

# Lesson 3: The Creation

## Reading Preparation:

- Genesis 1-2
- Moses 1-3; 4:1-4
- Abraham 3-5
- D&C 138:53-57
- Alma 30:44

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## Lesson Notes:

### [1. Introduction to Pearl of Great Price](#)

Throughout this material you will note the letters, PGP. These letters refer to the source of specific scriptural reference known as “The Pearl of Great Price.” In the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, besides the Bible, three other scriptural texts have been accepted as those containing the word of God. These are: The Book of Mormon, The Doctrine and Covenants, and the Pearl of Great Price. The Book of Mormon is “Another Testament of Jesus Christ” and contains a history of those who lived upon the American continent as recorded by the prophets who taught them. Their writings were later abridged by Mormon, whose name the book bears. It was translated by the power of God through the Prophet Joseph Smith and was initially published in 1830. The Doctrine and Covenants is a compilation of revelations received primarily by Joseph Smith from Jesus Christ regarding the organization and establishment of His Church restored upon the earth in the latter days. The last of the four scriptures is known as the Pearl of Great Price and mainly contains sacred writings from Moses and Abraham, along with excerpts from Joseph Smith’s translation of the Bible and his early history as well as the Articles of Faith, a brief summation of the basic beliefs of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints.

The ancient writings of Abraham came initially from the excavation of tombs in Egypt by Antonio Lebolo between 1817 and 1821. Initially there were eleven mummies.

H. Donl Peterson states,

*“The mummies were found near Thebes. They were discovered by Antonio Lebolo, a celebrated French traveler. Lebolo was employed by Drovettiti, who was granted permission to excavate by Mehemet Ali. Lebolo did superintend several hundred men in the digs. Lebolo did own eleven mummies. Lebolo did have business connections in Trieste. The mummies were freighted to New York City. They did arrive in the winter or early spring of 1833. Seven mummies were sold to gentlemen in the east before [Michael] Candler took the remaining four to Kirtland [Ohio]... These are the*

four mummies, along with the sacred writings, that were purchased by the Saints in Kirtland in July, 1835.” (The Pearl of Great Price A History and Commentary. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1987, [softbound, 1992], 41-42).

### 1.1. Book of Moses

The Guide to the Scriptures states,

*“The book of Moses... contains Joseph Smith’s inspired translation of the first seven chapters of Genesis. Chapter 1 records a vision in which Moses saw God, who revealed to him the whole plan of salvation. Chapters 2-5 are an account of the creation and the fall of man. Chapters 6-7 contain a vision about Enoch and his ministry on earth. Chapter 8 contains a vision about Noah and the great flood.”* (The Guide to the Scriptures. Salt Lake City: Intellectual Reserve, 2001, Moses. The book of Moses).

H. Donl Peterson states,

*“Moses and Joseph Smith-Matthew are extracts from the Joseph Smith Translation [JST] that were revealed to the Prophet during the period from June 1830 through February 1831. (See headnotes to the Pearl of Great Price, Moses and Joseph Smith-Matthew). The new translation was necessary because ‘many plain and precious things’ had been taken away from the Bible through the centuries (B/M, 1 Nephi 13:28).”* (The Pearl of Great Price A History and Commentary. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1987 [softbound, 1992], 25).

In Chapter 1 of the book of Moses, we learn that Moses received this vision directly from the Lord “when he was caught up into an exceedingly high mountain (PGP, Moses 1:1). This occurred between the time the Lord first appeared to him from the burning bush (PGP, Moses 1:17) and his departure from Egypt with the children of Israel.

The specific importance of this vision for us is herein is contained the events of the physical creation of the world with the declaration in that account of a spiritual creation of plants, animals and man. It also contains an account of Lucifer’s rejection at the Grand Council in heaven and the subsequent fall of Adam and Eve. I will note the applicable verses as we proceed with our discussion.

### 1.2. Book of Abraham and Facsimiles

The Book of Abraham as previously noted was obtained from a papyrus scroll, which in connection with some Egyptian mummies, was purchased by the Saints at Kirtland, Ohio, in July, 1835, from Michael H. Chandler and later translated and published by the Prophet Joseph Smith.

The Guide to the Scriptures states,

*“Chapter 1 records Abraham’s experiences in Ur of the Chaldees, where wicked priests tried to sacrifice him. Chapter 2 tells of his journey to Canaan. The Lord appeared to him and made covenants with him. Chapter 3 records that Abraham saw the universe and perceived the relationships between heavenly bodies. Chapters 4-5 are another account of the Creation”* (The Guide to the Scriptures. Salt Lake City: Intellectual Reserves, 2001, Moses. The book of Abraham).

