, 'significant, exalting, and exemplary.'

LDS patrons sometimes participate in Temple rituals as a matter of rote responsibility and action. Many participants of a temple endowment seek little more than the contentment of conscience. For some, the creation account that is repeated and rehearsed in Temples is often nothing more than just that, repetitive participation. Though spiritually satisfied in their Martha-like service, many fail to see the purpose why Temples were constructed: to create or maintain sacred space for the creative rituals of recitation and knowledge. Missing out on the spiritual purpose of repeating the creation epoch, many fail to heed the words of Moroni when he warns, "deny not the gifts of God" (Moroni 10:8).

Ordinance work for those who have passed on is essential and necessary. However, should it not be asked: Is the creation epoch necessary for those who have already passed through the veil? Could the repeated creation account be for the benefit of the living laborer who stands on Mount Zion in place and proxy for the dead? Just as every Sabbath becomes a time to remember the creation, every Temple session becomes a Sabbath to remember relationships. Every ancient and modern Temple creates, by dedication, and maintains by restriction, secluded sacred space to teach light and truth from God. Dedicated Houses of the Lord are prepared as sacred space so that the initiate and seasoned patron might be endowed with knowledge of eternal truths that will provide an intellectual and spiritual power over the fears and frustrations of mortality. Because of the participatory ordinances and creation narrative rehearsed in the temple, it should be realized that no matter how many times one might attend the Temple each time could and should be a learning experience for those living on both sides of the veil.

Symbol

The primary purpose that temples are constructed is to maintain ‘sacred space’. Sacred space is needed so that, 1) There is a Holy Place for the world of the Gods to make necessary interventions with the world of the living, and 2) That revealed knowledge of relationships could be taught and covenantal relationships entered into by those who are prepared. For this reason many prophets, in the absence of Temples, have been taken to mountaintops to commune with God; Moses, Nephi, Enoch, The Brother of Jared and others. Even Christ takes Peter, James, and John to the Mount of Transfiguration for instruction and ordinance. These mountains, called by Isaiah “the mountain of the Lord’s house,” (Isaiah 2:2) become a sacred and set apart space that is protected from the profane world. This sacred space provides a holy place where the necessary intrusions from the world of the Gods are made to man on earth to convey the required light and truth for the salvation of all mankind.

Some self-ordained scholars and individuals seek to find symbols behind every door, in every nook, and on every wall of the Temple and its surrounding grounds. This they do with a spiritual zeal rivaled only by a BYU Football fan. There are reliable symbols that exist, but only so far as the scriptures and God have revealed. Some symbols

seen in Temples 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 designed. If the origin and meaning of a metaphor or symbol is not known, then every interpretation might be correct, and conversely, every explanation is potentially wrong. If a symbol or metaphor is not founded in a historical reality, then all is guesswork.

Temples are not meant to be encyclopedic edifices with well-hidden, subtle secret symbols that can only be seen by the trained All-Seeing Eye. The Lord delights in plainness and cannot tolerate the Gnostic secrecy that can only be found by a select few. One may rest assured, that if the Lord requires something there is a reason for it, and that reason will be found in the scriptures rather than the commentaries written by the arm of flesh. Like the parables of Christ, symbols found in the Temple are private and individual in their scope to help retain, remind, or remember discovered insights. Understanding is revealed line upon line, precept upon precept, and only so far as one is spiritually prepared. As the spiritual insight, growth, and experience take place in an individual, a symbol seen one day may completely change in its meaning and importance, the next. The Gospel as rendered by Christ is simple: 'love God and love one another'. And all things testify of Christ.

The sacred knowledge provided in the Temple should reveal an 'endowment of power' to those seeking light and truth. The real message of this endowment power is not found 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 and commentaries have enshrouded the Temple Endowment in types and shadows of opinion. Members should be aware of those who are searching beyond the mark for symbols, and metaphors, as they are proliferating opinions, and private interpretations, 'crying lo here and lo there,' thus blurring the life-changing meaning of the endowment. Some authors seek to explain Temple symbolism to the 'lay members' who have not been trained for a ministry of metaphor and symbol. If this specialized

knowledge were necessary, then God would be a respecter of persons and partial toward the learned, blessing only those who have been trained for enlightenment. If a knowledge of a symbol, metaphor, architecture, ancient cultures, or any specific education is necessary to understand the information presented in the Temple, then spiritual perfection is forever out of reach, and the ‘lay member’ would fail miserably in their quest for an endowment of power. The ‘Endowment for Dummies’ already exists in the Temple and is written by the finger of the Lord, as found in the scriptures. The endowment of knowledge is prepared for all, bond and free, male and female, learned and unlearned, and “... adapted to the capacity of the weak and the weakest of all saints, who are or can be called saints. (D&C 89:3).

Science and Creation

There are some members on the other end of the spectrum not looking for symbols, but take the creation epochs so literally that they appropriate the material presented in scripture and the Temple as finite detail to explain all the works of God in this physical environment. They think to hold all science and religion to the interpreted specifics as presented in a chosen creation account. They fail to realize that even though the creation accounts are offered in the scriptural record, and especially the account in the Temple, they are ritualistic in purpose. These zealots suppose that the concepts and descriptions found in the creation accounts are literal and must be accepted as the unquestioned truth for the timetables and orders of creation. For example, some hold to the idea that the ‘six days’ of creation are six twenty-four hour periods that conform to a typical 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. Yet, in the Book of Abraham it is seen that ‘day and night’ are just designations of light and darkness.

The trend by some is to surmise that all of creation and the world in which we live, with 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. These fundamental creationists believe that the earth and its solar system can be 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 hoping to bring the scientific and religious

communities around to a specific point of view. Not surprisingly, these expositors tend to be partial to a single creation account (such as Moses) 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 restrict their own understanding and vision as well as place limitations on the Creator. The Prophet Joseph Smith warns about placing limits on God based on our feeble understanding:

...no man can limit the bounds or the eternal existence of eternal time. Hath he beheld the eternal world, and is he authorized to say that there is only one God? He makes himself a fool if he thinks or says so, and there is an end of his career or progress in knowledge. He cannot obtain all knowledge, for he has sealed up the gate to it. (*TPJS* p. 371)

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 eternal truth. Those who limit themselves to a preferred creation account are unable to visualize the whole picture.

