

THE NEVER BEGINNING STORY

BY BRAD W. CONSTANTINE

This book is about you and it's about me. It's about answers to these questions: Where did I come from? Why am I here on earth? Where will I go after this life is over? What is the purpose of life and can it all make sense?

By Brad W. Constantine
This book is written to high school students. I have been teaching youth shortly after being a youth myself. I hope this is understandable and easily explains a few of the great mysteries of life.

In my teaching of youth, I have been asked many questions about the Plan of Salvation, life after death, etc. This book attempts to answer their questions.



INTRODUCTION

IN THE BEGINNING God created the heaven and the earth.

These are the first words in both the Christian and the Hebrew Bible. But the beginning of what? The beginning of everything, or the beginning of this earth? The beginning referred to in the Bible is only about the creation of the earth we live on. Since this book is about never beginning, this verse in the Bible is not about the beginning of everything, because there is no such thing.



But how is that possible? How can there NOT be a beginning? And so what?! Does it matter? Yes it does! Let's figure this out together.

In our day, the Lord told Joseph Smith as recorded in Doctrine and Covenants Section 121:
And now, brethren, after your tribulations, if you do these things, and exercise fervent prayer and faith in the sight of God always,

26 God shall give unto you knowledge by his Holy Spirit, yea, by the unspeakable gift of the Holy Ghost, that has not been revealed since the world was until now;

27 Which our forefathers have awaited with anxious expectation to be revealed in the last times, which their minds were pointed to by the angels, as held in reserve for the fulness of their glory;

28 A time to come in the which nothing shall be withheld, whether there be one God or many gods, they shall be manifest.

29 All thrones and dominions, principalities and powers, shall be revealed and set forth upon all who have endured valiantly for the gospel of Jesus Christ.

30 And also, if there be bounds set to the heavens or to the seas, or to the dry land, or to the sun, moon, or stars—

31 All the times of their revolutions, all the appointed days, months, and years, and all the days of their days, months, and years, and all their glories, laws, and set times, shall be revealed in the days of the dispensation of the fulness of times—

32 According to that which was ordained in the midst of the Council of the Eternal God of all other gods before this world was, that should be reserved unto the finishing and the end thereof, when every man shall enter into his eternal presence and into his immortal rest.



JOSEPH FIELDING SMITH SAID:

“The Lord not only blesses the men who stand at the head and hold the keys of the kingdom, but He also blesses every faithful individual with the spirit of inspiration. He gives His people revelation for their own guidance, wherein they keep His commandments and serve Him. That is a blessing promised, and within their power to receive. We are blest with revelation; the Church is built upon that foundation. All the revelations given do not have to be written. The inspiration may come as the Lord directs them. It does not have to be printed in a book. We have revelations that have been given that have been written; some of them have been published; some of them have not.” (Conference Report, October 1910, pp. 40-41.)

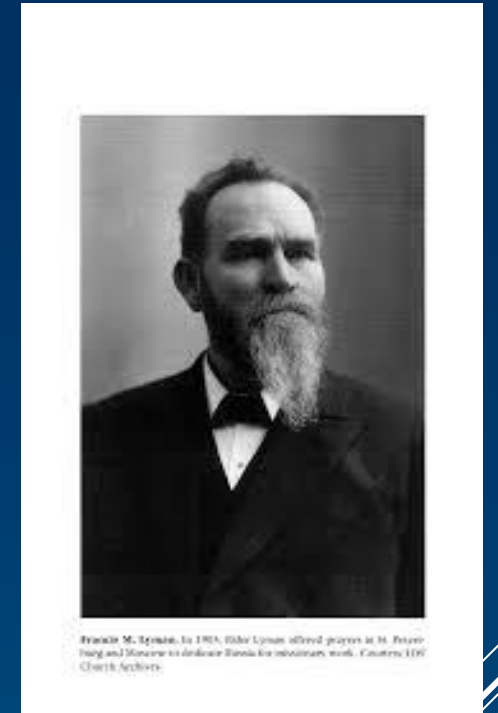
We can obtain inspiration from heaven to understand the creation.



FRANCIS M. LYMAN, OF THE QUORUM OF THE TWELVE APOSTLES SAID:

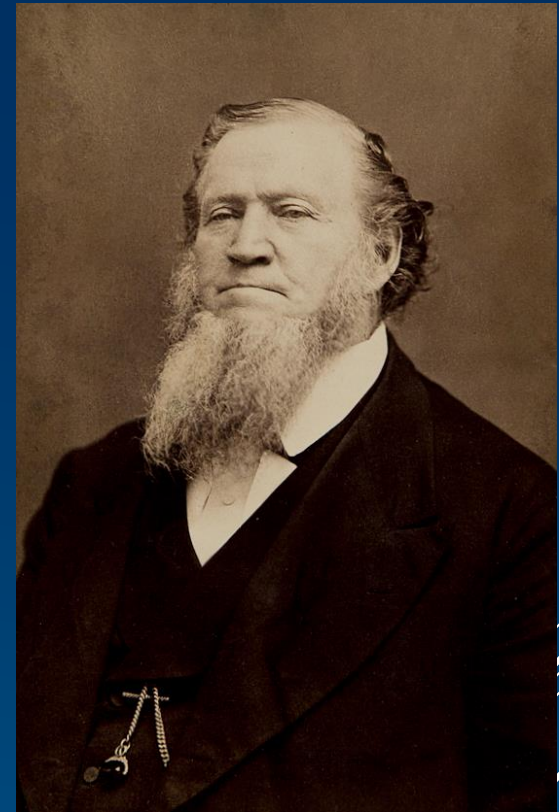
“We may not all be allowed to see the Father, yet we are all enjoined to know the Father and the Son, and to have the testimony of the Holy Ghost abiding in our hearts in regard to the Father and the Son: for when we know them we can rely confidently upon the promises that have been made to us, and the more we become acquainted with the Spirit of the Lord the more we become established, and the more we comprehend the things of God. Governors, judges, philosophers of the world do not know these things. The simplest Latter-day Saint in the Church has inspiration and light that the philosophers and the greatest among men have not tasted. There is a measure of light and inspiration that comes through the Holy Ghost to those who serve the Lord that the natural man, independent of the Holy Ghost, is not endowed with. It is the possession of this Spirit that makes us a peculiar people; and the reason we are not more different from the rest of the world than we are is because we do not live according to the light and inspiration of the Holy Ghost as we ought to do.” (Conference Report, April 1901, p. 47.)

Because we as Latter-day Saints have been given the gift of the Holy Ghost, we will understand spiritual things more than those who are not members of the Church.



BRIGHAM YOUNG SAID:

“How many Gods there are, I do not know. But there never was a time when there were not Gods and worlds, and when men were not passing through the same ordeals that we are now passing through. That course has been from all eternity, and it is and will be to all eternity. You cannot comprehend this; but when you can, it will be to you a matter of great consolation.” (Journal of Discourses, October 8, 1859, 7:333-34.)



Why didn't Brigham Young know how many gods there are? Because there's an infinite number of them.



God has given us an intellect to think about the things of eternity. The Lord told Joseph Smith, "... Treasure these things up in your hearts, and let the solemnities of eternity rest upon your minds." (D&C 43:34.) And since we are going to be spending a lot of time in the next life, we should be thinking about it a lot. This book is an attempt to help us all better understand where we have come from, our purpose here on the earth, and what we can expect when we leave this mortal life.

This book is the responsibility of the author. Although every attempt has been made to be doctrinally accurate, it is not an official document of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The reader is encouraged to do his or her own research regarding the things mentioned in this book.

Also, the author is not a scientist. But it doesn't take a scientist to understand the Plan that God has for us and the purpose of this life.



HOW DID WE GET HERE?

Here we are on earth; all of us together. Thousands of years of history have preceded us. But how did we get here? Where did we come from? Are we the result of millions of years of evolution that happened by chance? According to the laws of physics, matter does not evolve into more complex organisms, instead matter, if left alone, will usually decay over time. Consider this statement from Wikipedia about the 2nd law of physics: “Total entropy [decay] can never decrease over time [if left alone things will decay] for an isolated system because the entropy of an isolated system spontaneously evolves toward thermodynamic equilibrium: the entropy should stay the same or increase.” This means that there shouldn’t be an earth or people on it, according to the laws of physics. Then how did we get here? We don’t know the answers to every question, but we know a lot from what we’ve been told by prophets and apostles, through searching the scriptures, by prayer, and inspiration from the Holy Ghost, and from our ability to reason and think.



Because of mortal blinders that we all wear, it's hard for us to think that there could be anything without a beginning and without an ending. Books have beginnings and endings. Our lives on earth have beginnings and endings. But what if there really is no beginning to the universe, no big bang? What if the universe has just always been? It's hard to wrap our puny brains around such a concept but it would explain a lot. What if our God has a God, and his God has a God back to infinity where there never was a first God or a first man or a first anything? If matter has always existed, why couldn't mankind have also always existed? Maybe this is what is meant by ONE ETERNAL ROUND. (Alma 37:12 ...for he doth counsel in wisdom over all his works, and his paths are straight, and his course is one eternal round.)



Think about this statement: “I tell you, life did not commence upon this earth spontaneously. Its origin was not here. Life existed long before our solar system was called into being. The fact is, there never was a time when man – made in the image of God, male and female – did not exist...The Lord has given us the information regarding his creations, and how he has made many earths, for there never was a beginning, never was a time when man did not exist somewhere in the universe, and when the time came for this earth to be peopled, the Lord, our God, transplanted upon it from some other earth, the life which is found here.” (Joseph Fielding Smith, Doctrines of Salvation, 1:139-40.)

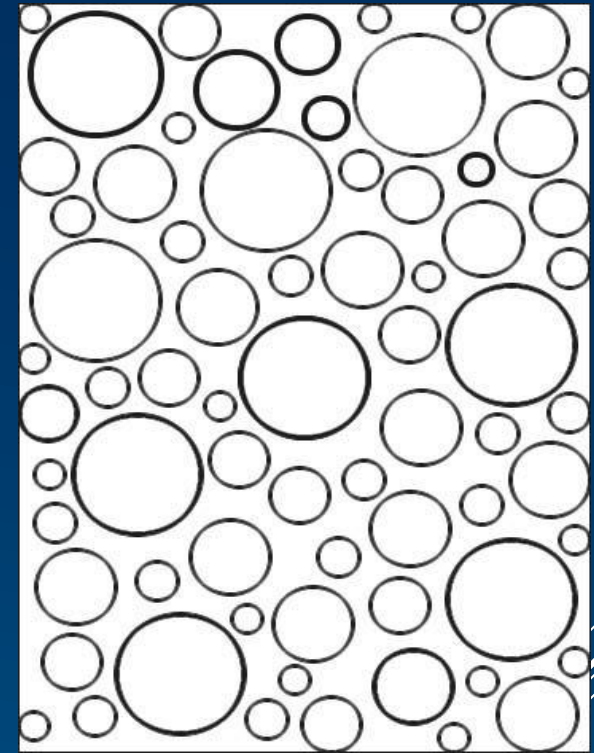


INTELLIGENCES

Long before you came to be you on earth, you existed. What that means is not clearly understood. You were a personality, an energy, a light, the scriptures call it an intelligence (Abraham 3:21), whatever that means. Let's call it a little "i."

How long were you in this condition as a little "i"? This is a hard concept but you have always existed as an intelligence, or a personality, or whatever you want to call it. You are eternal. You have no beginning. You have always existed and always will. How is that possible? We don't really understand how, just that it is true. Just because we don't understand something doesn't mean it's not true.

And so you, as an intelligence, (or light, or energy) have existed for an infinite (no beginning and no ending) amount of time. But what were you doing? Existing? Thinking? Well, we don't know for sure. Our memories of that time have been temporarily erased or blocked so we can't remember. Maybe someday that knowledge will be restored so we can remember that time.