### 1.3. Joseph Smith-Matthew

H. Dohl Peterson states,

*As previously noted, “Joseph Smith-Matthew, like the book of Moses, are extracts from the Joseph Smith Translation of the Bible that were reveled to the Prophet during the period from June 1830 through February 1831. (See headnotes to the Pearl of Great Price, Moses, and Joseph Smith-Matthew).”* (The Pearl of Great Price A History and Commentary. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1987 [softbound, 1992], 25).

The Guide to the Scriptures states,

*“The Joseph Smith Translation has restored some of the plain and precious things that have been lost from the Bible (B/M, 1 Nephi 13). Although it is not the official Bible of the Church, this translation does offer many interesting insights and is very valuable in understanding the Bible. It is also a witness for the divine calling and ministry of the Prophet Joseph Smith.”* (The Guide to the Scriptures. Salt Lake City: Intellectual Reserves, 2001, Joseph Smith Translation (JST)).

### 1.4. Joseph Smith-History

H. Donl Peterson states,

*“Joseph Smith-History is drawn from the first forty-four pages of volume 1 of History of the Church. It covers such important events as the First Vision, the first nine appearances of Moroni to Joseph Smith, the restoration of the Aaronic Priesthood through John the Baptist, the fulfillment of Isaiah’s prophecy of the ‘book that is sealed’ (Isaiah 29:11), and the beginning of the translation of the Book of Mormon.”* (The Pearl of Great Price A History and Commentary. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1987, [softbound, 1992], 56).

## 1.5. Articles of Faith

They are thirteen statements which simply state the basic doctrine and beliefs of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints.

The Guide to the Scriptures state,

*“Joseph Smith first wrote [these articles] in a letter to John Wentworth, editor of the Chicago Democrat, in answer to his request to know what members of the Church believed. The letter became known as the Wentworth Letter and was first published in the Times and Seasons in March 1832. On 10 October 1880, the Articles of Faith were formally accepted as scripture by the [sustaining] vote of the members of the Church and were included as part of the Pearl of Great Price.” (The Guide to the Scriptures. Salt Lake City: Intellectual Reserve, 2001, Articles of Faith).*

## 2. In the Beginning

### 2.1. The Council in Heaven

The book of Genesis, one of the five books written by Moses, begins with a simple declaration regarding heaven and earth.

Genesis 1:1

**1 In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.**

Joseph Smith states,

*“I shall comment on the very first Hebrew word in the Bible; I will make a comment on the very first sentence of the history of creation in the Bible—Berosheit. I want to analyze the word. Baith—in, by, through, and everything else. Rosh—the head. Sheit—grammatical termination. When the inspired man wrote it, he did not put the bith there. An old Jew without any authority added the word; he thought it too bad to begin to talk about the head! It read first, “The head one of the Gods brought forth the Gods.” That is the true meaning of the words. Baurau signifies to bring forth... Thus the head God brought forth the Gods in the grand council.*

*“I will transpose and simplify it in the English language... The head God called together the Gods and sat in the grand council to bring forth the world. The grand counselors sat at the head in yonder heavens and contemplated the creation of the world which were created at the time.” (Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith. Compiled by Joseph Fielding Smith. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1976, 348-349).*

Without the above insight, we would not understand that the first verse in the book of Genesis makes reference to the Council in Heaven that was held in preparation of the creation of the earth upon which we live. From the book of Abraham we gain further understanding.

PGP, Abraham 3:19, 21

**19 And the Lord said unto me: These two facts do exist, that there are two spirits, one being more intelligent than the other; there shall be another more intelligent than they; I am the Lord they God, I am more intelligent than they all.**

**21 I dwell in the midst of them all;... I rule in the heavens above, and in the earth beneath, in all wisdom and prudence, over all the intelligences thine eyes have seen from the beginning; I came down in the beginning in the midst of all the intelligences thou hast seen.**

Joseph Smith taught:

*“God himself, finding he was in the midst of spirits and glory, because he was more intelligent, saw proper 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.” (Teaching of the Prophet Joseph Smith. Compiled by Joseph Fielding Smith. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1976, 354).*

B.H. Roberts states,

*“It is the direct statement in the Book of Abraham—accepted by the Church as Scripture—that there are differences in the intelligences that exist, that some are more intelligent than others; and that God is ‘more intelligent than all of the other intelligences’ (Book of Abraham, Chapt. 3). ...It means that he is more intelligent than all of the other intelligences combined. His intelligence is greater than that of the mass, and that has led me to say in the Second Year Book of the Seventies:—‘It is this fact doubtless which makes this One ‘more intelligent than they all,’ God. He is the All-Wise One! The All-Powerful One! What he tells other Intelligences to do must be precisely the wisest, fittest thing that they could anywhere or anyhow learn—the thing which it will always behoove them, with right loyal*