In the Latter-day Saint world, there exists 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 accounts considered in this work will focus on creation epochs found in Moses, and Abraham with references being made to the Temple narrative. The three accounts, Moses, Abraham, and the Temple are remarkable in that they present different points of view in origin, presentation, and purpose. Just as the Gospels in the New Testament are written from different points of view, they are written for different purposes also. The creation account found in Moses, written for the stiff-necked 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 metaphorically 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). Studying the creation epochs from these three perspectives, the student 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 will easily lead to errors. Each account differs in key ways, owing to their respective points of view. Though these accounts are similar, they are substantially different, while at the same time are true and correct.

Moses and Abraham and Knowledge

The creation accounts found in Books of Moses and Abraham are the personal journal entries of these great men seeking for further light and truth, and the power they received because of that knowledge (not just the ritual to become such, but the reality to be). Both Moses and Abraham explain in the beginning of their records that their main purpose and main subject of their record was to seek for knowledge. Moses, desirous to learn more, is caught up to a high mountain to be instructed of the Lord (Moses 1:1). Even during the confrontation with Satan Moses declares that he has 'more to inquire of the Lord' (Moses 1:18). 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. The Father of the Faithful explains that he 'possessed great knowledge' which was not good enough, and that he wanted to 'possess greater knowledge' (Abr. 1:2). The desire for further light, knowledge and truth is what sets the great men apart from the common man. Abraham then spends the rest of the record explaining how he received the knowledge of, and the 'blessings of the fathers,' and what that blessing entailed. Both Moses and Abraham see the creation, which is a required element to better understand God, His work and His glory. Each record exposes the all-important three pillars of salvation: 1) the creation, 2) fall and 3) the Atonement. Together these three pillars set the stage to better understand the necessary relationships with mankind, God and the fallen world. Seeing and

understanding the elements of the creation are the precursor to comprehending God. (And this is life eternal to know thee the only true, God and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent. John 17:3). It is not just coincidence that the Bible begins with the creation to introduce the works of God for man, nor is it coincidence that the Gospel of John begins “in the beginning” to introduce the salvation prepared for man by God through His Son. The Pearl of Great Price is truly that. This Pearl records the knowledge that these prophets and patriarchs received from God as they were endued 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.

Geological Creation

Remember, the three accounts in the LDS culture 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 and the order of all life. They were given to mankind as part of an ordinance and an initiation into the knowledge that convey power over mortality. Each creation account begins with the general geologic information (water and dry land) and then moves into the astral-geologic (the sun, moon and stars) creation. These geologic and astral-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 astral-geologic creation took place. The creation of the heaven and the earth, the seas and dry land along with the sun, moon, and stars, form the *general framework* or set the stage for the relationships that will follow. As the biologic creation begins (the creation of the plants, fowls, fish and land animals), though sparse, the detail is expanded a hundredfold compared to the generality of ‘heavens and earth.’ This expansion in discussion and particulars found in the creation accounts are for a specific reason that is connected to the structure and purpose of ‘myth and ritual’ as described previously.

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 provide a better understanding of the creation. 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 live. 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).

The details that are in the Abrahamic account enlarge and clarify 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 astral-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.’^{xi} Decisions were made and “the head God organized the heavens and the earth”^{xii} and then, “the heads of the Gods appointed one God for us.”^{xiii}

Abraham 4:1-5; Moses 2:1-5

The Gods begin with the creation of the Heavens and the Earth as a general phase of the creation—it sets the framework to furnish a place for the biological creation that follows. The “*First Five*” verses of both Abraham Chapter Four and Moses Chapter Two is the ‘trailer’ so to speak, of what is to come, and should not be perceived to establish “days or times” of a supposed linear creation account. These verses are discussed in a general and informative way to introduce the

creation account that will follow. Taking the time to look beyond tradition, one might recognize the *content summary* or introductory nature of these verses, which is easily seen in Moses 2:1.

Since the first five verses of both Abraham 4 and Moses 2 constitute the colophon (the introduction and explanation of content) the creation account 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 is discussed. 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 time, environment, and element in which man will not live (the heavens and an empty and desolate earth) are addressed in a general fashion, just as the astral-geologic (heavenly) creation that follows. These introductory concepts are general because so far as man is concerned, they have always been here before any man was placed here.

Verse one is the ‘Introduction’ of what is to follow, which will be the ‘trailer’ (verses 1-5 in both texts) with the title of the text being presented at the end of the first verse: “*In the beginning I created the heaven, and the earth.*” Period. This is the title, introduction, a statement of fact, the end of discussion, and no more questions asked. Letting the scriptures speak for themselves is revelatory and rewarding, but may require an open mind unencumbered by the thoughts and traditional interpretations.

Abraham 4	Moses 2
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<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.</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.</p>
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In verse one of Abraham above, the Lord adds information recorded by the Patriarch not seen in Moses about the geologic creation as he reports that the Gods (plural) “organized and formed,” whereas Moses states, “I created” (Remember Moses is writing for the Children of Israel). In verse two, 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, "my spirit moved upon the face of the water," while Abraham records 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, protect, prepare, and nurture, things that a hen might do over her eggs. Something was happening, and it was being watched and protected. Then:

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

Abraham 4	Moses 2
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<p>4 And they (the Gods) comprehended the light, for it was bright; and they divided the light, or <i>caused it to be divided, from the darkness.</i></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.</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.</p>
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In these introductory verses 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, thus being “called” day and night. It can be easily seen in Abraham’s account that being ‘called day and night’ was not meant to be a time period but a description. Abraham is told “from evening to morning it was called night” and from the “morning to the evening it was called day.” In other words when it’s dark it will be called night; and when it’s light it will be called it day. This became the beginning and use of the terms “day and night.” Moses, on the other hand, implies that the introduction of light and darkness was the “first day” of creation. This implication of light and darkness being the first day of 24 hours or one thousand years is just an interpolation, especially if Abraham is used as another testament to help clear things up. Abraham states that this division of ‘light and darkness’ 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 24 hours or ‘*as a thousand*’ years.

The Promos, Trailers and Previews of the upcoming attraction are now over. The Lord promptly expands his explanation of what was *previewed* in the first five verses of both Moses and Abraham. He will talk about the creation of the heaven and the earth or waters above and waters below introduced previously. The gathering of the waters and the dry land appearing establishes boundaries to the chaotic waters of creation and the beginning of the biologic creation of plants and then the all-important division of light and darkness. These verses

are the follow through of the colophon or introduction of the first five verses.