Consider these thoughts from apostles and prophets:

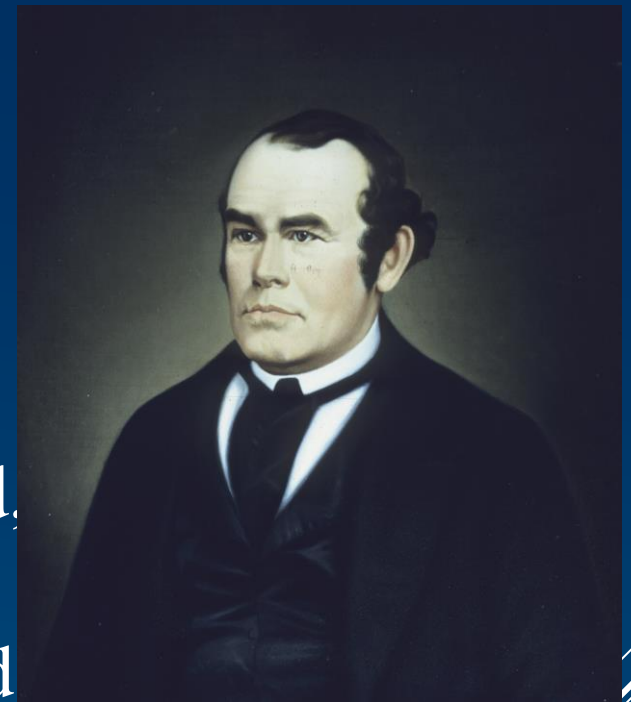
Neal A. Maxwell said:

“Man was also in the beginning with God, and thus man is co-eternal, but certainly not co-equal with God.” Neal A. Maxwell, *If Thou Endure It Well*, p. 82.



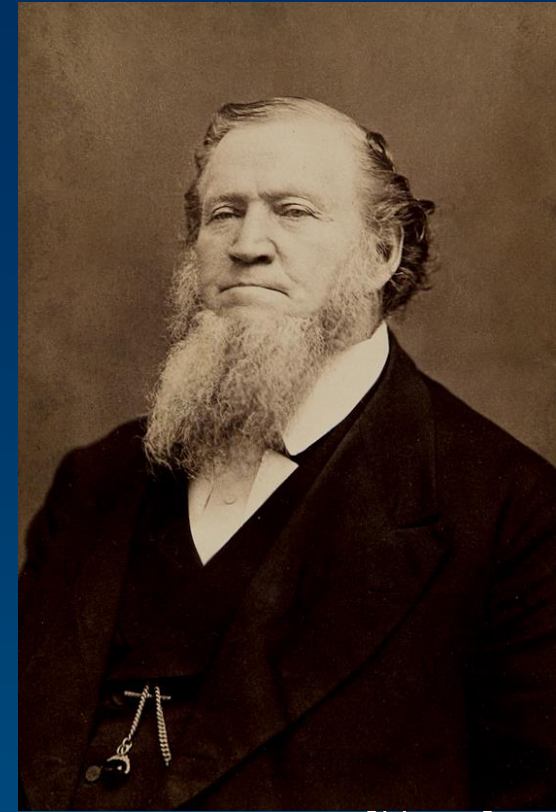
Parley P. Pratt, an Apostle said:

“It [i.e., the primal intelligence of man] never was created, being an inherent attribute of the eternal element called spirit, which element composes each individual spirit, and which element exists in an infinitude of degrees in the scale of intellect, in all the varieties manifested in the eternal God, and thence to the lower agent, which acts by its own will.” Parley P. Pratt, Journal of Discourses, 1:258.)



Brigham Young said:

“There is an eternity of life, from which we were composed by the wisdom and skill of superior Beings...The life that is within us is a part of an eternity of life, and is organized spirit, which is clothed upon by tabernacles, therefore constituting our present being, which is designed for the attainment of further intelligence.” Brigham Young, Journal of Discourses, 8:284-85.



THE BIG BANG

Some scientists say that the universe was created by a big bang. That all of the matter of the universe was in one gigantic ball, or grain of sand, or something and then it all exploded and the universe came into being that way. Let's think about this for a minute. So, if all the matter, which earlier we said cannot be created or destroyed, was all in one place, then somehow, (and scientists don't explain how it occurred), a big bang happened. But what caused the big bang to happen?



THE BIG BANG IS NOT THE BEGINNING OF THE UNIVERSE.

In an article written in September of 2017, Ethan Siegel wrote:

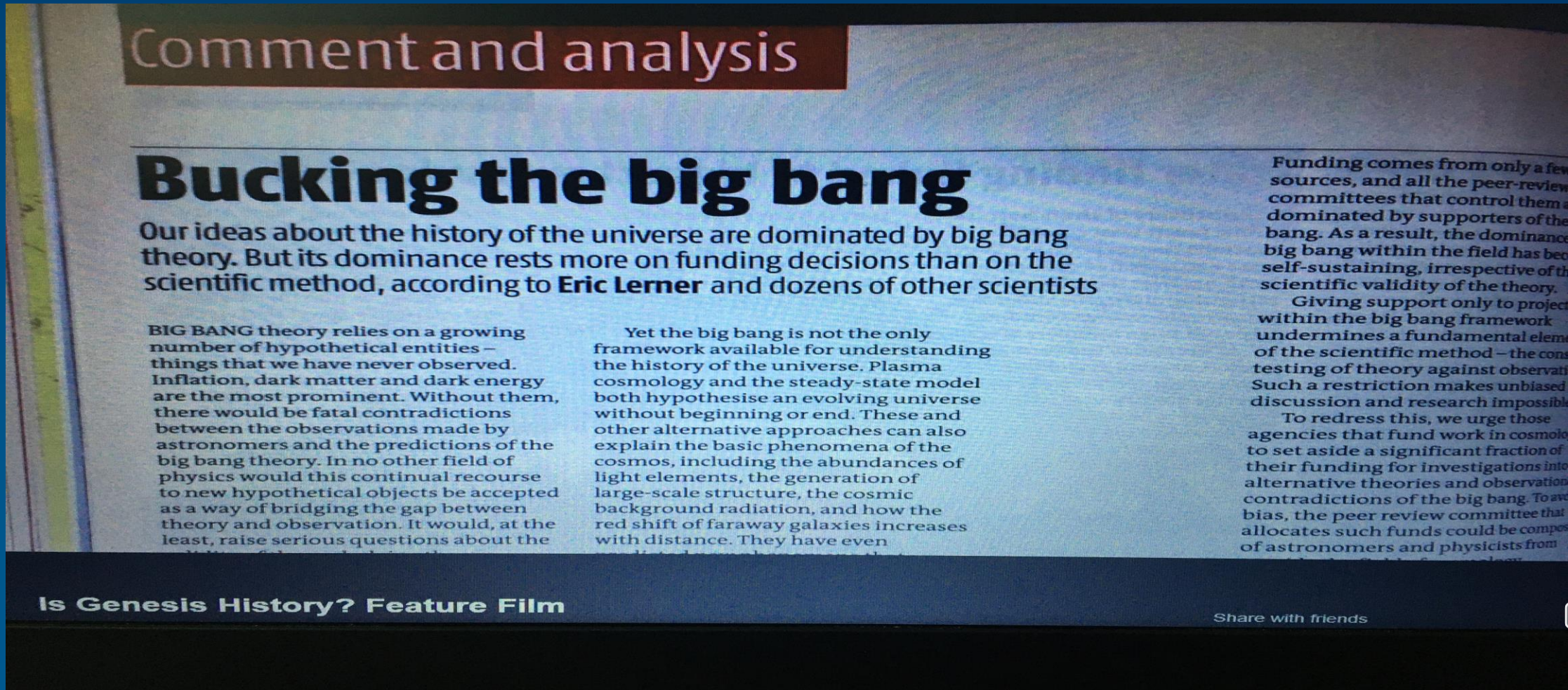
The conclusion was inescapable: the hot Big Bang definitely happened, but doesn't extend to go all the way back to an arbitrarily hot and dense state. Instead, the very early Universe underwent a period of time where all of the energy that would go into the matter and radiation present today was instead bound up in the fabric of space itself. That period, known as cosmic inflation, came to an end and gave rise to the hot Big Bang, but never created an arbitrarily hot, dense state, nor did it create a singularity. What happened prior to inflation — or whether inflation was eternal to the past — is still an open question, but one thing is for certain: the Big Bang is not the beginning of the Universe! (Forbes Magazine)

I still contend that there never was a big bang, the Universe has always existed.



THERE WAS NO BIG BANG

Many scientists are now admitting that a big bang does not make sense. Here is a paper written a few years ago signed by dozens of scientists refuting the big bang theory.



An Experiment

So let's use a little logic and the scientific method about the big bang. Let's assume that we have a stick of dynamite. Don't worry how it got created, you just have the stick of dynamite. The stick of dynamite has matter, something that will cause an explosion, and a fuse to be lit to ignite the explosive. We have a scientist in a white lab coat assigned to watch the stick of dynamite until it explodes all on its own. He has to keep watch because we don't want someone or something to come along and ignite the dynamite, we want to see it blow up all by itself.



But the scientist watches for a very long time, and nothing happens to cause it to explode. In fact, something else happens instead. The stick of dynamite begins to fall apart. There is a law of physics which we mentioned before that explains that if things are left alone, they tend to decay over time. So not only will the dynamite not explode all by itself, it will decay to the point that it will completely disintegrate into its native elements as they were before being organized into a stick of dynamite. That's what happens to anything and everything. So if the universe were a big ball of matter prior to the big bang, then logically and according to law, the matter would not have exploded, rather it would have remained as its original elements.



Here's another example: What if we took the materials that are found in a watch and put them in one place and then they all exploded. Would it be possible for those materials to all come together into a watch, with gears and mechanisms and a crystal face and delicate, intricate hands that keeps perfect time? I think most of us would say that can't happen; it's impossible. But many believe that the earth just came together from nothing by chance. Are you beginning to see how unreasonable that idea for creation is?



Ronald Reagan once said: “Sometimes when I’m faced with an atheist (a person who does not believe in the existence of God), I am tempted to invite him to the greatest gourmet dinner that one could ever serve. And when we have finished eating that magnificent dinner to ask him if he believes there’s a cook.” (Quote Book #4, compiled by James H. Patterson, p. 5.)



So then what of the big bang? What if there wasn't a big bang at all? What if the universe has always existed and that it is infinitely large, meaning it has no boundaries, and extends into infinity? It's really hard to imagine that there was never a beginning, but just because we can't understand it doesn't mean it's not true.