*thankfulness and nothing doubting to do. There goes with this, too, the thought that this All-Wise One will be the Unselfish One, the All-Loving One, the One who desires that which is highest, and best; not for himself alone, but for all; and that will be best for him too. His glory, his power, his joy will be enhanced by the uplifting of all, by enlarging them; by increasing their joy, power, and glory” [“For behold, this is my work and my glory—to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man” (Moses 1:39)]. And because this All Intelligent One is all this, and does all this, the other Intelligences worship him, submit their judgments and their will to his judgment and his will. He knows and can do that which is best; and this submission of the mind to the Most Intelligent, Wisest—wiser than all—is worship. This is the whole meaning of the doctrine and the life of Christ expressed in—“Father, not my will but Thy will, be done.” (Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith. Compiled by Joseph Fielding Smith. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1976, Note by Elder B.H. Roberts, 353).*

In the above statement we learn the attributes of He whom we reverently refer as Our Father in Heaven. He is the Head of all other Gods and through his knowledge and intelligence has made it possible for us to become like him. He is also the Father of our spirits and thereby we are his spirit children.

PGP, Abraham 3:22-23

22 Now the Lord had shown unto me [Abraham], the intelligences that were organized before the world was; and among all these there were many of the noble and great ones.

23 And God saw these souls that they were good, and he stood in the midst of them, and he said: These I will make my rulers; for he stood among those that were spirits, and he saw that they were good;

In verse 22, we learned that Abraham himself was present at that Council. From modern revelation given to Joseph Smith, we learn the names of others who were present and their advanced spiritual preparation.

Doctrine and Covenants 138:53-57

53 The Prophet Joseph Smith, and my father, Hyrum Smith, Brigham Young, John Taylor, Wilford Woodruff, and other choice spirits who were reserved to come forth in the fulness of times to take part in laying the foundations of the great latter-day work,

54 Including the building of the temples and the performance of ordinances therein for the redemption of the dead, were also in the spirit world.

55 I observed that they were also among the noble and great ones who were chosen in the beginning to be rulers in the Church of God.

56 Even before they were born, they, with many others, received their first lessons in the world of spirits and were prepared to come forth in the due time of the Lord to labor in his vineyard for the salvation of the souls of men.

57 I beheld that the faithful elders of this dispensation, when they depart from mortal life, continue their labors in the preaching of the gospel of repentance and redemption, through the sacrifice of the Only Begotten Son of God, among those who are in darkness and under the bondage of sin in the great world of the spirits of the dead.

Following their mortal mission, “the faithful elders” will continue to preach the words of righteousness to those who are waiting to hear the message of the gospel in the world of spirits.

## [2.2. The Importance of Agency](#)

We learn from the Book of Mormon the principle of free agency existed before we came to earth. In our pre-mortal life we were also able to make choices. It was our choices there that determined our opportunities for service here.

B/M, Alma 13:3-5

3 And this is the manner after which these high priests were ordained--being called and prepared from the foundation of the world according to the foreknowledge of God, on account of their exceeding faith and good works; in the first place being left to choose good or evil;

therefore they having chosen good, and exercising exceedingly great faith, are called with a holy calling, yea, with that holy calling which was prepared with, and according to, a preparatory redemption for such.

4 And thus they have been called to this holy calling on account of their faith, while others would reject the Spirit of God on account of the hardness of their hearts and blindness of their minds, while, if it had not been for this they might have had as great privilege as their brethren.

5 Or in fine, in the first place they were on the same standing with their brethren; thus this holy calling being prepared from the foundation of the world for such as would not harden their hearts, being in and through the atonement of the Only Begotten Son, who was prepared—

Joseph Smith taught:

*“Here, then is eternal life—to know the only wise and true God; and you have got to learn how to be Gods yourselves, and to be kings and priests to God, the same as all Gods have done before you, namely, by going from one small degree to another, and from a small capacity to a great one; from grace to grace, from exaltation to exaltation, until you attain to the resurrection of the dead, and are able to dwell in everlasting burnings, and to sit in glory, as do those who sit enthroned in everlasting power.” (Teaching of the Prophet Joseph Smith. Compiled by Joseph Fielding Smith. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1976, 346-347).*

Joseph Smith continues,

*“When you climb up a ladder, you must begin at the bottom, and ascend step by step, until you arrive at the top; and so it is with the principles of the Gospel—you must begin with the first, and go on until you learn all the principles of exaltation. But it will be a great while after you have passed through the veil before you will have learned them.” (Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith. Compiled by Joseph Fielding Smith. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1976, 348).*

The opportunities which the Father has provided for each of us are limitless. The realization of these promises, however, depends upon us. We must be willing to be faithful and obedient to his commandments even during our times of trial and adversity. I am reminded in this respect of a parable, attributed by C.S. Lewis, to George MacDonald.