Abraham 4	Moses 2
<p>6 And the Gods also said: Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters, and it shall divide the waters from the waters.</p>	<p>6 And again, I, God, said: Let there be a firmament in the midst of the water, and it was so, even as I spake; and I said: Let it divide the waters from the waters; and it was done;</p>
<p>7 And the Gods <i>ordered</i> the expanse, so that it divided the waters which were under the expanse from the waters which were above the expanse; and it was so, even as they ordered.</p>	<p>7 And I, God, made the firmament and divided the waters, yea, the great waters under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament, and it was so even as I spake.</p>
<p>8 And the Gods called the expanse, Heaven. And it came to pass that it was from evening until morning that they called night; and it came to pass that it was from morning until evening that they called day; and this was the second time that they called night and day.</p>	<p>8 And I, God, called the firmament Heaven; and the evening and the morning were the second day.</p>
<p>9 And the Gods <i>ordered</i>, saying: Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the earth come up dry; and it was so as they ordered;</p>	<p>9 And I, God, said: Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and it was so; and I, God, said: Let there be dry land; and it was so.</p>
<p>10 And the Gods <i>pronounced</i> the dry land, Earth; and the gathering together of the waters, pronounced they, Great Waters; and the Gods saw that they were obeyed.</p>	<p>10 And I, God, called the dry land Earth; and the gathering together of the waters, called I the Sea; and I, God, saw that all things which I had made were good.</p>
<p>11 And the Gods said: Let us <i>prepare the earth</i> to bring forth grass; the herb yielding seed; the fruit tree yielding fruit, after his kind, whose seed in itself yieldeth its own likeness upon the earth; and it was so, even as they ordered.</p>	<p>11 And I, God, said: Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, the fruit tree yielding fruit, after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed should be in itself upon the earth, and it was so even as I spake.</p>
<p>12 And the Gods <i>organized the earth</i> 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,</p>	<p>12 And the earth brought forth grass, every herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed should be in itself, after his kind; and I, God, saw that all things which I had made were good;</p>

whose seed could only bring forth the same in itself, after his kind; and the Gods saw that they were obeyed.	
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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 5	Moses 3
4 And they (the Gods) comprehended the light, for it was bright; and they divided the light, or <u><i>caused it to be divided, from the darkness.</i></u>	4 And I, God, saw the light; and that light was good. And I, God, divided the light from the darkness.
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.	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.
14 And the Gods organized the lights in the expanse of the heaven, and <u><i>caused them to divide the day from the night;</i></u> and organized them to be for signs and for seasons, and for days and for years;	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;
15 And organized them to be for lights in the expanse of the heaven to give light upon the earth; and it was so.	15 And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth; and it was so.
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;	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.
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, <u><i>and to cause to divide the light from the darkness.</i></u>	17 And I, God, set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth,
	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;

Viewing the introductory verses of both accounts in parallel columns above allows one to see the differences within the texts and provide a better understanding of how the lights that were set in the firmament became the 'cause' of the separation between light and darkness. 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 on an axis perpendicular to the sun, which causes the light ('from the morning until the evening') to be "divided" from the darkness ('from the evening until the morning').

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's 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. Many have also assumed that the earth fell from the presence of God to our current position in the universe and solar system. Yet, the text states that *long before the fall* the sun, moon, and even the stars (constellations) were set and in position for times, seasons, for days and for years.

Many teachers have been asked: “When God said, ‘Let there be light,’ what was the source of the light if the sun had not yet been created”? What these accounts are establishing, and can easily be seen in the Abraham account, that 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. The Gods set the earth in motion so that part of the time it was light and part of the time it was dark, and the Gods called the light 'day' and the darkness they called 'night'. This is intentionally general as the creation of these elements will be same throughout the existence of the earth. In 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. These are the three things of which life must have to exist: part time sun, controlled water, and prepared soil. The general geologic and astral-geologic creation must be in place to continue the preparation of the earth for mankind. Like it or not God is teaching Moses and Abraham and consequently all mankind about relationships, rather than scientific details.

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 beaten. 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 and spiritual relationships between Deity, the cosmos, and mankind. To think that science should be reconciled to scripture—or scripture to science—based on these canonical accounts is not only narrow-minded but also a waste of time. One is sure to miss the beautiful forest of relationships, when the trees of interpretation are blocking the divine vista. These creation accounts in scripture are not meant to establish scientific facts for the fundamentalist or a fictional fabrication for the scientist. Any endeavor or argument to prove or disprove the creation accounts via a scientific process, theory or inquiry is a superfluous waste of time and effort. It should not be expected that scientific detail be revealed within the texts and epochs of creation.

Moses and Abraham, in their search for knowledge about the works of God, receive a very small, visionary and prophetic glimpse of a very small part of the creative acts of God. These prophets and other righteous men, who have had the opportunity to look through the windows of creation, such as Enoch (Moses 6:35-36) and the Brother of Jared (Ether 1:3) write little about the marvelous

works and acts of God. This is because they are unable, like the speculating Latter-day Saint, to comprehend or write about the full and detailed account of the handiwork of the Gods.

4 And, behold, thou art my son; wherefore look, and I will show thee the workmanship of mine hands; *but not all*, for my works are without end, and also my words, for they never cease.

5 Wherefore, *no man can behold all my works*, except he behold all my glory; and *no man can behold all my glory*, and afterwards remain in the flesh on the earth. (Moses 1:4-5)

Each account recorded by righteous men who have seen and written about the creation of this world *always* do so in the context of relationships and the salvation of mankind. Each with a visionary understanding of just a small part of God's creative acts inevitably and consistently connect these accounts to the context of the creative "work and glory" of God; the immortality and eternal life of humanity.

To briefly review and repeat: The purpose of the creation accounts are to establish the relationships between God, man, and the environment in which he is to live and die as he seeks a relationship with his Savior and works out his own salvation in fear and trembling.

27 O then *despise not*, and *wonder not*, but hearken unto the words of the Lord, and ask the Father in the name of Jesus for what things soever ye shall stand in need. *Doubt not*, but be believing, and begin as in times of old, and *come unto the Lord with all your heart, and work out your own salvation with fear and trembling before him*.