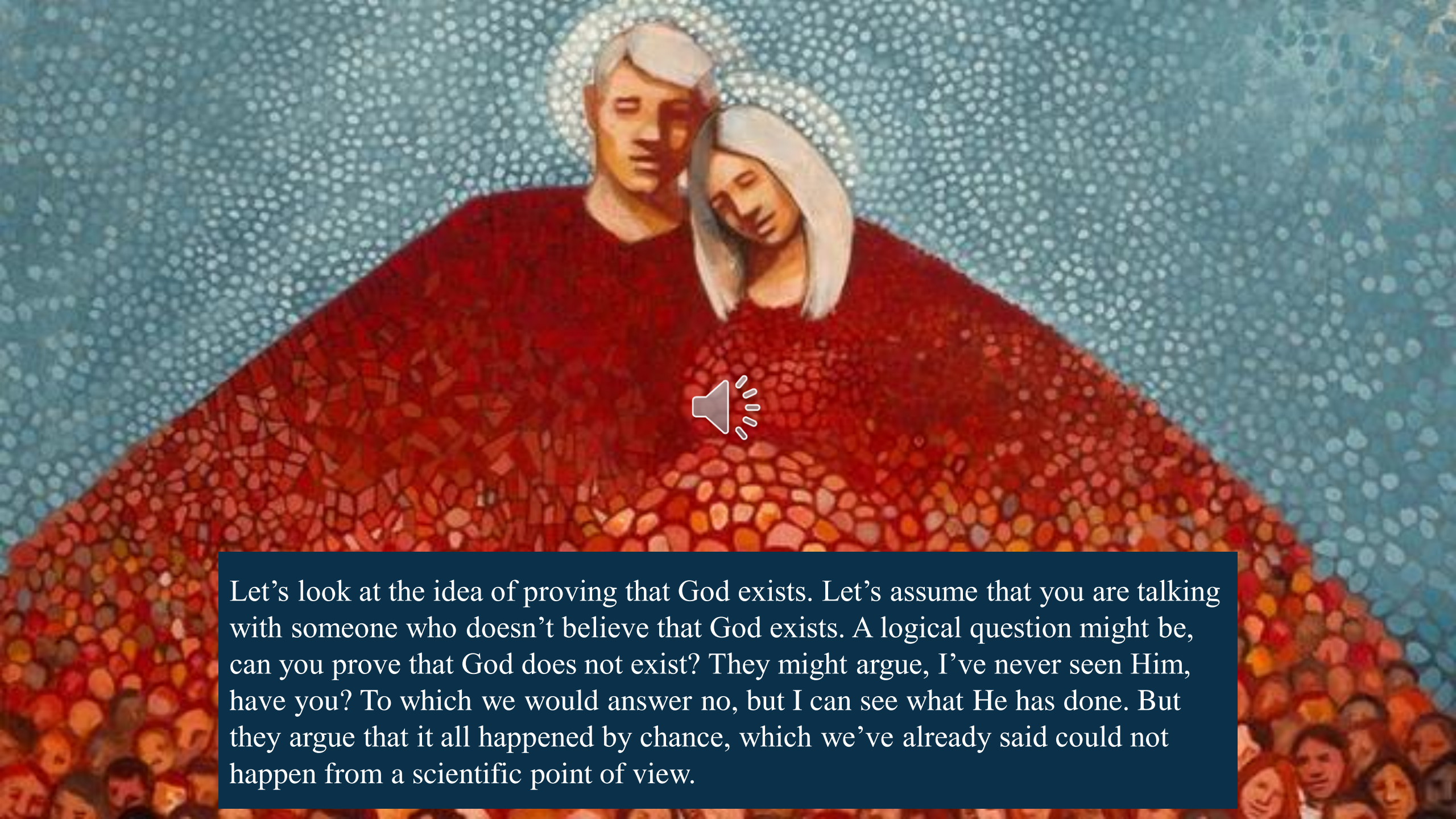
Given the fact that matter will disintegrate over time if left alone, then the fact that there are planets and stars must mean something has happened to create them, or organize them in such a way as to become the planets and stars that we can see in the universe and in our solar system. Some call that "Divine Design." The universe is evidence that God exists or that many Gods exist. Let's explore this idea further.



GOD EXISTS AND MANY GODS EXIST



There are some people who deny that there is such a thing as God. They will ask those that believe in God to prove it or show them God. From what was said earlier, matter, if left alone, eventually decays and falls apart, so how could there even be something like an earth, or plants, or animals, or people, or planets or stars, unless there was something or someone to actually create or organize them from the available materials?



Let's look at the idea of proving that God exists. Let's assume that you are talking with someone who doesn't believe that God exists. A logical question might be, can you prove that God does not exist? They might argue, I've never seen Him, have you? To which we would answer no, but I can see what He has done. But they argue that it all happened by chance, which we've already said could not happen from a scientific point of view.

So let's ask this question: Prove that there is no God. How would you do it? We might ask the person that we want proof that God does not exist, proof that there is no God. If we are trying to prove that God does not exist, one way to do that would be to look in the universe for Him. If we don't find Him, then He must not exist. Let's look closer at this idea. Let's say, for example, we heard that God was on Mars. So we go to Mars to find God and He wasn't there, that doesn't prove there is no God because He could have been somewhere else at the time. So then we hear He is somewhere else, and we go there and He's gone. Again, it doesn't prove God doesn't exist, He just isn't in the place we looked. So how could we prove there is no God by looking throughout the universe? We would have to see every single place in the universe at the same time to look for God. And then if we didn't see Him we could say, there is no God. But if we could do that, see everywhere at the same time, we would be God! Which would prove that there is a God.

Another proof of God's existence is from witnesses. Have there been people who have actually seen Him? Many of the prophets in the scriptures have witnessed seeing Him. Moses saw God face to face (Genesis 32:30). Moses, Aaron, Nadab, Abihu and seventy of the elders of Israel saw God (Exodus 24:9-10). Isaiah saw God (Isaiah 6:5). Stephen saw Jesus Christ standing on the right hand of God (Acts 7:56) Joseph Smith saw God (Joseph Smith – History 1:17). Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon saw Jesus Christ and God (D&C 76:22-24). Zebedee Coltrin, and several other men, saw Jesus Christ and God in the school of the prophets in the upper room of the Newell K. Whitney store (“Statement of Zebedee Coltrin,” Minutes, 3 October 1883, Salt Lake School of Prophets, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah, 56-58; see also Lyndon W. Cook, *The Revelations of the Prophet Joseph Smith* (Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book, 1981), 187-88.)

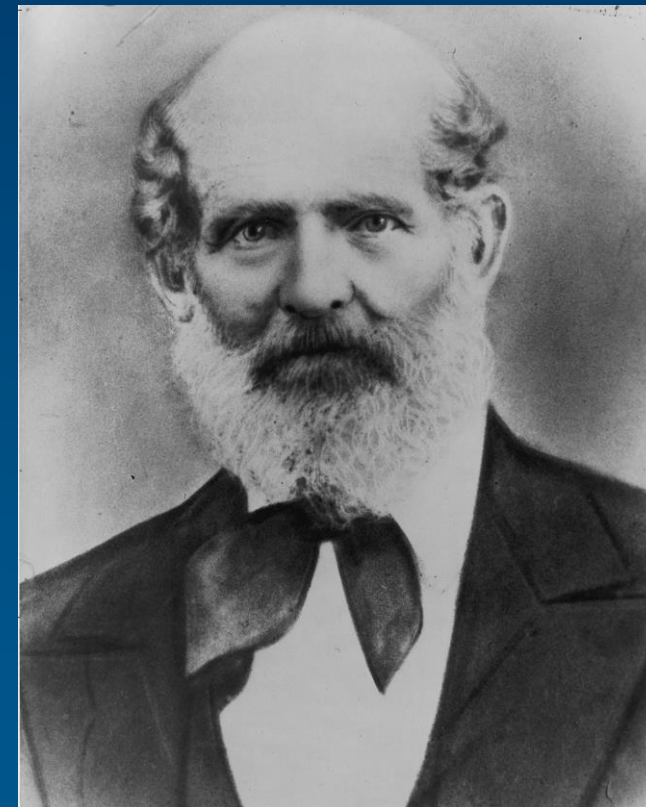


Over 500 men saw the resurrected Jesus Christ in Galilee and over 2,500 people also saw him on the American continent as recorded in the Book of Mormon.

A more important witness than sight, is the witness of the Holy Ghost upon the soul of a person bearing witness that God not only exists, but that He is our Father who loves us. This witness is had by millions of people, both living and dead.

So now that we've proven that there is a God, where did He come from? How did He become God? Are there many gods? Can we become gods, too? We'll discuss this further, but a few other preliminary ideas first.

Zebedee Coltrin



HOW OLD IS THE UNIVERSE?

So how old is matter, or the stuff in the universe? Matter is the elements, the rocks, the asteroids, the other particles of materials that are floating in space. We are told by scientists that matter can neither be created nor destroyed. So that means that matter also has always existed. So when scientists try to put a date to the earth or some other planet or star, and we take a piece of the earth and test it, there is no way to put an accurate date to matter, since it has always existed. It's not millions of years old, or billions of years old, it's infinitely old.

As with intelligences and matter, good and evil have also always existed. They were also never created. While you were just an intelligence you could choose to have good thoughts and you could choose to have evil thoughts. By choosing good thoughts, you acquired more intelligence or light and truth. By choosing evil thoughts, you lost some of the light that you once had. A person who acquires light and intelligence obtains it by obedience to law. But what laws? The laws that govern the universe are not arbitrary, or haphazard, they, like matter and good and evil, have also always existed.

ONE DAY EVERYTHING CHANGED FOR US!

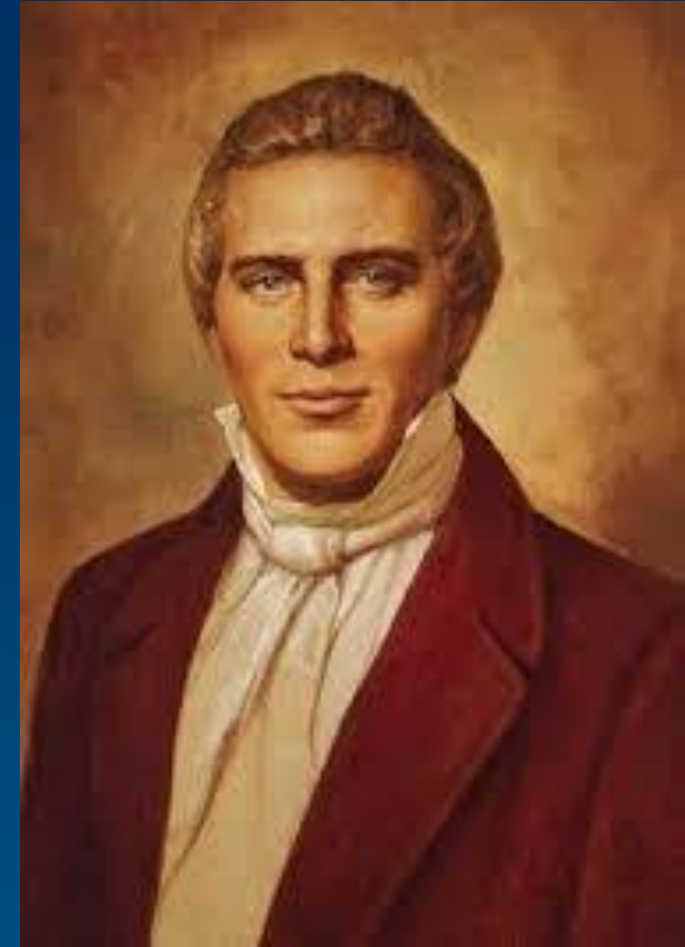
One day, after an infinite amount of time, something changed. Two glorious personages came into our group of intelligences. One was a man and the other was a woman. They explained that they were husband and wife, and they had been married in an eternal covenant and would be married forever through all eternity. They gave our group of intelligences an exciting proposal.



They said something like this: “We have power to help you progress from this condition that you have been in forever so far. You have the possibility of becoming just like us. We once were just like you, and there was someone who came to us and offered us the same proposal we are now offering to you. If you accept, you will become our spirit children. We have all power given unto us that we are Gods. We have all knowledge of the past, present and the future. In fact the past, present and future to us is one eternal *now*. Because of this knowledge and power, we can make it possible for you to progress where you can also obtain what we have. All we ask of you is that you accept us as your parents and as your Gods. And because we can do this for you, we will ask you to love us above all other things that mortals tend to love.” (See Abraham 3:21-26.)

JOSEPH SMITH SAID:

“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.” (Joseph Smith, Documentary History of the Church, 6:312.)