C.S. Lewis states,

*“Imagine yourself as a living house. God comes in to rebuild that house. At first, perhaps, you can understand what He is doing. He is getting the drains right and stopping the leaks in the roof and so on: you knew that those jobs needed doing and so you are not surprised. But presently he starts knocking the house about in a way that hurts abominably and does not seem to make sense. What on earth is He up to? The explanation is that He is building quite a different house from the one you thought of—throwing out a new wing here, putting on an extra floor there running up towers, making courtyards. You thought you were going to be made into a decent little cottage: but He is building a palace. He intends to come and live in it Himself.*

*“The command Be ye perfect is not idealistic gas. Nor is it a command to do the impossible. He is going to make us into creatures that can obey that command. He said (in the Bible) that we are ‘gods’ and He is going to make good His words. If we let Him—for we can prevent Him, if we choose—He will make the feeblest and filthiest of us into a god or goddess, dazzling, radiant, immortal creature, pulsating all through with such energy and joy and wisdom and love as we cannot now imagine, a bright stainless mirror which reflects back to God perfectly (though, of course, on a smaller scale) His own boundless power and delight and goodness. The process will be long and in parts very painful; but that is what we are in for. Nothing less. He meant what He said” (Mere Christianity. New York: Macmillan Press, 1943, [Large Print edition, New York: Walker and Company, 1987], 315-317).*

PGP, Abraham 3:11-12

11 Thus I, Abraham, talked with the Lord, face to face, as one man talketh with another; and he told me of the works which his hands had made;

12 And he said unto me: My son, my son (and his hand was stretched out), behold I will show you all these. And he put his hand upon mine eyes, and I saw those things which his hands had made, which were many; and they multiplied before mine eyes, and I could not see the end thereof.

All that Our Father does is for the blessing of His children. All His creations are for the purpose of allowing His children the opportunity to continue their progression. As His children eternally progress, so does the exaltation and



glory of the Father.

Joseph Smith states,

*“What did Jesus do? Why; I do the things I saw my Father do when worlds came rolling into existence. My Father worked out his kingdom with fear and trembling, and I must do the same; and when I get my kingdom, I shall present it to my Father, so that he may obtain kingdom after kingdom, and it will exalt him in glory. He will then take a higher exaltation, and I will take his place, and thereby become exalted myself. So that Jesus treads in the tracks of his Father, and inherits what God did before; and God is thus glorified and exalted in the salvation and exaltation of all his children.”* (Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith. Compiled by Joseph Fielding Smith. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1976, 347-348).

Jesus Christ is our exemplar. He is the only Begotten of the Father in the flesh. He came to earth and suffered all things so He may know and understand the challenges we are facing and so He can assist us in our journey in becoming our best self. Our goal is to do all that we need to do while we are on earth so someday we can return to live again with our Father in Heaven.

### 2.3. The Father’s Plan of Salvation

We are not here on this earth by accident. Our Father in Heaven has a plan for each of us. Jesus Christ is a pivotal person in that plan. If we want to know his plan for us all we have to do is ask the Father, in the Name of Jesus Christ, and He will answer us.

PGP, Abraham 3:25-27:

**25 And we will prove them herewith, to see if they will do all things whatsoever the Lord their God shall command them;**

**26 And they who keep their first estate shall be added upon; and they who keep not their first estate shall not have glory in the same kingdom with those who keep their first estate; and they who keep their second estate shall have glory added upon their heads for ever and ever.**

**27 And the Lord said: Whom shall I send? And one answered like unto the Son of Man: Here am I, send me..**

Joseph Fielding McConkie states,

*“This marvelous story has often been told poorly in Latter-day Saint circles, with the idea given that the Father, not knowing how to save men and what they must do to become like him, asked for suggestions from the assembled host and that two plans were presented. Such was hardly the case. God, an exalted man himself, hardly needs counsel from his own children on how they are to become like him. His question was not “What shall I do?” but “Whom shall I send?” That is, “Whom shall I send to be your Redeemer in my plan for your salvation?”* (“The Grand Council” in *Studies in Scripture*, Vol. 2. Edited by Kent P. Jackson and Robert L. Millet. Salt Lake City: Randall Book Co., 1985, 69)

#### 2.3.1. The Savior – An Essential Ingredient

PGP, Moses 4:2

**2 But, behold, my Beloved Son, which was my Beloved and Chosen from the beginning, said unto me--Father, thy will be done, and the glory be thine forever.**

Joseph Fielding McConkie states,

*“His expression then was to this effect, “Father I know and understand the eternal plan you have given for the salvation of your children. I accept that plan, I have faith in that plan, and I willingly offer myself as the sacrifice necessitated by that plan. In doing so I seek no honor for myself, the glory be thine forever; I seek only to bless and be blessed with these my brothers and sisters.”* (“The Grand Council” in *Studies in Scripture*, Vol. 2. Edited by Kent P. Jackson and Robert L. Millet. Salt Lake City: Randall Book Co., 1985, 69-70).