28 *Be wise in the days of your probation*; strip yourselves of all uncleanness; ask not, that ye may consume it on your lusts, but ask with a firmness unshaken, that ye will yield to no temptation, but that ye will serve the true and living God. (Mormon 9:27-28)

Creation epochs are always written and rehearsed in the context of an ordinance or initiation, providing a framework or setting for an endowment of power. A portion of that endowment of power is knowing why the earth was created rather than how it was created; knowing why there is death, sin and evil, and how to control it; knowing how to live righteously in this fallen world; knowing how to come unto Christ and return to the presence of the Gods of creation. These are the questions that must be answered to make a difference in the character of mankind, as they provide power and insight over life in a spiritually fallen world. For Latter-day Saints to focus on the questions of 'how and how long, where and what order' the creation took place, will strip the Divine spiritual purpose of these accounts, taking man out of the picture, and out of control. To focus only on the 'the how' of these creation epochs renders them bereft of purpose, and should be relegated to the 'gee whiz' file. Creation accounts viewed from the 'why' provide the foundation for the knowledge needed for the process of salvation and exaltation. Joseph Smith explains:

In the beginning, the head of the Gods called a council of the Gods; and they came together and concocted a plan to create the world and people it. When we begin to learn this way, we begin to learn the only true God, and what kind of a being we have got to worship. Having a knowledge of God, we begin to know how to approach him, and how to ask so as to receive an answer. When we understand the character of God, and how to come to him, he begins to unfold the heavens to us, and to tell us all about it. When we are ready to come to him, he is ready to come to us. (TPJS, pp.349-350)

Biological Creation

Given that the creation epochs found in scripture are provided to establish a relationship between God, man, and the environment, the descriptive rehearsal of the biological creation (plants and animals) must have the same fundamental purpose. In other words, the flora and fauna introduced in creation epochs 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 perfected and 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. The biological creation is a description of living things that will interact with man and were engendered for the use of Adam and his 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 climbeth 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)

9 And *out of the ground made I, the Lord God, to grow every tree, naturally, that is pleasant to the sight of man; and man could behold it...* for it remaineth in the sphere in which I, God, created it, yea, even *all things which I prepared for the use of man*; and man saw that it was good for food. And I, the Lord God, planted the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and also the tree of knowledge of good and evil. (Moses 3:9)

These verses make it clear that the fruit trees and herbs, the fish and fowls, and all manner of beasts and life on earth 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 (the astral-geologic and geologic creation), there is no need to know about the plants and animals that might have lived prior to the first man, Adam. A knowledge and understanding about living things (plant and animal) that may have lived and died prior to the first man on the earth is *not* required knowledge *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 all evidence of life to that which is described within the text. A more in-depth discussion about this subject will follow.

There are two things that must be kept in mind as the following discussion ensues. 1) 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* through agency and choice rather than instinct. It is an important distinction when considering the varieties of life that this earth may have supported before the advent of Adam, the first man (Moses 1:34; Abr. 1:3) that has the potential to become like God. 2) The account that is connected to the biological creation is specifically connected to the plants and animals that will be on the earth during the duration of mankind’s mortal existence. These are the plants and animals described in the text that he, Adam and his posterity, would have a relationship with in their quest for their survival and their temporal and spiritual salvation.

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’ for that purpose. Abraham unmistakably describes the works of the Gods and the preparation of the earth to sustain the necessary flora and fauna for mankind. The most “FAQ” is usually: How long is the preparatory period? The western mindset would like a definite duration to fit it in to a selected time frame and creation account. However the often-unaccepted answer is: As long as need be. Abraham explains that once set in motion, “the Gods watched those things which they had ordered until they obeyed” (Abraham 4:18). [Bracketed statements are inserted for understanding.]

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, sustain, and nourish 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, the fruits and vegetables that would be used by man as well as the animals. Below, the Gods address Adam's needs as they organize the plants that will be created for, and available to him:

And the Gods said: Behold, *we will give them* [Adam, Eve and all mankind] 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 is the preparation that was needed; and 2) How long did that preparation take? Again, as long as is necessary, because it needed to be perfect and ready for mankind (those who have the potential to become like God).

Part of the necessary preparation for man would be the requirement that the soil be rich and fertile enough for a garden to grow when Adam is brought to Eden before the fall, and for him to plant in his labor for 'bread'. This soil must be able to sustain the plant life that man and his animals would require for sustenance and survival. The soil would need to be prepared with all manner of organic material, minerals and nutrients. Fertile 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. This is a heretical thought when compared to the traditional commentaries of opinion and tradition. When letting God and the scriptures speak for themselves without the aid of the arms of flesh, one might be astonished at the view.

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 that has the agency and choice to leave His presence, while at the same time, 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 knowledge of the plan of salvation. This applies to all lower forms of life that are incapable of sin because they are ruled and acted upon because of a genetic, inherent God given instinct for their survival. Mankind is the only creature that may, as the Doctrine and Covenants illuminate: 'act in futurity according to moral agency' (D&C 101:78). In other words, unlike the animal kingdom, mankind is capable of making a choice regarding acts and thoughts that might have a bearing on a reward or punishment after death or in the next life. (The dog rolls over for a treat now, not after it is dead). Man has the ability, through their desires and their words, works, and thoughts, to develop a character worthy to become like God, rather than being governed by the fleshly attributes and instincts of animals. Some men choose to be ruled by the animalistic drives by choice unlike animals, mankind has the ability to repent and forgive, to love and worship

and believe in a God they cannot see. Mankind is the only creature that is born without instinct, and in infancy, needs constant nourishment and loving care to survive temporally. Men, with the potential to become like God, are not animals, nor have they evolved from lower forms of life. When Adam and Eve find themselves in the Garden of Eden they have an immortal life, already walking with God in the cool of the day (Moses 4:14), but to become like Him they must work for their eternal life and glory that had been promised to them.

The first principles of man are self-existent with God. God himself, finding he was in the midst of spirits and glory, because he was more intelligent, saw proper to institute laws whereby the rest could have a privilege to advance like himself. The relationship we have with God places us in a situation to advance in knowledge. He has power to institute laws to instruct the weaker intelligences, that they may be exalted with himself, so that they might have one glory upon another, and all that knowledge, power, glory, and intelligence, which is requisite in order to save them in the world of spirits. (*TPJS*, p.354)

The first traditional argument that there was no death of any living thing before the fall is based on the assumption that the whole world (the physical sphere called earth) was in a “terrestrial” state and that it fell from the presence of God (which it is assumed, was somewhere near Kolob) when Adam partook of the fruit, causing the "fall" of the earth and Adam. This tradition is not scriptural but is (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 the “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 even the respected arm of flesh. Joseph Smith stated that his “key” to understanding the scriptures was to “try and discover the question that provoked the response or answer from the Lord.”^{xiv}

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 the "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)

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 (verse 19). 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 assumptions or adopt and adapt opinions 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 the father of 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 which 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 organic 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 move 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, perhaps 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 and fruits that were consumed by Adam and Eve and eaten by 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 of 1931 that was published in the “Deseret News” and then printed as 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.^{xv} 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.”^{xvi}

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 plant and animal death before Adam, just as the fossil record demonstrates. Again the creation accounts are for relationships not details. They (the creation accounts) 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*. This potential is 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 sometimes mistakenly called ‘cave man’.