THE PLAN

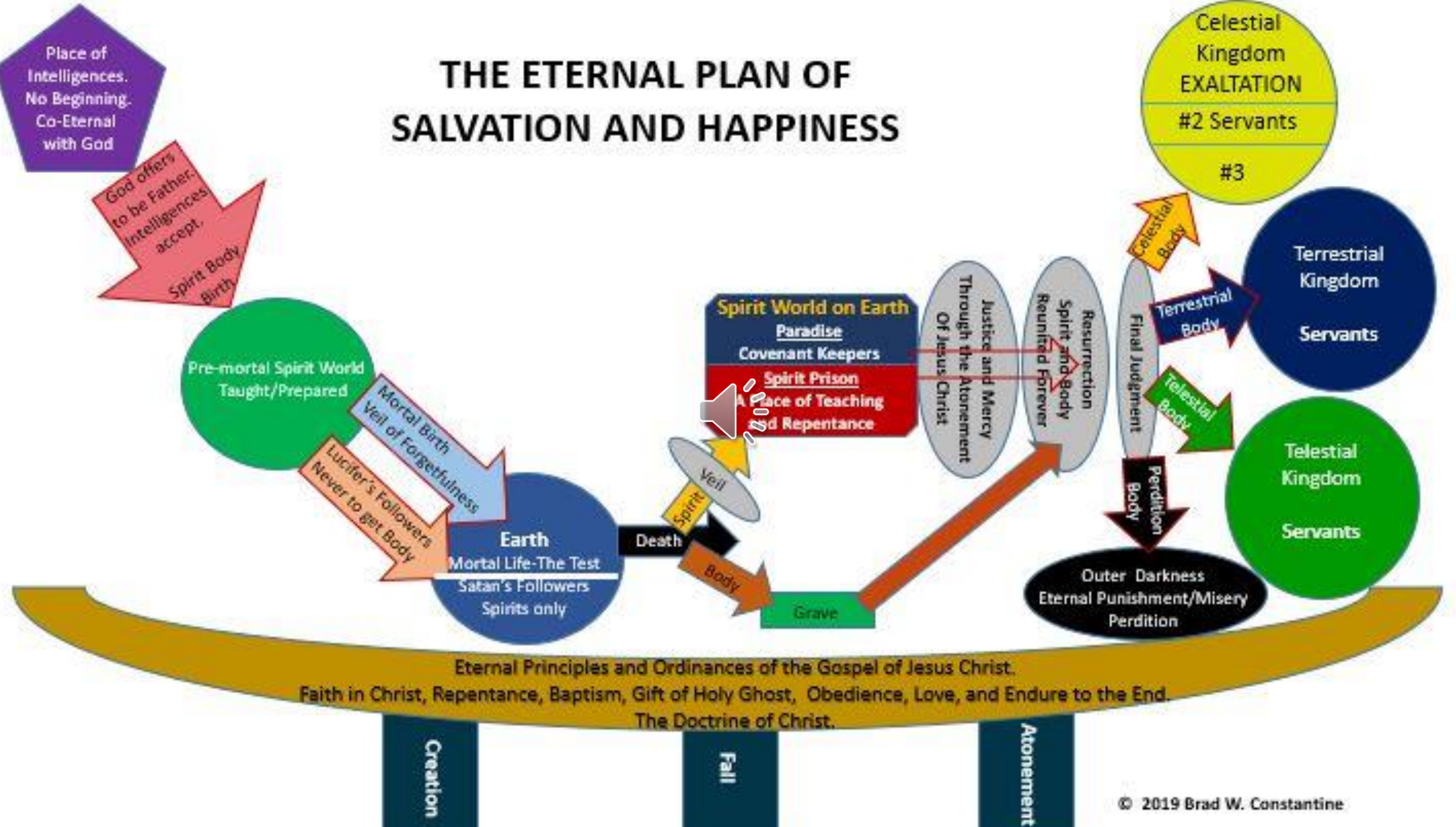
Our Heavenly Parents then told us about the Plan. They may have said to us something like: “Your intelligence, or light, or personality, or little “i,” will be given a spirit body that we, as Father and Mother, will create for you. That spirit will become eternal as well. If you choose to obey certain laws and ordinances that we give you, you can progress to become like we are. These laws and ordinances do not come from us, because they have been the same laws and ordinances that have governed everything forever. It is called the Plan of Happiness, or the Plan of Salvation. Its basic principles include love, obedience to laws, justice, and mercy, judgment, and an Atonement made by a Savior that allows all of this to work together.



We know that it will be difficult to always keep the commandments, so we will provide a Savior for you, who will take upon Himself the guilt and the punishment for your sins, only if you repent of your sins and are willing to try to obey and change for good. This Savior is our first-born son, Jesus Christ. We are not so interested in what you do, but in what you become. If you become like us, then you will be gods, too. Christ will help you and change you since you will not be strong enough alone, but He is mighty. He can make those who follow Him and clean like us.”

The next page is a chart showing the Plan of Salvation as we understand it.

THE ETERNAL PLAN OF SALVATION AND HAPPINESS



God did not have to come up with a plan. The Plan that He used is the same Plan that has always been used on every other earth by every other God throughout the universe. Our God has already created millions of earths just like ours, so He is well experienced in creating worlds. We are not His experiment. He knows exactly what He is doing, because He has done it all before.

The Pillars of Eternity are: The Creation, The Fall, and The Atonement of Jesus Christ. These are the essential parts of The Plan. Without a Creation, there would be no Fall, and without the Fall there would be no need for an Atonement.

AGENCY – FREEDOM TO CHOOSE

These two Gods, Heavenly Father and Heavenly Mother, then may have said something like: “If you accept us as your parents and Jesus Christ as your Savior, you will be given the opportunity to gain a spirit body where you will be taught the principles and laws concerning the Plan. You will learn, through your choices, to obtain talents and abilities that you will be able to use when you become mortals. You will listen to the words of prophets who were chosen before coming to earth and others who will be given authority to teach gospel truths about faith, repentance, and obedience to laws. Jesus Christ, who was perfectly obedient, obtained more light and intelligence than any other of God’s spirit children. In fact, He obtained more intelligence or light than all of God’s children combined.



Since we had been as little “i’s” for so long, without any hope of progressing from that condition, when these two glorious persons came to our group, we readily accepted their proposal and accepted with great joy and excitement the opportunity to be more with a body and move on from where we were. We could become like them, if we did everything that would qualify us to be able to do so.



ETERNAL MARRIAGE

As husband and wife, joined together in holy matrimony according to God's law, a husband and wife's marriage will last for eternity. They will be qualified to have spirit children into which they placed our little "i's." When there was a certain number of these spirit children, God determined that this group was sufficient to be placed on an earth and given the opportunity to see if they would continue to adhere to the Plan while out of God's presence.



THE PREMORTAL SPIRIT WORLD

There were three groups of spirit children of our Heavenly Parents.

1. There were those who proved themselves worthy through their faithfulness of choosing good thoughts over bad thoughts and by obeying the laws that governed them, they became “noble and great” spirits. These God would make the rulers on earth.
2. There was a group who were less than noble but who still accepted the plan to come to earth and be tested with mortal bodies.
3. And there was a third group or part who decided that they did not believe in the Plan and that they would not be obtaining physical bodies on earth. They would choose evil over good. And they would choose to tempt and torment those who decided to come to earth in mortality. We don't know how many were in this third group, but the scriptures mention that there was a third part who made this choice. Not one third of all of the spirit children born to Heavenly Parents, but a third part, or a third group of people.



THE WAR IN HEAVEN

When God presented the Plan, He said that we would be sent to earth to gain a physical body, we would forget our pre-earth life, and we would be tested to see if we would choose to follow God and His teachings during our time on earth. There was another plan suggested by one of the spirit children whose name was Lucifer, which means “light bearer.” We often think that his plan was to force everyone to be good so that everyone would be worthy of returning back to God’s presence and become gods. However, others believe that his plan was to allow us to do whatever we wanted in mortality and then he, Lucifer, would forgive everyone of any wrong doing, in other words making the concept of moral agency as though it didn’t exist. He would make it so that there would be no consequences to wrong actions at all. Everyone would become like the gods no matter what they did. But the big problem with Lucifer’s plan was that it wouldn’t work, that’s not how to become gods. It was a lie.



There was a serious debate between these two plans. God's Plan and Lucifer's plan. It became such a debate that it is called the "war in heaven." Lucifer became so angry that his plan was not accepted, that he rebelled with his followers and God cast them from heaven down to the earth, and Lucifer became Satan, the Devil, where he and his followers still live as spirits here on earth. We can't see them, but we can feel their presence often. For Satan and his followers there is no veil of forgetfulness over their minds, so they remember us before we came to earth. Their activity is to persuade us from keeping God's commandments. Their goal is to make us unhappy all the time in the hopes that we won't believe in God, accept Jesus Christ as the Messiah and Mediator, and that we won't love our fellow man.



TIME TO COME TO EARTH

At some point in our existence as children of Heavenly Parents, They determined that the time was right for us to progress further. They gathered all of the spirits together in a grand meeting and presented the Plan to everyone. The Plan was that we would be sent to earth, born into mortality as helpless babies, to a mother and a father, who would raise us to one day stand on our own. Even though we would not remember our pre-mortal existence, They promised us that we would not be left completely alone during this test. Everyone would be given the Light of Christ. This is what we might call a conscience, knowing right from wrong, good from evil. It is something that everyone has at birth. There would also be special people, called from among our group, to be prophets, kings, and teachers, to guide and help us in our journey through life. These people would be instructed by God and they would write their words into books like the Bible, the Book of Mormon, etc.



MORTALITY IS THE TEST

The test of mortality is to show who would choose to live and develop godly attributes to qualify to become gods in their own right. For this test to be a real test, everyone would be given a “veil of forgetfulness” so that there would be no memory of what happened before being born on earth. We were told that the test of mortality would be of faith and obedience and to learn to love one another.

Think about it, if you can't obey a few commandments here on earth, how could you be trusted to obey laws perfectly after this life to be a god? Also, if you don't learn to love others here on earth, how will you love others enough in the next life to want to be the parents of gazillions of children for eternity? God has created all we see because He loves us and wants us to become like Him.

Another purpose for coming to earth is to obtain a physical body. That is why life is so precious. Another reason is to learn what it's like to be a father and mother so we can be one in the next life. We can have experiences here that will help us in the next life.



So, to start the mortal experience on earth, God took two of his spirit children and made physical bodies for their spirits. These physical bodies were created just the same way that all bodies are created. Heavenly Father and Heavenly Mother, because they are married in an eternal marriage, are given power to not only have spirit children, but also to have physical children. The two children for whom they also gave physical bodies were named Adam and Eve. They were placed on earth that had been created purposefully for their benefit and the benefit of their children after them. But when their physical bodies were created, they were immortal. They had what we would call a terrestrial body. Not a Celestial body (not a resurrected body), a terrestrial body. Their bodies were perfect and they could live forever in the Garden of Eden into which they were placed. A terrestrial body has flesh and bones, but it does not have blood like our mortal bodies. Blood is the corruptible part of our bodies which eventually causes our death.

But before Adam and Eve were placed on earth, things had to be set up just right. After God determined the exact number that would be assigned to come to an earth, he decided to begin the creation process. The Book of Genesis in the Bible gives us an outline of what happened in the Creation, but it is only a fragment of the story. We are not told everything regarding the creation, because we would not understand it if it were told to us. But there are a few things we know. Also, this earth is not the first planet that God created. There have been millions of earths that He created before ever he created ours.



THE CREATION OF THE EARTH

First, the Bible account indicates that it took six “days” to create the earth. We don’t know if that is six of our days as measured on earth, six of God’s days, which would be 6,000 years, or six creative periods of an unknown amount of time. I believe the Hebrew account to be literal and that it took 6 days of 1,000 years each or 6,000 years to create the earth. The Biblical account of creation is an abbreviation of what happened, but it gives us some insights into the process that we can figure out. The overall purpose for telling the story of the creation, even if it is only an abbreviation, is to show that it was a deliberate act of God and not a random, haphazard series of events over an enormous amount of time that resulted in our current condition on earth. There was no evolution of one-celled creatures turning into other types of creatures, and mutating into other types of creatures until you arrive at man. This theory has been put forward and encouraged so that we won’t believe that there is a God and that He created this beautiful earth for his children. At the conclusion of the creation, He pronounced it “very good.”



Before we begin with the description of the earth's creation, keep in mind that Jesus Christ, or Jehovah of the Old Testament, is the God who is assigned, under Heavenly Father, to create the earth, and everything else, except for the people. Heavenly Father and Mother are the Ones who create all the people. Did anyone else help to create the earth? Consider this comment by a prophet: "It is true that Adam helped to form this earth. He labored with our Savior Jesus Christ. I have a strong view or conviction that there were others also who assisted them. Perhaps Noah and Enoch; and why not Joseph Smith, and those who were appointed to be rulers before the earth was formed?" (Joseph Fielding Smith; Doctrines of Salvation 1:74-75.) You may have even had a role in helping to create our earth.