#### 2.3.2. Satan’s Part in the Plan

There were two who offered to serve as Savior for the Father’s children. The first who spoke was the pre-mortal Jesus Christ. The second, Lucifer, who had achieved prominence among the Father’s spirit children. His glory is implied when he is referenced by Isaiah as “son of the morning” (Isaiah 14:7). He felt sure enough of himself to offer a plan in opposition to the Father.

PGP, Moses 4:3-4:

3 Wherefore, because that Satan rebelled against me, and sought to destroy the agency of man, which I, the Lord God, had given him, and also, that I should give unto him mine own power; by the power of mine Only Begotten, I cause that he should be cast down;  
4 And he became Satan, yea, even the devil, the father of all lies, to deceive and to blind men, and to lead them captive at his will, even as many as would not hearken unto my voice.

Satan's proposal was two-fold: (1) He sought to destroy the agency of man which was fundamental to Father's plan. The Father's desire was that those who would later become part of His kingdom would choose to do so because of their love for Him, not out of force; (2) Satan wanted the glory of the Father. Under his plan of absolute control, no one would be free to choose and thus all would be obedient to the commandments. Satan thus assumed, he himself would then receive the glory, not the Father! In selfishness, he assumed divine glory could be bestowed, rather than only obtained through individual obedience to divine laws. He sought not obedience, but rebellion against the Father Himself!

We learn as a result of Satan's rebellion, there was a war in heaven between those who supported the Father's plan and those who rejected it.

Revelation 12:7-9

7 And there was a war in heaven: Michael [Adam] and his angels fought against the dragon [Satan]; and the dragon fought and his angels,  
8 And they prevailed not; neither was their place found anymore in heaven.  
9 And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

Doctrine and Covenants 29:36-37, 39

36 ...and also a third part of the hosts of heaven turned he [Satan] away from me [The Father] because of their agency;  
37 And they were thrust down, and thus came the devil and his angels;  
39 And it must needs be that the devil should tempt the children of men, or they could not be agents unto themselves; for if they never should have bitter they could not know the sweet--

As a result of Satan's rebellion he and "a third part of the hosts of heaven" were cast out of the Father's presence. Through their own choice, they forfeited the opportunity to gain a body through mortal birth and continue their progression. Instead they are here on earth to "tempt the children of men" so that they may become as miserable as they are. Through the influence of Satan and his angels, we are influenced by good and evil thereby allowing us the opportunity to exercise our divine right of choice. The war began in heaven between the forces of good and the forces of evil, and continues today on the earth.

Doctrine & Covenants 76:25-29

25 And this we saw also, and bear record, that an angel of God who was in authority in the presence of God, who rebelled against the Only Begotten Son whom the Father loved and who was in the bosom of the Father, was thrust down from the presence of God and the Son,  
26 And was called Perdition, for the heavens wept over him--he was Lucifer, a son of the morning.  
27 And we beheld, and lo, he is fallen! is fallen, even a son of the morning!  
28 ...for we beheld Satan, that old Serpent, even the devil who rebelled against God and sought to take the kingdom of our God and his Christ--  
29 Wherefore, he maketh war with the saints of God, and encompasseth them round about.

## 2.4. Lessons Taught

Joseph Fielding McConkie states,

*“...the nature of the plan of salvation... [is illustrated[in] the Grand Council. (1) it teaches us that there is no salvation in ignorance-all must know the plan and the principles by which salvation comes; (2) it dramatizes the absolute necessity of agency-there can be no force salvation; (3) it affirms that there is but one plan or way by which salvation can come-the plan ordained by the Father; it establishes that in the government of God all service is voluntary, yet it is to him to choose those who will represent him-it is his Church and he runs it; (4) [it]...in turn attests that God is our king and that the government of heaven is not a democracy, but a kingdom[, and] (5)...it emphasizes that God did not attempt to raise his family without a plan for their salvation and he frequently sat in council with them and instructed them.”* (“The Grand Council” in *Studies in Scripture*, Vol. 2. Edited by Kent P. Jackson and Robert L. Millet. Salt Lake City: Randall Book Co., 1985, 74-75, numbers added).

We are so blessed to have a Father in Heaven who loves his children so much that He wanted to give us the opportunity to become like Him. We had progressed to the point in the heavens that it became necessary for us to leave our pre-mortal existence and to come to this earth. Through our mortal birth, and without remembrance of our prior experience, we now walk by faith. We are taught the Father's truths by His chosen prophets, while at the same time we are also influenced by Satan and his angels. By our choices and our actions we demonstrate to the Father and His Son, whose side we are on. This was the desire of the Father from the beginning.