The Spiritual Creation

Albert Einstein once made the comment: “I want to know God’s thoughts, the rest are mere details.” The creative accounts in The Book of Abraham are the thoughts of God. The ‘spiritual creation’ commonly talked about in LDS circles are expanded in such a way in the Book of Abraham, that it often creates havoc on the traditional understanding. The verse that is most often used to define the spiritual creation is found in Moses 3:5, while at the same time the corresponding verses in The Book of Abraham are often ignored because of the interpretative traditions surrounding the spiritual creation. Abraham explains that the spiritual creation is the coming together of the Gods and is really the counseling or planning session (i.e. the thoughts of God) that foreshadowed the beginning of the physical creation process of being “prepared, ordered, organized, and watched” (Abr. 4:11-12, 18). Abraham is told by the Lord that there was a discussion and counsel about the creation, not that the spirits of all things were created before coming to the earth. The verse in Moses 3:5, interpreted to be the spiritual creation, is expanded in Abraham to include Verses 2-5 in Chapter Five. Unfortunately tradition is often stronger and better accepted than scripture and doctrine and this may be the reason there are more than just a single account of the creation epochs. The Book of Mormon becomes a second witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ; so also do the differing accounts of the creation stand as multiple witnesses to the works of God for the temporal and spiritual salvation of humanity. Too many foolishly seek to find and define *how* the creation took place rather than look to the different accounts to better comprehend *why* it took place.

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 hinted at 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 has been assumed that Moses is saying. LDS commentaries run rampant with explication on a ‘spiritual creation’ that neglects the explanation found in the Book of Abraham.

Moses’ account of the so-called ‘spiritual creation’, has become the interpreted traditional opinion:

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 council 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 Council 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>5 According to <i>all that which they had said</i> 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>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 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</p>

	upon the earth, neither in the water, neither in the air;
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As seen above, Abraham adds tremendous insight about the planning meeting (Counsel) of the Gods that were in counsel about the creation of the earth (a super activity), not the creation of spirits that will animate all things to be physically created later, as tradition embraces. 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 somewhat 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 interpretation from 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, and cave dwellers. (These are addressed below).

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 or alter 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 a spiritual 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 as explained in D&C 77 above.

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 physical 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 LDS 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 many LDS educational venues and classes). 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 beetles.

Since the spirit exists, and is eternal, it must, at some time receive a body and a temporal life having the opportunity to live and die, 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 and protection. 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 or ever fulfill the measure of its creation. The spirit is eternal and has a nature or ‘intelligence’ that makes it act as it does and react to the environment in which it is placed. This could not only include cave dwellers but also the sixty-four dollar question about dinosaurs. As Abraham explains that while the earth was in preparation for the first man Adam, the Gods watched and prepared. These creatures could live and die long before Adam is placed on the earth.

As stated earlier, the physical body that a corresponding spirit is placed in, must be capable of fulfilling the measure of its creation and reaching its full potential. This would extend to mankind, 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 (TPJS, p. 345).

Before Adam

Anything animal or man-like 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 but animal. A cave dweller, genetically closer to man than monkey, still does not have 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 the sphere in which they live. For man it is possible to travel to and live in space, walk on the moon, live under the oceans or on the ice caps of the poles, creating a suitable habitation in a less than hospitable environment.

30 All truth is independent in that sphere in which God has placed it, to act for itself, as all intelligence also; otherwise there is no existence. (D&C 93:30)

Anything less than man is not capable of living in an environment that is not suited to the requirements of its physical 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 its higher level of 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 anthropologists will explain, this lasted throughout their time and tenure on earth (about 40,000 years). There was no change, no progression, no language, no written record, 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 sophisticated 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 for that spirit to receive a physical body in which they could fulfill the measure of their creation. That spirit and body should be able to act for itself and reach its full potential, whatever that might be, based on the intelligence and abilities of the 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 his character, while making decisions that will render consequences, rewards and punishments after death?

Adam was the first being created in the image of God, who 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. This was so that mankind could progress as fast as his intellect and righteousness would allow. 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 the 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 faithful members who have decided that God could accomplish His designs by way of evolution, or perhaps 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 is believed and accepted is determined by whom one may place or chose to be an authority over them, i.e. the 'sources.' Only the individual can give that 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). If the authority or source the individual accepts (chooses) becomes the foundation for their standard of truth, no matter if it is right or wrong, their chosen standard will be 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 best source just might be God.

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 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 undertaking. 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.”^{xvii} It has been concluded that the amount of knowledge available to humanity doubles every year and soon will be every 12 hours. Of all the knowledge that exists in the universe, the amount humans know is virtually nothing. Of all that is available to man on earth, the individual is able to comprehend very little. Yet, many claim they know for sure, standing firm in their ignorance. To say that God does not exist or the scriptures are not true, one would have to know and comprehend eternity, spiritual truths, know all about life and everything about death. It is the fool who thinks he knows all and rejects the unknown, for all are ignorant on a different subject. Joseph Smith stated that a ‘man would be condemned more for what he doesn’t believe than what he does believe’. (*TPJS*, p. 374)

Evolutionary theory demands that over time, more complex genetic mutations must develop for any advancement to occur. This theory readily accepts that the animal kingdom evolved because of these mutations, but at the same time refuses to 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 the evolutionary time rate must remain constant to allow evolution to take 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 as a main course. Another consideration often left out of the argument about evolution is that of catastrophes that could effect and nullify the law of uniformitarianism.^{xviii} Be it evolution or catastrophes, it is the genetic material that would have to be affected to 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 chosen theory, there is often no letting go—professional reputations and livelihoods are sometimes built and staked on a particular premise. There is in the discipline of science; supposed *scientific fact*, accepted *scientific theory*, and the all powerful *scientific ego*. Each one of these must be overcome or put aside for learning to take place. *Theory* and *Ego* often create a ‘black hole’ where everything in a given discipline is governed only by peer-accepted theories and sometimes for the self survival of the ego. The professional 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 some 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. Repetition is the Hebrew form of conceptual emphasis.