There isn't room in this book to talk about the concept of Evolution. It is enough to say that the creation of the earth and everything on it did not occur by evolution. There is an excellent discussion about this in the LDS Institute Manual, *Old Testament Student Manual – Genesis-2 Samuel*, September 2002, pages 33-36. The Manual quotes heavily from Harold G. Coffin, Professor of Paleontology and Research at the Geoscience Research Institute, Andrews University in Michigan, from a pamphlet entitled *Creation*, by Dr. Coffin.

In 1909, the First Presidency of the Church, which consisted of Joseph F. Smith, John R. Winder, and Anthon H. Lund, issued a letter to the Church entitled *The Origin of Man*. In it they said: "Man is the child of God, formed in the divine image and endowed with divine attributes, and even as the infant son of an earthly father and mother is capable in due time of becoming a man, so the undeveloped offspring of celestial parentage is capable, by experience through ages and eons, of evolving into a God."



DAY ONE – FORMING THE EARTH

In the first day, matter was gathered and organized into a planet. God assigned this creative process to His Son, Jesus Christ, who in turn got the help of those who were the noble and great ones. They saw the unorganized matter and in some creative process brought it together to make an earth. Creation is a process that is done by words rather than muscles. When the word was spoken, the elements obeyed and came together to form the earth. Then God's light was allowed to shine upon the earth so that they could see what was going on with the creation of the earth. And the earth was created in the presence of God, near where He lives, near the governing planet called Kolob. (See Abraham 3:2-3, 9, 16.)



DAY TWO – DIVIDING THE WATERS AND THE LAND

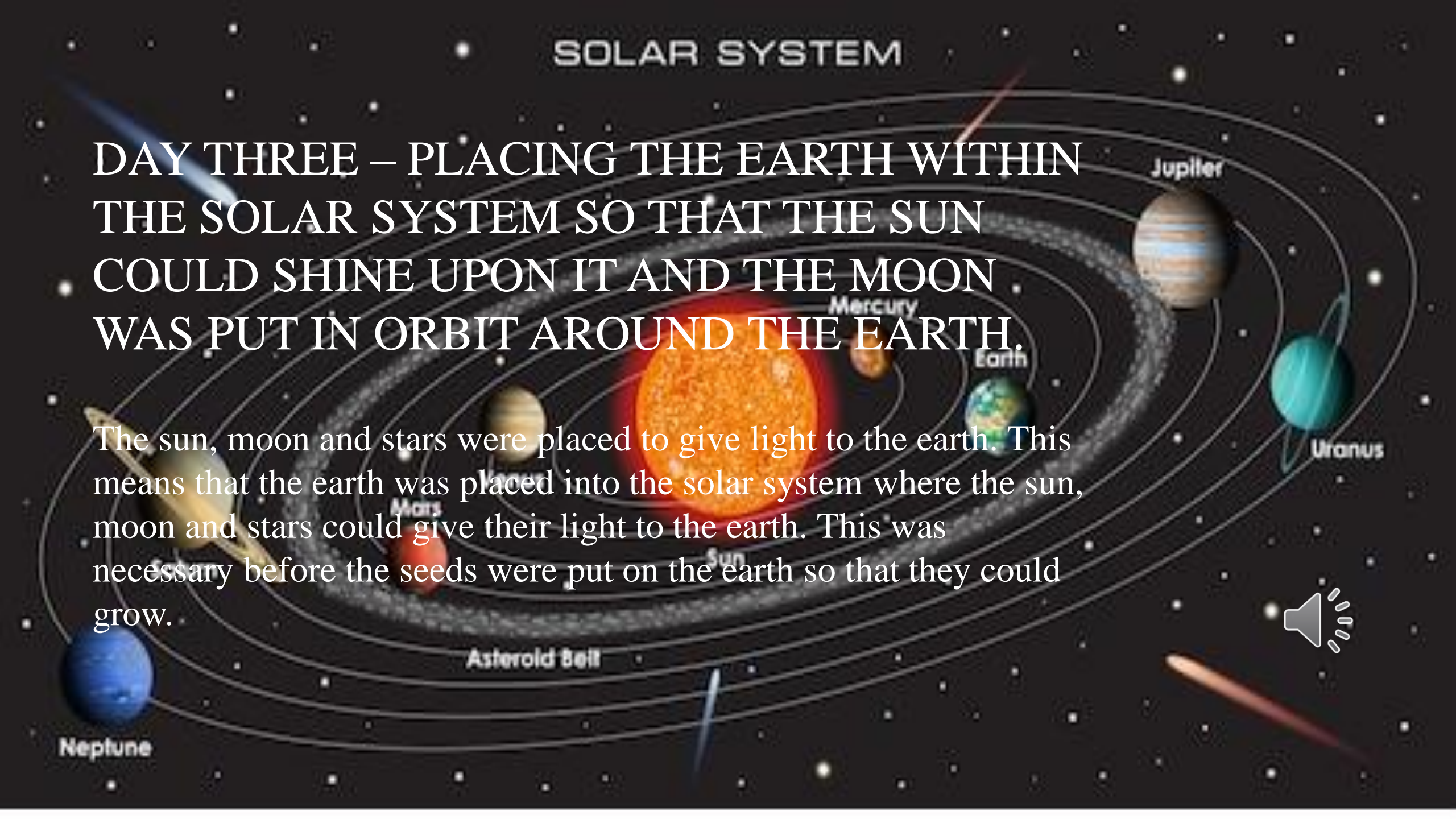
Then on the second day the waters were divided from each other. The water in the sky or atmosphere was separated from the water on the earth. The land was made to appear and the ocean was put in one place. At the time of creation, all land was in one place and the ocean was in one place. After the flood of Noah, the topography of the earth changed drastically and the continents became divided into what we have today. At or before the Second Coming of Jesus Christ, the land will be moved back to its original one land mass as at the creation.



SOLAR SYSTEM

DAY THREE – PLACING THE EARTH WITHIN THE SOLAR SYSTEM SO THAT THE SUN COULD SHINE UPON IT AND THE MOON WAS PUT IN ORBIT AROUND THE EARTH.

The sun, moon and stars were placed to give light to the earth. This means that the earth was placed into the solar system where the sun, moon and stars could give their light to the earth. This was necessary before the seeds were put on the earth so that they could grow.

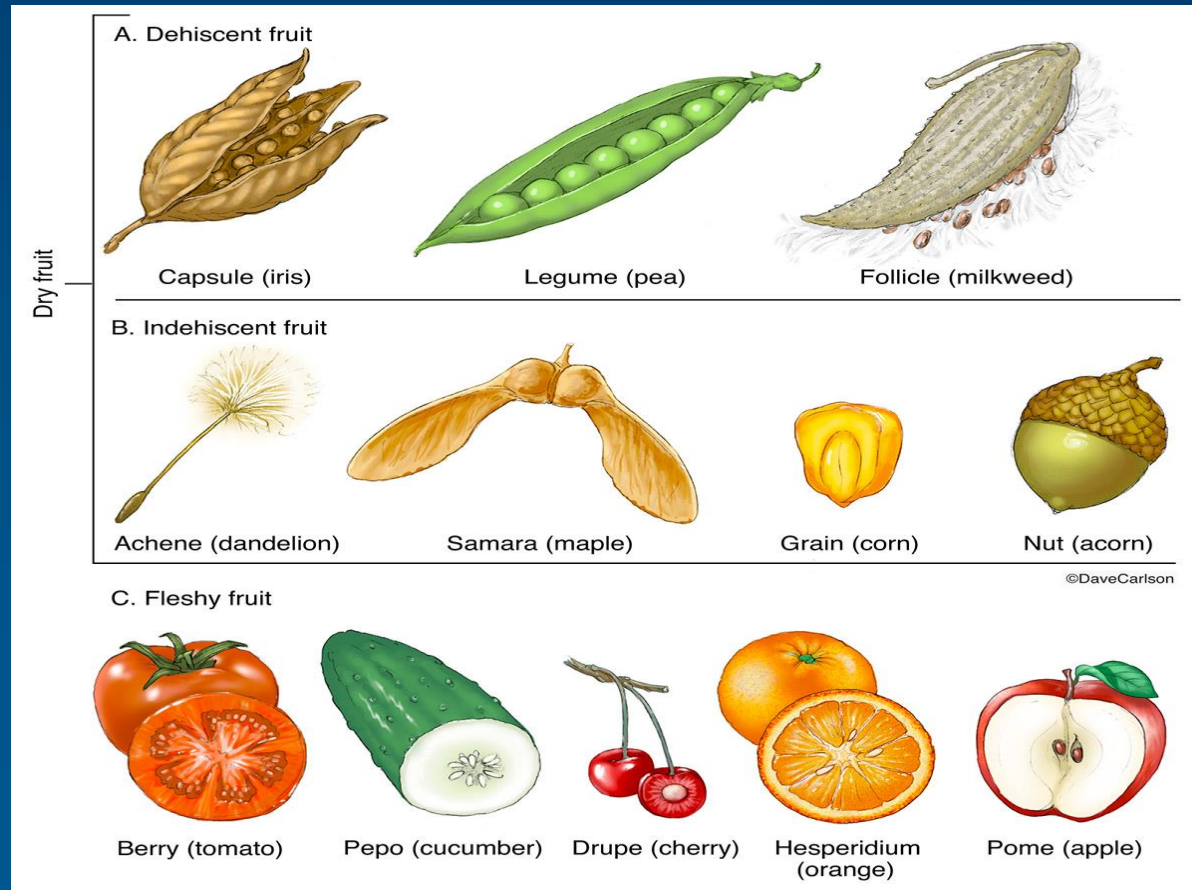


DAY FOUR – PLANTS ARE PLACED ON THE EARTH.

With the earth formed and the earth put where it could get sunlight, the gods placed seeds of all kinds of plants in the earth so that they would spring forth as the various plants we have on earth. Seeds would grow in each plant, after their own kind. Where did the seeds come from. Knowing that everything God saves will be resurrected, God took seeds from those resurrected plants and planted them on our earth.

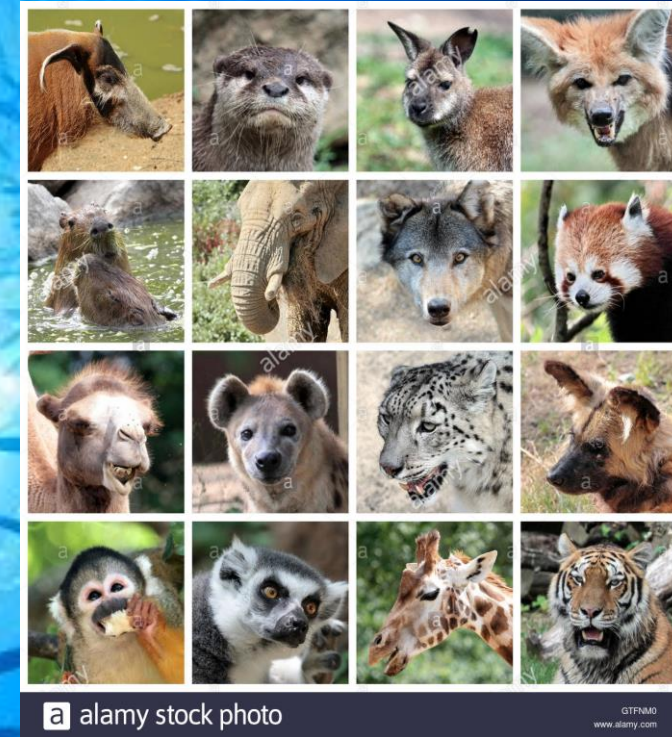


Every living organism has a spirit within itself which was also taken from an intelligence of some sort. And every organism, plant, or animal that fulfills the measure (or reason or purpose) of its creation, will become a resurrected entity to live forever. The Gods will take the seeds that come from these resurrected plants to be planted on earths so that they can spring forth on the earth, according to their own kind.