## 3. The Creation – Organization

In order for us to be tried and tested it was necessary for us to leave our heavenly home and come to a world where we could begin our mortal existence. We learned the earth upon which we now live came into existence under the Father's direction.

PGP, Moses 2:1

**1 ...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.**

The prophet Moses was taught in vision about the creation of this earth. He learned that it was the pre-mortal Christ, acting under the direction of His Father, who was the creator of this earth. He was given the assignment of creating the earth upon which he would later experience mortal life.

### 3.1. Moses Questions

During the vision Moses experienced he was given the opportunity to ask questions of the pre-mortal Lord.

PGP, Moses 1:30

**30 And it came to pass that Moses called upon God [pre-mortal Lord], saying: Tell me, I pray thee, why these things are so, and by what thou madest them?**

Robert J. Matthews states:

*“The information in the early chapters of Genesis actually seem to have been given to Moses in answer to... two specific questions [which he asked the Lord]: (1) Why did you do it? and (2) How did you do it?”*

*“In answer to Moses' first question as to the WHY of things, the Lord replied that he had made all these things because “this is my work and my glory-to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man” (Moses 1:39). In other words, building worlds and populating them with people is the kind of work that God does. And why does he do it?-for the salvation and exaltation of his children.”*

*“In answer to the second question as to the HOW of things, Moses was informed that all things were done by the power of the Only Begotten, but that only an account of this world would be given to Moses...These two basic questions are not found today in our current text of Genesis, but fortunately they have been made available to us through the visions of Moses as revealed to Joseph Smith.”* (“What is the Book of Moses?” in *Studies in Scripture*, Vol. 2. Edited by Kent P. Jackson and Robert L. Millet. Salt Lake City: Randall Book Co., 1985, 39).

### 3.2. Spiritual Creation – Abraham

Milton R. Hunter noted,

*“Abraham's account of the creation represents a vision that he was privileged to behold of the Grand Council of the Gods at the time they were making their plans to create the heavens and the earth; therefore, his account represents the Gods' 'blue-print or plans regarding the creating of the heavens and the earth.”* (*Pearl of Great Price Commentary*. Salt Lake City: Stevens and Wallis, Inc., 1948, 74).



### 3.3. Physical Creation – Moses

Milton R. Hunter continues,

*“The principle portion of Moses’ account, on the other hand, is the story of the actual work of creating the heavens and the earth; in other words, the putting into effect of the plans that the Gods had made, as recorded in the Book of Abraham.” (Pearl of Great Price Commentary. Salt Lake City: Stevens and Wallis, Inc., 1948, 75).*

PGP, Moses 1:31-33:

31 And behold, the glory of the Lord was upon Moses, so that Moses stood in the presence of God, and talked with him face to face. And the Lord God said unto Moses: For mine own purpose have I made these things. Here is wisdom and it remaineth in me.  
32 And by the word of my power, have I created them, which is mine Only Begotten Son, who is full of grace and truth.  
33 And worlds without number have I created; and I also created them for mine own purpose; and by the Son I created them, which is mine Only Begotten.

Doctrine & Covenants 101:32-33:

32 ...In that day when the Lord shall come, he shall reveal all things--  
33 Things which have passed, and hidden things which no man knew, things of the earth, by which it was made, and the purpose and the end thereof--

Alma, a prophet in the Book of Mormon, confronted Korihor, an Anti-Christ, regarding his desire for a sign that there is a God. He referenced the creation of the earth and universe as evidence a creator.

B/M, Alma 30:44

44 But Alma said unto him: Thou hast had signs enough; will ye tempt your God? Will ye say, Show unto me a sign, when ye have the testimony of all these brethren, and also all the holy prophets? The scriptures are laid before thee, yea, and all things denote there is a God; yea, even the earth, and all things that are upon the face of it, yea, and its motion, yea, and also all the planets which move in their regular form do witness that there is a Supreme Creator.

Bruce R. McConkie states,

*“Our analysis properly begins with the frank recital that our knowledge about the Creation is limited. We do not know the how and why and when of all things. Our finite limitations are such that we could not comprehend them if they were revealed to us in all their glory, fullness, and perfection. What has been revealed is that portion of the Lord’s eternal word which we must believe and understand if we are to envision the truth about the Fall and the Atonement and thus become heirs of salvation. This is all we are obligated to know in our day.” (“Christ and the Creation” in Studies in Scripture, Vol. 2. Edited by Kent P. Jackson and Robert L. Millet. Salt Lake City: Randall Book Co., 1985, 79; see also Ensign, June, 1982, 8-15).*

### 3.4. Doctrine of the Creation

While our knowledge regarding the details of the Creation are limited, as Bruce R. McConkie has noted, we do know the basic doctrine associated with the Creation.