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 yielding seed; the fruit tree yielding fruit, after his kind, whose seed in itself yieldeth its own likeness 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, after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed should be in itself 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 above and verse 25 below, 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 likeness upon the earth” which produced “after his kind, ... whose seed should be in itself, after his kind.”

Abraham 4	Moses 2
<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 after their kind; and every winged fowl after their kind. 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 after his kind, cattle and creeping things, and beasts of the <i>earth after their kind</i>; and it was so, as they had said.</p>	<p>21 And I, God, created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind; 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 after his kind, cattle, and creeping things, and beasts of the earth after their kind, and it was so;</p>

25 And the Gods organized the earth to bring forth the beasts <i>after their kind</i> , and cattle <i>after their kind</i> , and every thing that creepeth upon the earth <i>after its kind</i> ; and the Gods saw they would obey.	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.
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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. The 'spirit is eternal and was not created or made' and therefore, could not evolve. (D&C 93:29)

For science to accept any theory there are two things that must, according to science, occur. The theory must be: 1) observable, and 2) repeatable. The theory of evolution has rendered to science 'nil' in both requirements for it even to be accepted as theory. One key deterrent to the theory of evolution is called a "law" by physics and science, 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 far 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. Likewise to move from the monkey to cave dweller and then modern man, has never been seen, is not repeatable, and is contrary to the Second Law of Thermodynamics or Entropy. Since the theory of evolution is based on the premise of the law of uniformitarianism there would have to be the visible and existing links between the species of animal and humanity.

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.^{xix}

Every thing moves from a state of order to a state of disorder, and given the chance this entropy will maximize itself toward disorder. One demanding 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 is a dimension with an 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). Evolution cannot exist in a temporal environment contrary to the law of entropy, and never in a dimension where time exists.

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 at first, 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 to live in order to be governed by the laws of nature. Hence, Adam should be created from the elements or “dust of the earth” on which he will dwell, in submission to the natural 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. Adam, created by God, was perfect in form, and substance, perfect in mind and body, perfect genetically and emotionally. Handicaps exist because of ‘time’ and entropy. Genetic material within a species will change and devolve like language. The claim that ‘God made me the way I am’ is not true. He made Adam perfect, and the genetic mutations that exist within humanity over time and mixture will cause change and weaknesses in mind and body. Perhaps one might justifiably blame their parents and ancestors for the way they look. Even some issues or handicaps with the physical body can be genetic, but the spirit, when it comes to earth, is whole and perfect, without any spiritual handicap. Mankind will sometimes let the physical handicaps and physical genetic issues control the spirit and character, seeking to blame their creator, to justify their

weaknesses. The weaknesses of the physical body exist because all descend from father Adam who was created from the ‘dust of the earth’.

The Dust of the Ground

The Prophet Joseph Smith, in the “Inspired Version” of the Bible, (Joseph Smith Translation or “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 illustrates this change when compared with the JST.

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 <i>was formed of God, and the first man upon the earth.</i>

The 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 multiple times in each of 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 any symbolic meaning. Each statement is definite in the context of the scripture and therefore, definite in the meaning and understanding. Letting the scriptures speak for themselves will sometimes open vistas never before considered.

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 problematically, no right interpretation 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, and the self proclaimed 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 ‘like 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. Latter-day Saints have a choice: 1) let the scriptures speak for themselves, or 2) try to correct the word and work of God found in the scriptures.

The Bird's Eye View

These creation accounts have been preserved so that the Latter-day reader may comprehend the relationships between God, our temporal environment and our potential exaltation. Being cognizant of these relationships and their purpose will prepare man for the next new creation. This awareness is tantamount, as one repetitively participates in the creation epoch rehearsed for the benefit of the patron and proxy in the Temple. The endowment of power is received from and because of Christ. King Benjamin, speaking of the connections concerning creation, relationship, knowledge and salvation explains:

9 Believe in God; believe that he is, and that he created all things, both in heaven and in earth; believe that he has all wisdom, and all power, both in heaven and in earth; believe that man doth not comprehend all the things which the Lord can comprehend.

6 I say unto you, if ye have come to a knowledge of the goodness of God, and his matchless power, and his wisdom, and his patience, and his long-suffering towards the children of men; and also, the atonement which has been prepared from the foundation of the world, that thereby salvation might come to him that should put his trust in the Lord. (Mosiah 4:6-7, 9)

Adam was the first man on the earth, (i.e., the first being with the potential to become like God). The spirit is eternal, and the physical body is temporal. It needed to be created from the elements of the world upon which he will live and die. The body, because of time, entropy and the laws of nature, is corruptible and finite, for "it was appointed unto men that they *must die*" (Alma 12:27). While the physical body will die, the eternal nature of the spirit will continue to live, as all will realize that death, like birth, are events that all spirits live through.

The creation epochs connect physical and spiritual relationships. Understanding these relationships one will see that the creation of the heavens and the earth and all that in them are, relate to the life and death of the physical body of mankind. For instance, the earth upon which all live, the food that is produced with seed in itself for the use of man was created from the same earth and elements, to which all must return (D&C 59: 16-20).

The scriptures explain that the time will come when another creation of heaven and earth will take precedence over this one with which all are familiar. The final chronicler of the Nephite nation writing his editorial comments about Ether's record states that: "there shall be a *new heaven and a new earth*; and they shall be like unto the old save the old have passed away, and all things have become new". (Ether 13:9). Joseph Smith adds a little more detail through revelation about this new heaven and new earth:

23 And the end shall come, and the heaven and the earth shall be consumed and pass away, and there shall be a *new heaven and a new earth*.

24 For all old things shall pass away, and all things shall become new, even the heaven and the earth, and all the fulness thereof, both men and beasts, the fowls of the air, and the fishes of the sea; (D&C 29:23-24)

The Prophet Isaiah concludes his record of personal and national salvation with the insertion of a concluding creation account from the Lord, describing a new heaven and new earth by stating that: "For, behold, I create *new heavens and a new earth*: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create..." (Isaiah 65:17-18). The interesting detail the Lord explains in Isaiah is that the 'former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind' which would not just mean a new world but a new existence, a new state of mind, and new beginning.