DAY FIVE – PLACING OF ANIMALS ON THE EARTH

Day five is when fish and water creatures, all animals and insects, all types of living creatures were placed on the earth. They did not just appear after a long evolutionary process, moving from one type of primitive animal to a more complex animal until we arrive at man. But rather, God took the offspring (or babies) of resurrected animals and placed them on planets as part of the creative process. All of these plants and animals from resurrected plants and animals would have had terrestrial bodies, which could never have existed. He organized all the plants and animals that were to come to the earth. There is a predetermined number of plants, animals, and people that have or will come to the earth. God planned everything in advance and organized everything perfectly. God does not and cannot create things from nothing. The word in Hebrew for create means to organize the earth and everything on it.



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All animals were produced after their own kind. Cows would come from other cows, horses would come from horses, jelly fish would come from other jelly fish, and so on. God did not create animals in a laboratory. He simply took the offspring of eternal, resurrected animals and placed them upon the earth as needed. Then after He placed all the necessary animals, birds, and fish in the varieties He wanted and in the places He wanted, the earth was ready for God's most important creation to be placed on the earth. Man and Woman as Adam and Eve.

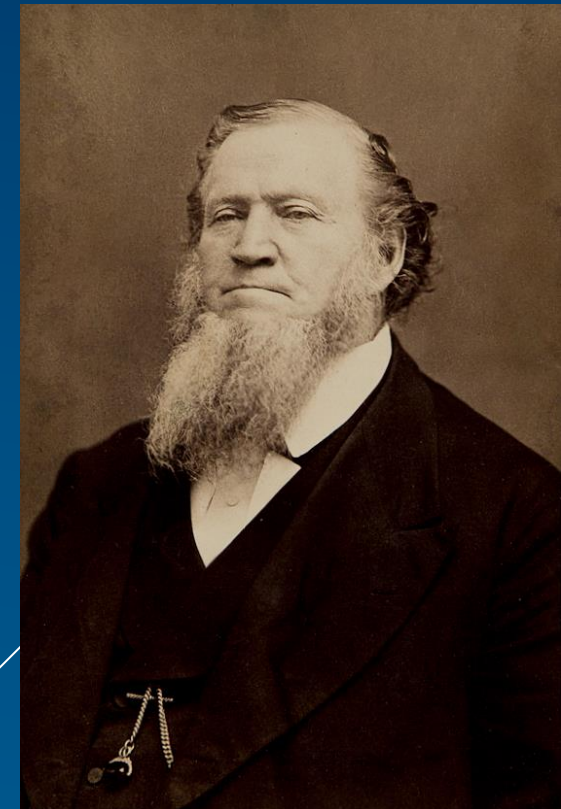


DAY SIX: ADAM AND EVE ARE PLACED ON EARTH

Adam and Eve were created like all other humans are created. By a father and a mother. Then they were placed upon the earth as immortals with terrestrial bodies, which could never die. But these were not resurrected bodies. Since Heavenly Father and Heavenly Mother are immortal beings, their children will also be immortal, but upon certain limiting conditions to be explained shortly. The change from being immortal to mortal is what is called the FALL.



Consider these words from Brigham Young: “Here let me state to all philosophers of every class upon the earth. When you tell me that father Adam was made as we made adobes from the earth, you tell me what I deem an idle tale. When you tell me that the beasts of the field were produced in that manner, you are speaking idle words devoid of meaning. There is no such thing in all the eternities where the Gods dwell. Mankind are here because they are offspring of parents who were first brought here from another planet, and power was given them to propagate their species, and they are commanded to multiply and replenish the earth.” (Brigham Young, Journal of Discourses, 7:285-86.)



THE EARTH WAS A PARADISE

When the earth was organized, it was created near the throne of God, near the planet Kolob, the governing planet. This earth was in a paradisiacal condition, or a terrestrial condition, which would have remained that way forever. All animals, plants and our two human beings were immortal and would have stayed that way, but for an action which Adam and Eve later decided to take. But first let's look at the condition in the Garden of Eden when Adam and Eve were placed in it.

Adam and Eve were given authority over the entire earth. Man was the most important achievement of God and Adam was the ruler over the entire earth. While in the Garden of Eden, God spoke often with Adam and Eve and gave them instructions about their purpose on earth and their roles as our first parents on earth.



THE GARDEN OF EDEN

When Adam and Eve were first placed in the Garden, they were given certain instructions. Adam and Eve became husband and wife, married by God, the Father, in the Garden of Eden. Then, they were commanded to take good care of the garden, to be responsible for the well-being of the earth. (This command has not been taken away and we are just as much under the responsibility of being good stewards of the earth as were Adam and Eve.) They were told that they could eat of every fruit or vegetable in the Garden, except one. God had planted two trees, among others, in the Garden. One was the Tree of Life, and the other was the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. Both trees were in the middle of the Garden so that they could see them every day. Adam and Eve were commanded to eat of every tree or vegetable in the Garden, except for the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. But what was the consequence of eating from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil? God told them that when they ate of that tree, that they would be shut out of his presence, become mortal and eventually die, but then they would also be able to have children, which they could not do as immortals.

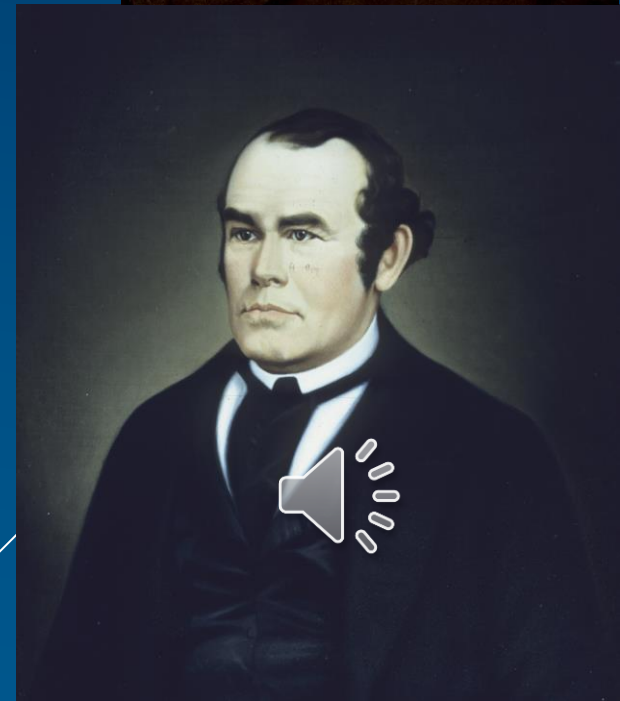
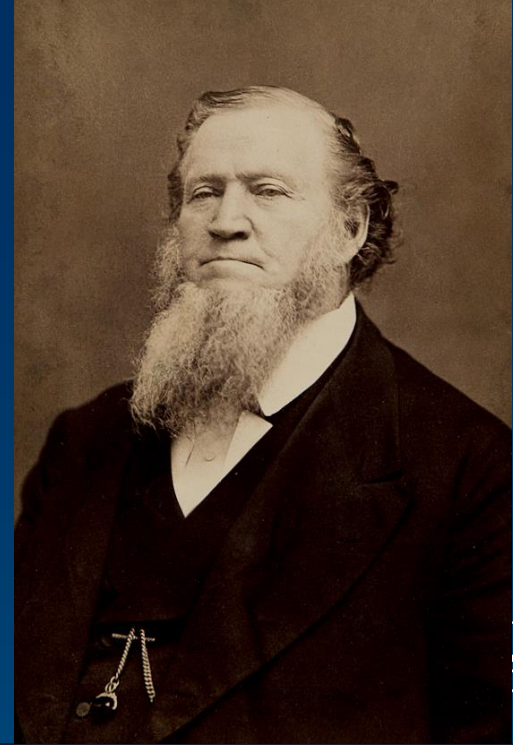


One prophet put it this way: “The Lord said to Adam, here is the tree of knowledge of good and evil. If you want to stay here then you cannot eat of that fruit. If you want to stay here then I forbid you to eat it. But you may act for yourself and you may eat of it if you want to. And if you eat it you will die.” Joseph Fielding Smith, Charge to Religious Educators, p. 124.)

While in the Garden, they were in the presence of God. They walked with Him, they talked with Him. The conditions in the Garden and on the earth were certainly a paradise.

An Apostle wrote the following about the conditions of the Garden of Eden before the fall. “The beasts of the earth were all in perfect harmony with each other; the lion ate straw like the ox, the wolf dwelt with the lamb, the leopard lay down with the kid, the cow and bear fed together in the same pasture, while their young ones reposed in perfect security, under the shade of the same trees; all was peace and harmony, and nothing to hurt nor disturb in all the holy mountain. And to crown the whole, we behold man created in the image of God, and exalted in dignity and power, having dominion over all the vast creation of animated beings which swarmed through the earth, while at the same time he inhabited a beautiful and well-watered garden in the midst of which stood the tree of life, to which he had free access; while he stood in the presence of his Maker, conversed with Him face to face, and gazed upon His glory, without a dimming veil between. O reader, contemplate for a moment, this beautiful creation, with peace and plenty; the earth teeming with harmless animals, rejoicing over all the plain; the air swarming with delightful birds, whose never-ceasing notes filled the air with varied melodies; and all in subjection to their rightful sovereign, who rejoiced over them; while in a delightful garden, the capital of creation, man was seated on the throne of this vast empire, swaying his scepter over all the earth with undisputed right; while legions of angels encamped round about him, and joined their glad voices in grateful songs of praise and shouts of joy; neither sigh nor groan was heard through the vast expanse; neither were there sorrow, fear, pain, weeping, sickness, nor death; neither contentions, wars, nor bloodshed; but peace crowned the seasons, as they rolled, and life, joy and love reigned over all God’s works. But, oh, how changed the scene!” Parley P. Pratt, The Voice of Warning, p. 91.

All of God’s creations were pronounced very good. And so it was. Could this have been done differently? Let’s look at some “what ifs.”



GOD DID NOT CREATE EVIL OR SIN OR MORTALITY

Here is what one author wrote: “Sometimes it helps to understand a religious question if we ask ourselves, How else could our Heavenly Father have done this? For example, how else could our Heavenly Father have brought about the necessary conditions that resulted from the fall of Adam and Eve? Following are four possibilities, and the only acceptable one is the one followed by the Lord:

1. What if the Lord had created the world in such a way that evil and sin would have been here from the beginning? In this case, God would be responsible for all sin and evil.
2. What if God had created the world in such a way that we never could commit any sin? In other words, what if he had never given us any law? It is true that in such a condition we never could have broken a law (committed sin), and thus there would have been no evil, no pain, or no disease. But if there is no possibility for sin and for the punishment and misery that accompany it, then there is no possibility for good and for the blessings and joy that follow obedience to law. None of us would want that type of world.
3. What if God had created a world where he would give us law (the opportunity of choice) but would not give us free agency (the freedom of choice)? How could there be any real growth in this situation? What development is there if we do things only because we have to do them? Also, how could a just God hold us responsible for our acts if we had no choice in the matter?
4. The other major possibility is the one the Lord followed. He created a world that was without sin or evil, and he placed Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden in a state of innocence. He then gave law (the opportunity of choice) to Adam and Eve, and he also gave them their free agency (the freedom of choice). Then, and this is a very important point, he did not hold Adam and Eve responsible for any transgression they committed in their state of innocence. God knew before the earth was ever created that it would be necessary for Adam and Eve to fall so they "would have seed." Thus, even before the earth was created, Jesus Christ had agreed that he would pay the penalty required by the law of justice for the transgression of the law that resulted in the fall of Adam and Eve. The scriptures refer to the Savior as "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" (Rev. 13:8), and they indicate that Jesus Christ had agreed to bring about the atonement before the earth was ever created" (1 Pet. 1:19-20; Eph. 1:4; Moses 5:57; D&C 121:32; Mosiah 18:13; Ether 3:14).(Daniel H. Ludlow, "Q&A: Questions and Answers," New Era, Sept. 1973, 14).