Bruce R. McConkie states,

*“This doctrine [of the Creation] is: (1) that the Lord Jesus Christ is both the Creator and Redeemer of this earth and all that on it is, save only man; (2) It is that the Lord God himself, the Father of us all, came down and created man, male and female, in his own image and likeness; (3) It is that the earth and all else were created in a paradisiacal [heavenly] state so there could be a fall; (4) It is that the Great Creator became the Redeemer so that he could ransom men from the effects of the Fall, thereby bringing to pass the immortality and eternal life of man; (5) It is that the Creation, the Fall, and the Atonement are the three pillars of eternity, [and] (6) It is that all who accept him as both the Creator and the Redeemer have power to become joint-heirs with him and thereby inherit all that his Father hath” (“Christ and the Creation” in Studies in Scripture, Vol. 2. Edited by Kent P. Jackson and Robert L. Millet. Salt Lake City: Randall Book Co., 1985, 89, numbers added; see also Ensign, June, 1982, 8-15).*

#### 4. Adam was the First Man

Genesis 2:7

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.

PGP, Moses 3:7

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.

Joseph Smith taught,

*"The spirit of man is not a created being; it existed from eternity, and will exist to eternity. Anything created cannot be eternal; and earth, water etc., had their existence in an elementary state, from eternity" (History of the Church, Vol. 3. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1951, [Second Edition, Revised, 1969], 387).*

Joseph Fielding Smith explains meaning of "first flesh",

*"Adam did not come to this earth until it was prepared for him. The animals were here. Plants were here. The Lord did not bring him here to a desolate world, and then bring other creatures. It was all prepared for him, just according to the order that is written in our scriptures, and when it was all ready for Adam he was placed upon the earth."*

*"Then what is meant by the 'first flesh'? It is simple when you understand it. Adam was the first of all creatures to fall and become flesh, and flesh in this sense means mortality, and all through our scriptures the Lord speaks of this life as flesh, while we are here in the flesh, so Adam became the first flesh. There was no other mortal creature before him, and there was no mortal death until he brought it, and the scriptures tell you that. It is here written, and that is the gospel of Jesus Christ." (Seek Ye Earnestly. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1970, 281).*

Genesis 2:17

17 But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

PGP, Moses 3:17

17 But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it, nevertheless, thou mayest chose for thyself, for it is given unto thee; but, remember that I forbid it, for in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

There are two important additions found in the Pearl of Great Price reference. (1) Adam and Eve are reminded they have the right of agency, meaning to partake or not partake of the tree of knowledge of good and evil is their choice; and (2) God forbids them to do so, therefore, if they choose to partake of the fruit, they do so in opposition to their Father's direction.

Joseph Fielding Smith states,

*"When Adam and Eve were placed in the Garden of Eden, there was no death. It was by the violation of a commandment that brought mortality and death upon them." (Conference Report, April, 1956, 125.)*

Genesis 2:18, 21-22. 24-25

18 And the LORD God said, it is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet [companion] for him.

21 And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof;

22 And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man.

24 Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.

25 And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.

Joseph Smith taught,

*"I... remarked that marriage was an institution of heaven, instituted in the garden of Eden; that it was necessary it should be solemnized by the authority of the everlasting Priesthood." (History of the Church, Vol. 2. Edited by B.H. Roberts. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1951, [Second Edition, Revised, 1969], 320).*

Joseph Fielding Smith states,

*"Marriage as established in the beginning was an eternal covenant. The first man and the first woman were not married until death should part them, for at that time death had not come into the world. The ceremony on that occasion was performed by the Eternal Father himself whose work endures forever. It is the will of the Lord that all marriages should be of like character and in becoming 'one flesh' the man and the woman are to continue in the married status, according to the Lord's plan, throughout all eternity as well as in this mortal life." (Doctrines of Salvation, Vol. 2. Compiled by Bruce R. McConkie. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1955, [20th Printing, 1978], 71).*

It is because of the importance of marriage and the commandment from the Lord for couples "to multiply and replenish the earth" thereby providing earthly homes for heavenly spirits through the power of procreation that the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints build temples upon the earth. Herein is found the power to bind families forever.