This new earth will be renewed, sanctified, and prepared for the advent of celestial man, i.e., those who are now worthy to be called the sons and daughters of God, just as the first earth was prepared for Adam and his posterity.

18 Therefore, it [the earth] must needs be sanctified from all unrighteousness, that it may be prepared for the celestial glory;

19 For after it hath filled the measure of its creation, it shall be crowned with glory, even with the presence of God the Father;

20 That bodies who are of the celestial kingdom may possess it forever and ever; for, for this intent was it made and created, and for this intent are they sanctified. (D&C 88:18-20)

9 This earth, in its sanctified and immortal state, will be made like unto crystal and will be a Urim and Thummim to the inhabitants who dwell thereon, whereby all things pertaining to an inferior kingdom, or all kingdoms of a lower order, will be manifest to those who dwell on it; and this earth will be Christ's. (D&C 130:9)

The Bible begins with the creation of the temporal heaven and earth in Genesis, and at the other end of the Biblical Standard, the Book of Revelation records that there will be an eternal 'new heaven and new earth' (Rev. 21:1). The goal of mankind and the message of the scriptures that are sandwiched between the bookends of these two creations, is how to spiritually move from the first temporal earth, to the eternal new world.

Adam and Eve sought to 'be as the Gods knowing good and evil', which required them to be driven out of the Garden into a temporal world of suffering and death, constantly seeking for light and knowledge to find the way to return to what they once had, and receive that which they lost. In an ancient text this concept Adam teaches his son, Seth, this concept about the events surrounding

the fall and him partaking the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, seeking to become as the Gods.

Adam said to Seth, his son, “You have heard, my son, that God is going to come into the world after a long time, and put on a body, be born like a human being and grow up as a child. He will perform signs and wonders on the earth: He spoke to me about this in Paradise after I picked some of the fruit in which death was hiding: ‘Adam, Adam do not fear. You wanted to be a god; I will make you a god, not right now, but after a space of many years. I am consigning you to death. ...And I answered and said to him, ‘Why, my Lord?’” And he said to me, ‘Because you listened to the words of the serpent, you and your posterity will be food for the serpent. But after a short time there will be mercy on you because you were created in my image, and I will not leave you to waste away in Sheol. For you sake I will be born of the Virgin. For you sake I will taste death and enter the house of the dead. For you sake I will make a new heaven, and I will be established over your posterity. ‘And after three days, while I am in the tomb, I will raise up the body I received from you. And I will set you at the right hand of my divinity, and I will make you a god just like you wanted... And I will restore to you and to your posterity that which is the justice of heaven’^{xx}

Once cut off from immortality and the presence of God by choice Adam now must become worthy, (again through agency) to be introduced into a new Celestial world, to live as it was in the beginning, immortal and in the presence of Deity. However, now having this *knowledge* of good and evil, right and wrong, light and darkness, men are endowed with a power to become ‘as the Gods’ even sons and daughters of God (John. 1:12), with immortality and eternal life.

This is the message of salvation, which is initiated with the fall of Adam as he is forced into a lone and dreary world, beginning the process of personal transformation and the transition into the glory and exaltation in the world of the Gods. Adam, cast out of the paradise of Eden, must learn of Christ, the power of the Atonement and the promise and power of the Resurrection. To move between these two worlds, he must live in one preparing, learning, and changing to become worthy to live in the other new world. This he does by exercising faith unto repentance (the change of character) in Jesus Christ and the Atonement, being encouraged by the future realities promised in ordinance, coupled with a hope of a glorious resurrection (D&C 138:14).

There is a third creation account in the middle of the Bible. This all important creation account is found in the Gospel of John as he begins his book speaking of the creation (not by coincidence, but with purpose) while introducing the Christ, who is the only ‘way, the truth, and the life’ (John 14:6), which opens the door of the new heaven and new earth that he speaks of at the end of his Book of Revelation.

- 1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
- 2 The same was in the beginning with God.
- 3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.
- 4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men.
- 5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

- 10 He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.
- 11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:

13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth. (John 1:1-5, 10-14)

To transfer from the Old world to the New, one must grasp firmly a faith and hope of immortality and eternal life. To do so, a *spiritual* separation *must* take place from the pleasures of mortality, i.e., the fleshly desires, appetites, and passions for the things of this world and ignorance. This spiritual preparation is one of character development based on one's knowledge, faith in Christ and His Atonement. One must begin that spiritual preparation on this temporal earth in anticipation for the new heaven and new earth.

The temporal creation accounts that occur in modern scripture are unquestionably linked to the creation of a new heaven and new earth of a celestial nature and glory by relationship. As one might look backward to the scriptural creation epochs and appreciate that the Gods not only created this earth but also created the physical body from the dust of this same earth (Mosiah 2:25). This temporal earth becomes the survival sphere upon which our temporal bodies will live and die. King Benjamin explains that all recognition should be given to the God of creation

“... 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...” (Mosiah 2:21).

God took an eternal spirit, created an earth and then formed from the earth a temporal body to temporarily house that eternal spirit, providing a time or probation where all three must be prepared for eternity. These three are: the earth, the body and the spirit. On this earth the spirit's purpose is to develop a character that is worthy of God and his presence. Eventually, God will create and provide for mankind, a 'new heaven and new earth' where the individual spirit is united again and “inseparably connected” (D&C 93:33) to the immortal bodies in their chosen resurrected glory.

25 Wherefore, may God raise you from death *by the power of the resurrection, and also from everlasting death by the power of the atonement*, that ye may be received into the eternal kingdom of God, that ye may praise him through grace divine. Amen. (2 Nephi 10:25)

11 Wherefore, beloved brethren, *be reconciled unto him through the atonement of Christ, his Only Begotten Son, and ye may obtain a resurrection, according to the power of the resurrection which is in Christ*, and be presented as the first-fruits of Christ unto God, having faith, and obtained a good hope of glory in him before he manifesteth himself in the flesh. (Jacob 4:11)

By the power of His only Begotten each world is created by the Father. The Gods prepare in each world a body, created in His image and likeness, to house the eternal spirit. In the first world the individual spirit, by their choices, obedience to law and character, prepare for a glorified body for the second.

21 And they who are not sanctified through the law which I have given unto you, even the law of Christ, must inherit another kingdom, even that of a terrestrial kingdom, or that of a telestial kingdom.