THE FALL OF ADAM AND EVE IS THE FALL OF ALL OF US

The prophet said: “Adam and Eve’s intelligence while they were in Eden was greater than that had by any human today. They were intellectually as adults, having great reasoning powers.” (Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, 1:94-95. See also *Times and Seasons* (1843), 672.

According to Jewish legend, "Adam came from the hands of the Creator fully and completely developed. He was not like a child, but like a man of twenty years of age." See Ginzberg (1967–1969), 1:59. See also Neusner (1985), 154; Oden (2001), 100; Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown (n.d.), 18..)

How long Adam and Eve stayed in this condition, we do not know. It could have been days, months, or decades. And it would have continued forever had not a decision to move on been made.



Lucifer (Satan), who had been cast out of heaven for rebellion, was sent down to earth. While Adam and Eve were in the Garden, Satan came among them and told them to eat of the forbidden fruit. He came to Adam first, and Adam refused the offer. He then came to Eve and persuaded her to eat of the fruit. Lucifer did not deceive Eve into eating the fruit, but she could see that doing so would have more benefits not just to them, but to all mankind. So she chose to eat the fruit. She then brought the fruit to Adam who at first refused to eat. Eve reminded Adam that since she had partaken of the fruit, she would be cast out of the Garden which would leave Adam all alone in the Garden. Eve also reminded Adam that they were commanded to stay together in order to have children. Then Adam realized he also should eat of the fruit so that they could stay together, and so he also ate the fruit.

When Eve came To Adam with the fruit, she used a word to describe the fruit that they didn't know before. She called the fruit "delicious." Now she began to understand what having a mortal body, a body of flesh and blood, is like. She could now tell the difference between good and evil, between pleasure and pain, between health and sickness, between sweet and bitter, between virtue and vice, between delicious and not very tasty.



Adam and Eve did not sin in eating of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. They transgressed a law. In other words, they went beyond the boundary placed regarding the eating of that fruit. They were innocent in the Garden and therefore did not know good and evil, and therefore could not sin. They could not be held accountable for doing something if they didn't know it was a sin. Because they had been given dominion over all the earth, when they became mortal everything on the earth, including the earth itself, also became mortal, and became subject to death and decay. We honor Eve for making this choice to make it possible for all of us to come to earth.

Suddenly, now that the world went from a terrestrial world to a telestial world and all things became mortal, blood came into all the animals. And with this change all animals were also at odds with each other. Some animals became meat eaters, and others were hunted to be eaten. Fear, hatred, and distrust would now be part of our mortal experience.

When Adam and Eve were expelled, or kicked out of the Garden of Eden, they were not left alone. They still got instructions from God. Angels appeared to Adam to teach and remind them of God's Plan and their purpose for being on earth. Adam and Eve tried their best to keep the commandments and laws that God gave them, and they taught them to their children, too. With mortality also came a forgetting of their life in the pre-mortal world of spirits. This would also be the condition of all who come to earth. We don't remember our lives before this earth life. But that is part of the test.

It has been said that our lives are like a three-act play. The first act is our lives before we came to earth. The second act is this life, but we don't remember act one, and we're trying to figure out who we are and how we fit into the play. The third act is our life after this one. And much of the life after our death depends on how well we live our lives here in Act Two.

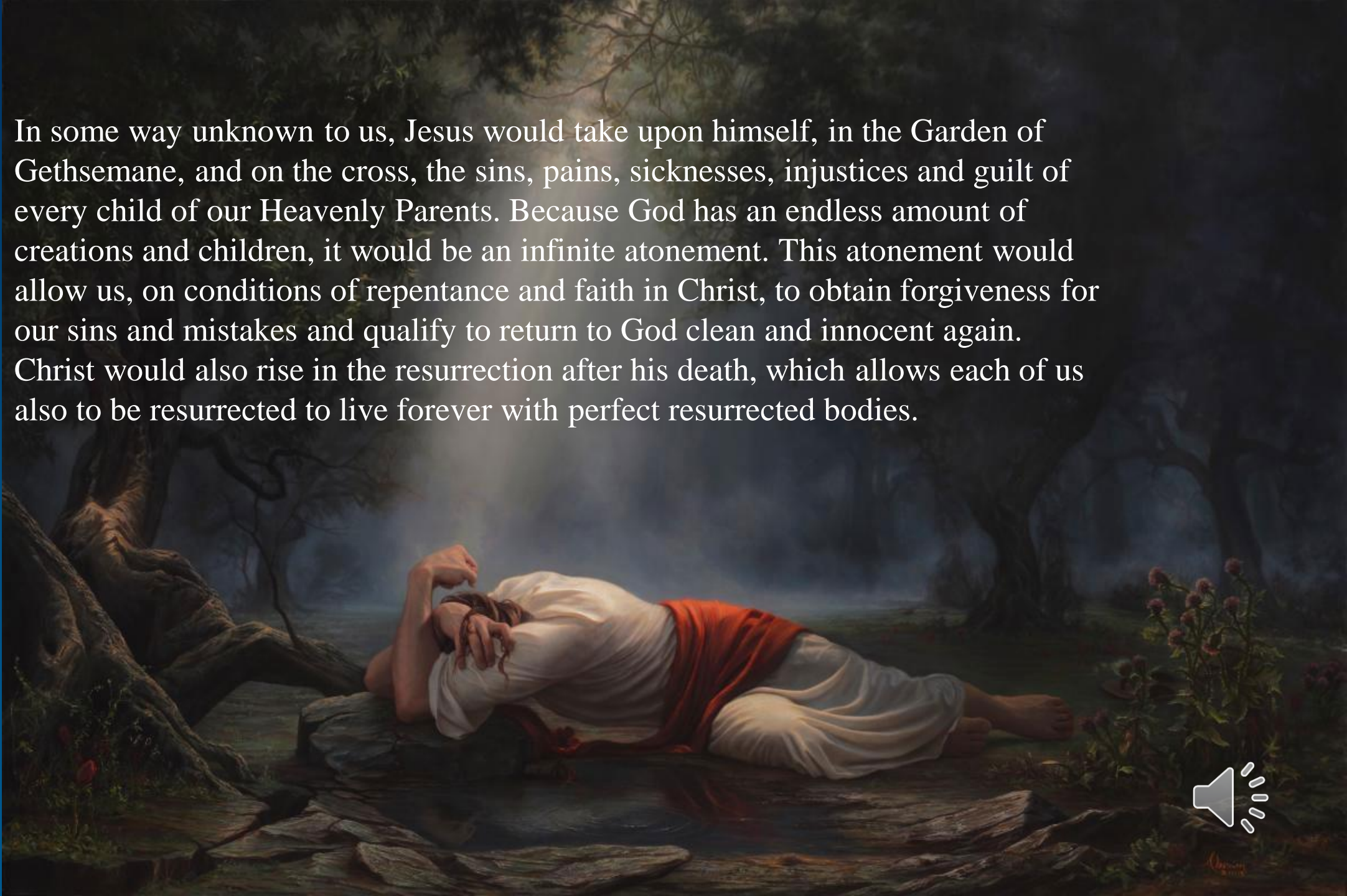


Another interesting fact about the fall of Adam and Eve, is that, as mentioned before, the earth also became mortal. Then the earth was moved from its location near Kolob or the governing planet, to the place it is now in the universe with our solar system.

The story of the Fall of Adam and Eve, really is more a story about us and our falls. The symbolism of the Fall is to show our need for obedience to God's laws, the consequence of our sins, and the desperate need for a Savior to redeem us from our fallen condition. We did not agree to come to earth just to die and go back to being spirits or have that be the end of our existence. We agreed to come here as long as someone else could pay the price for our guilt and sins, if we would do our best to obey God's laws and repent often when we fall short or make mistakes.



In some way unknown to us, Jesus would take upon himself, in the Garden of Gethsemane, and on the cross, the sins, pains, sicknesses, injustices and guilt of every child of our Heavenly Parents. Because God has an endless amount of creations and children, it would be an infinite atonement. This atonement would allow us, on conditions of repentance and faith in Christ, to obtain forgiveness for our sins and mistakes and qualify to return to God clean and innocent again. Christ would also rise in the resurrection after his death, which allows each of us also to be resurrected to live forever with perfect resurrected bodies.



THE FALL WAS ESSENTIAL TO THE PLAN

The Fall shows our absolute need for a Savior. What we know of the Plan, is that we didn't want to come to earth unless we were guaranteed a round trip, to be able to come back to God and live with Him as part of His family with our families forever. But according to law, if we committed one sin, we could never return to God because no unclean thing can dwell with God. But mortality was designed in such way that we would all make mistakes. So, since we would all sin, we desperately needed someone to rescue us from the consequences of sin to make us clean and innocent again.

Someone had to live a perfect life Himself, which would qualify Him to return to God on His own merits, but He would also need to overcome death so the rest of us could overcome death, too. For that to happen, this person had to be the child of an immortal Father and a mortal mother. Jesus Christ was born of Mary, a mortal mother, and was the literal child of God the Eternal Father. This is what is called the Only Begotten Son of God in the flesh. Jesus Christ was the only person born on earth who had an immortal father, which meant he could have lived forever, and a mortal mother, which made him subject to the conditions of mortality including disease, pain, and death.

Remember the chart shown earlier about the relationship between the Creation, the Fall, and the Atonement.



PRINCIPLES AND ORDINANCES NECESSARY FOR SALVATION

After the fall of Adam and Eve, they began having children. We don't know for sure how many children they had. But they taught them about the Plan and their part in it and how to live in such a way as to qualify to return back to God. The basic principles of the Plan include faith in Jesus Christ, repentance, baptism by immersion (meaning completely under water) for the remission (or wiping away) of sins, the gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands, and enduring (continuing on) to the end of our lives. The family, at this time, was the main organization that existed among Adam and his children. Adam was given priesthood authority by God while he lived in the Garden of Eden. With this priesthood authority he had authority over his family in the patriarchal order. He baptized his children and gave them the gift of the Holy Ghost, and he ordained his sons to the Holy Priesthood after the Order of the Son of God. For those of his children who were worthy, he performed marriage ceremonies which would last for eternity.



TEMPTATIONS

Some of Adam's children did not believe in the Plan and rebelled against it. At this time we have record of the first time that a person was killed by his brother. Cain killed his brother Abel. Before this happened, however, Cain was told by the Spirit of God, not to kill his brother. One of the lessons we learn from this is that any time we are tempted to commit a sin or to do a wrong act, God's spirit or what is called the Light of Christ, will also prompt us to not do the wrong act or choose to sin. The temptation to do wrong is as strong as the urge to do right. The pull to either side has to be equal or it's not a fair test.

If the temptation to do evil was too strong we could say that we couldn't help it. Likewise, if the pull to do good is too strong, there would be no real test. By having the pull equal it then becomes our choice whether we will choose good over bad, right over wrong. We are totally responsible for our own choices. We can't say that the enticements were too strong one way or the other. We will be held accountable for all of our choices, because we have been given moral agency to choose. Sometimes in life, things happen to us that are truly out of our control. We will not be held accountable for those. For example, little children are born innocent and are not responsible for their actions until they reach the age of accountability. That age is 8 years old, unless they have mental disorders which would make that person innocent beyond the age of 8. Parents are responsible to teach their children until their children are old enough to be personally accountable for their actions. And if the parents don't teach their children, they will be accountable for the sins and wrongs of their children for not teaching them properly.



OBEDIENCE

Since this life is a test of obedience, what is involved with that? Obey what? First, God gives us commandments to obey. He also gives us ordinances to be performed. What is the purpose of the ordinances? To make covenants with God. A covenant is a promise we make with God. We promise that we will keep His commandments and He promises not only that we can return to Him, but also that we can inherit all that He has. Why would you not want to keep a few commandments for the promise of everything?