Genesis 2:24

**24 Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother,  
and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one  
flesh.**

Spencer W. Kimball states,

*"To cleave is to adhere closely, to cling; and the Lord gave as the purpose for their cleaving, the peopling of the earth, the replenishing of the earth, the subduing of the earth, the dominion over the earth. There was high purpose in the creation and in the proper associations of husband and wife,..." ("Love vs. Lust" in Speeches of the Year, 1965. Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, January, 1965, 15).*

## 5. Evolution vs. Creation

It is held by some that Adam was not the first man. Mankind originated, according to this theory, known as evolution advocated by Charles Darwin that man evolved or developed from the lower orders of the animal creation. This process took an extended period of years to accomplish and occurred mainly through the process of the fittest member of the kingdom evolving or adjusting to the changing environment in which they found themselves. In this manner, moving from the simple to the complex, the ape evolved. The missing link is twofold: (1) What occurred that brought about the change?; and (2) What is the missing link between ape to the caveman, mankind oldest relative? For many subscribers to this theory, the Big Bang theory is proposed as being the impetus for the change and the search continues for the missing link.

James R. Clark states,

*"In November, 1909, the First Presidency of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints issued an official statement on the subject of the Origin of Man... This statement of the First Presidency [The Origin of Man] in 1909 still remains perhaps the most thorough and complete statement on the subject issued by the First Presidency to date (1969)." (Messages of the First Presidency, Vol. 4. Compiled by James R. Clark. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1970, 199-200).*

A quote from the 1909 First Presidency message follows. The First Presidency stated,

*"It is held by some that Adam was not the first man upon this earth, and that the original human being was a development of lower orders of the animal creation. These, however, are the theories of men. The word of the Lord declares that Adam was 'the first men of all men' (Moses 1:34), and we are, therefore, duty bound to regard him as the primal parent of our race. It was shown to the brother of Jared that all men were created in the beginning after the image of God; and whether we take this to mean the spirit or the body, or both, it commits us to the same conclusion: Man began life as a human being in the likeness of our heavenly Father." (First Presidency [Joseph F. Smith; John R. Winder; Anthon H. Lund] as cited in James R. Clark, Messages of the First Presidency, Vol. 4. Compiled by James R. Clark. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1970, 205).*

Some may find the debate between evolution and creation to hold only minimum importance. Unfortunately, the difference is great. One either hold-firm to the theory of evolution as the source of the origin of man or to creation as the manifestation of Heavenly Father's plan. Both proposals cannot be true as the theory of evolution is in direct opposition to the plan presented by Our Heavenly Father.

Joseph Fielding Smith states,

*"I say most emphatically, you cannot believe in this theory of the origins of man, and at the same time accept the plan of salvation as set down by the Lord our God. You must choose the one and reject the other, for they are in direct conflict and there is a gulf separating them which is so great it cannot be bridged, no matter how much one may try to do so... Then Adam, and by that I mean the first man, was not capable of sin. He could not transgress, and by doing so*

*bring death into the world; for, according to this theory, death had always been in the world. If, therefore, there was no fall, there was no need of an atonement, hence the coming into the world of the Son of God as the Savior of the world is a contradiction, a thing impossible. Are you prepared to believe such a thing as that?" (Doctrines of Salvation, Vol. 1. Edited by Bruce R. McConkie. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1955, [20th Printing, 1978], 141-142.*

For some, the answer to the question raised by Joseph Fielding Smith is "yes", How could science be wrong? For others, the answer is "no". My faith tells me there is a God above whose knowledge and understanding far exceeds mine or any other mortal man. Through the process of prayer, my faith has been confirmed. I know that God does live and through the plan of creation, life began. Adam was the first man. Eve the first woman.

## 6. Conclusion

This world did not come about by chance. The head God whom we refer to as Our Heavenly Father met in council with those of his spirit children who through their obedience, had progressed to a greater level of intelligence. A plan was set forth that would enable each of his spirit children the opportunity for further progression. This would necessitate their being born upon an earth.

This plan was presented to all his spirit children along with the need for a Savior. Two spirits stepped forward and indicated their willingness to fulfill this requirement of the Father's plan. One was the pre-mortal Jesus Christ and the other was Lucifer or Satan. Satan's plan was rejected by the Father, however, one-third of the hosts of heaven embraced the plan presented by Lucifer and along with Lucifer lost the opportunity of gaining a mortal body.

Adam and Eve made important choices while in the garden of Eden. One consequence brought death into the world. The other, a blessing, was to be able to have children. Through Adam and Eve, we were able to come to this earth and experience mortality.

Bruce R. McConkie states,

*"As Adam brought death, so Christ brought life, as Adam is the father of mortality, so Christ is the father of immortality...And without both, mortality and immortality, man cannot work out his salvation and ascend to those heights beyond the skies where gods and angels dwell forever in eternal glory." ("The Purifying Power of Gethsemane" in Ensign, May 1985, 9).*

Part of our purpose for being upon the earth is to be tested. Satan and his minions continue to play their part. Due to their influence upon the earth, each day we must continue to make choices. Each day we demonstrate by our actions the plan we choose to follow.