22 For he who is not able to abide the law of a celestial kingdom cannot abide a celestial glory.

23 And he who cannot abide the law of a terrestrial kingdom cannot abide a terrestrial glory.

24 And he who cannot abide the law of a telestial kingdom cannot abide a telestial glory; therefore he is not meet for a kingdom of glory. Therefore he must abide a kingdom which is not a kingdom of glory. (D&C 88:21-24)

The new resurrected body that is united to the eternal spirit, will be of the same glory which the spirit has chosen to become. Not by declaration or judgment of God but by the law of restoration that is founded on the choice and agency of the individual spirit.

28 They who are of a celestial spirit shall receive the same body which was a natural body; even ye shall receive your bodies, and your glory shall be that glory by which your bodies are quickened.

29 Ye who are quickened by a portion of the celestial glory shall then receive of the same, even a fulness.

30 And they who are quickened by a portion of the terrestrial glory shall then receive of the same, even a fulness.

31 And also they who are quickened by a portion of the telestial glory shall then receive of the same, even a fulness.

32 And they who remain shall also be quickened; nevertheless, they shall return again to their own place, to enjoy that which they are willing to receive, because they were not willing to enjoy that which they might have received. (D&C 88:28-32)

As these verses soberly explain, the glory of the resurrected body and kingdom of glory that one might inherit is dependent upon the spirit that one has chosen to become. It might be a “celestial spirit” (i.e., celestial character) or terrestrial, or even telestial. Nevertheless, the glory and kingdom in which one will remain is a result of the nature and character developed by the spirit and body in this probationary state. This is the doctrine of “restoration” as explained by Alma in Chapter Forty-one of his book.

3 And it is requisite with the justice of God that men should be judged according to their works; and if their works were good in this life, and the desires of their hearts were good, that they should also, at the last day, be *restored unto that which is good*.

4 And if their works are evil they shall be restored unto them for evil. Therefore, *all things shall be restored to their proper order*, every thing to its natural frame—mortality raised to immortality, corruption to incorruption—raised to endless happiness to inherit the kingdom of God, or to endless misery to inherit the kingdom of the devil, the one on one hand, the other on the other—

5 The one raised to happiness according to his desires of happiness, or good according to his desires of good; and the other to evil according to his desires of evil; for as he has desired to do evil all the day long even so shall he have his reward of evil when the night cometh. (Alma 41:3-5)

The heart of the creative narrative is: that the Gods create the earth and body for the eternal spirit,

which cannot be created or made (D&C 93:29; Abraham 3:18). For each heaven and earth, the first and the second, God makes provision for an environment and body for the spirit, both in a temporal world and eternal world. He prepares a physical body from the dust of the earth for a spirit to dwell in mortality, and He prepares an eternal resurrected body to dwell on the new world. However, as God prepares all things for the life of the spirit, the individual spirit on the other hand, will choose the happiness or misery they have on the first, and make a choice for their eternal happiness and glory in the second by agency (2 Nephi 2:27-29). The Gods prepare a world and body for all spirits, however, it is the individual spirit that prepares itself for exaltation. For ‘God will not control the agency of the spirit of man’ (*TPJS*, p. 187) because the ‘spirit of man was not created or made and is co-eternal with God’ (*TPJS*, p. 353).

Mankind, with a celestial character, nature and everlasting glorified body, is prepared to dwell again on the sanctified glorified earth without time or entropy in the presence of God. Once a mortal world and place where it was not ‘good that man should be alone’ to a new heaven and celestial earth where man cannot be alone (D&C 131:1-3). The new world will be a place where those who dwell there will be in the image and likeness of God, male and female.

The scriptures explain in multiple passages why the earth was formed, and the Lord offers to mankind a necessary endowment of power through scripture and Temple procedure of remembering and rehearsing the creation accounts. The passages below explain that the creation accounts in scripture are to establish relationships, rather than scientific fact.

15 And again, verily I say unto you, that whoso forbiddeth to marry is not ordained of God, for marriage is ordained of God unto man.

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 49:15-17)

36 *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)

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)

As Abraham begins his record of his personal endowment of knowledge and power, he tries to convey those things that are most important in his history. He is not just writing a marvelous account of the creation of the earth but making a connection to the blessings he was seeking and the creation epoch. The Patriarch himself explains very clearly his purpose in making this record:

31 But the records of the fathers, even the patriarchs, concerning *the right of Priesthood*, [responsibility to minister] the Lord my God preserved in mine own hands; ***therefore a knowledge of the beginning of the creation***, and also of the planets, and of the stars, as they were made known unto the fathers, have I kept even unto this day, and I shall endeavor to write some of these things upon this record, ***for the benefit of my posterity that shall come after me.*** (Abraham 1:31)

Notice what the Patriarch and Father of the Faithful is explaining about the blessings that he is seeking and creative relationships. Abraham is responsible for the records of the fathers concerning the right, authority and responsibility of the Priesthood. He then specifies, by using the word “*therefore*”, explaining that because of that ‘right of the Priesthood’ a ‘knowledge of the creation’ and mankind’s relationships must be made clear to better understand and fulfill that Priesthood responsibility’. The Priesthood obligation will be upon Abraham’s posterity to administer the blessings of salvation and life eternal, having been endowed with a power of knowledge.

10 And I will bless them through thy name; for *as many as receive this Gospel shall be called after thy name, and shall be accounted thy seed, and shall rise up and bless thee, as their father;*

11 And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse them that curse thee; and in thee (that is, in thy Priesthood) and in thy seed (that is, thy Priesthood), for I give unto thee a promise that *this right shall continue in thee, and in thy seed after thee (that is to say, the literal seed, or the seed of the body) shall all the families of the earth be blessed, even with the blessings of the Gospel, which are the blessings of salvation, even of life eternal.* (Abraham 2:10-11)

Creation accounts found in scripture and the Temple exist to establish relationships between God, mankind, and the environment in which mankind must work out their own salvation in fear and trembling. For some reason Abraham felt it necessary to repeat again the creation for the benefit of his posterity. If this creative repetition existed for any other reason than the salvation of his children and the responsibility to teach and administer that salvation to mankind, the creation accounts are for naught. Abraham realized that what he is writing for his posterity would give them an endowment of power to understand and teach truth to those searching for salvation. To say that a knowledge of scientific fact, time periods, and order was the purpose of creative epochs is void of vision and manifests a lack of understanding, and would be considered useless and wasted space in the pages of scripture and a prophetic time. The Creation, The Fall, and The Atonement are The Three Pillars of Salvation. The story of creation is repeated that our children and following generations may know how, and why all must come unto Christ.

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