SAVING ORDINANCES

What ordinances are necessary? The first ordinance is baptism. It is an outward symbol of an inner commitment. We promise God that we will obey His commandments, take upon ourselves His name, or be His disciples, and to always remember Him. We also promise to bear one another's burdens and to truly love one another, our brothers and sisters.

Another ordinance is to receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. This is part of the baptismal covenant. This gift is God's down payment for the promise of even better things to come if we remain faithful. This wonderful gift prompts us to keep the commandments. It warns of danger, spiritual as well as physical. He guides us in the decisions we make every day. He gives peace and comfort in times of difficulty and trials. The Holy Ghost is a member of the Godhead, and cleanses us from sin when we repent and receive forgiveness from God.

For men, receiving the priesthood is another necessary ordinance. This gives us greater opportunities to be of service to others. With this Melchizedek priesthood we can give blessings, heal the sick, give comfort to those in need, and generally to serve others with love and understanding.



We also make other covenants with God in His holy house, the temple, which is dedicated for sacred ordinances. This is called the endowment. Here we promise to live the law of the gospel, to live the law of sacrifice, to avoid all impure and unholy practices, to be morally clean in thought and action, and to consecrate our time and talents to the building of the kingdom of God.

A man and woman can go to the temple and be married together for all eternity. We call that being “sealed.” This is the most important ordinance performed in sacred temples by those who have the priesthood authority. This marriage so sealed will last throughout all the eternities and will qualify the man and woman to become gods just like our heavenly parents are now. And the children born to a couple that have been sealed will be their children forever, too.

These ordinances are exalting promises whereby God promises us all that He has if we will remain true and faithful to our covenants, repent when we make mistakes, and allow the atonement of Jesus Christ to work in our lives.

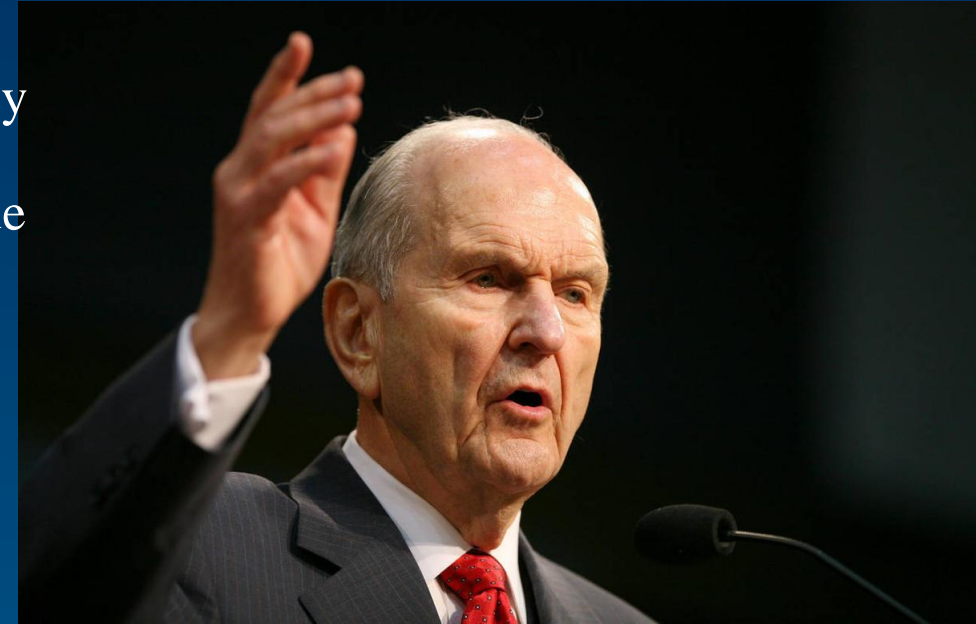
All these principles and ordinances were taught by Adam and Eve to their children. And they were taught to their children, and so on down through time.



GOD CALLED PROPHETS TO TEACH THE PEOPLE THE GOSPEL AND THE PLAN

At various times in the history of the earth, people have been faithful in keeping the commandments of God. At other times they forgot their covenants and turned away from God into a state of apostasy and some of those apostacies resulted in a loss of the true gospel and the priesthood authority to act in the name of God. Sometimes God called men as prophets to go and reclaim the people and remind them of the gospel plan and their part in it. Some of these prophets were accepted, but many were rejected and killed. People suffered the consequences for their killing and rejecting the prophets. The Bible is full of their stories.

All of these prophets testified of the coming of a Messiah, who would be able to save us from death and hell and eternal punishment if we trusted and believed in Him. The person the prophets testified of was Jesus Christ. God told the prophet Amos that God will not do anything unless He first tells it to His prophet.



JESUS CHRIST

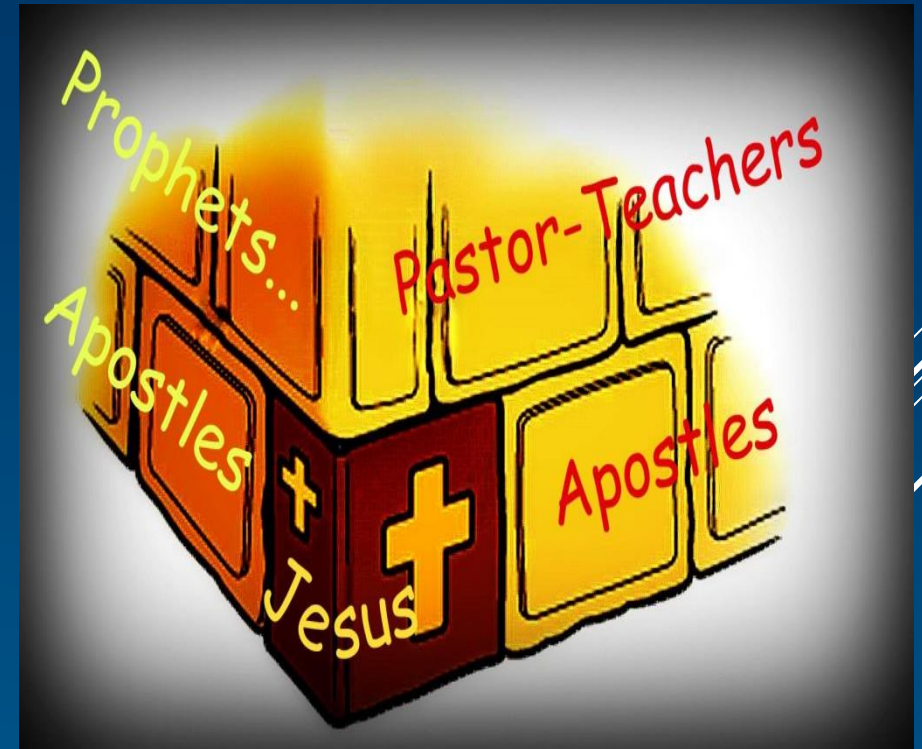
Around 4000 years after the fall of Adam and Eve, Jesus Christ was born into the world. He was born in Bethlehem and spent most of His life up near the Sea of Galilee in Israel. He lived His life as a mortal and never committed a sin. He was baptized by immersion by His relative John the Baptist in the River Jordan near the Dead Sea. As mentioned earlier, Jesus performed the Atonement whereby He took upon Himself the sins and guilt of all of us so that we can be spared the punishment of eternally being out of the presence of God. Our part of the Plan is to repent and promise to do better and to keep trying.



THE CHURCH ESTABLISHED BY JESUS CHRIST

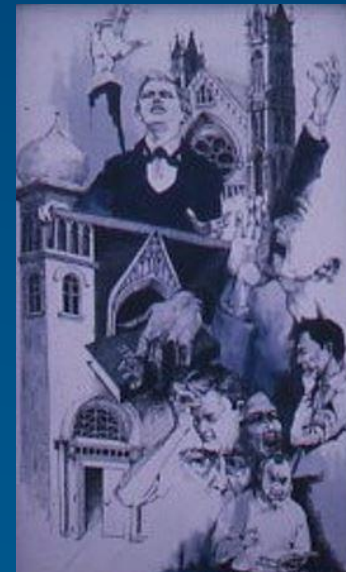
While Jesus was on earth as a mortal, He set up a church among the people. The purpose of the Church was to teach the gospel Plan and to provide priesthood authority for the ordinances of the gospel. The church provides an organized way for the ordinances to be performed and recorded so that a person can prove the ordinances have been performed by one who has God's authority to do so. When these ordinances are done in the right way by the proper authority, they are also recorded in heaven.

Jesus organized His Church which included such positions as prophets, apostles, teachers, priests and patriarchs. These positions in the church have certain responsibilities which provide service and blessings for the members of the Church. There are many positions in the Church so that we may all have some responsibilities to help build up the church and kingdom on earth. While Jesus was alive, the church grew quickly. He had men who were called as the Twelve Apostles. These were the leaders in the Church. He also called Seventy and sent them forth to preach the gospel throughout the world.



THE GREAT APOSTACY

Not long after Jesus was killed, the prophets and apostles were also killed. And by around 300 AD the Church was in a complete state of apostasy and the priesthood authority was absent from the earth for a time. Many men tried to bring reformation or changes to what was left of the Church, but they all lacked the proper priesthood authority. There was only one way to obtain that authority, and that was to receive it from those who held it. But if the priesthood authority was gone, how could that happen? It would have to be sent directly from God through men who once held that authority while they lived on earth. And so a restoration of priesthood authority began to come forth on the earth starting in the spring of 1820.



THE RESTORATION OF THE AUTHORITY OF GOD AND HIS CHURCH

A 14 year-old boy named Joseph Smith, was living in upstate New York and he wondered which of all the churches was the true church of Jesus Christ. His family was divided in their joining different churches, and he didn't like the division he saw in his own family. He had read in the Bible a passage which states: "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. (James 1:5) Joseph thought that if anyone lacked wisdom on how to find the true church, he did.

So on March 26th, 1820, a beautiful spring Sunday morning (Palm Sunday), he went to a small grove of trees to pray. Joseph had never prayed out loud before. No sooner had he begun to pray that an evil power came upon him. He was unable to speak and was being shown images that distracted him from his purpose. But he was determined to pray harder and he cried out to God for deliverance from this power that came upon him.



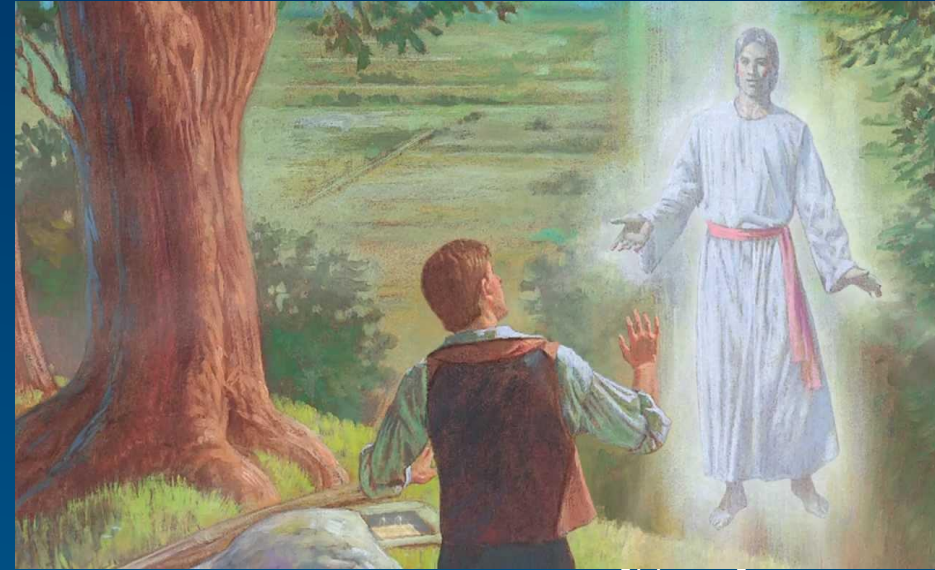
As soon as Joseph cried out to God, he beheld a pillar of what looked like light or fire coming down upon him. At first he thought that when the light touched the trees that they would burst into flames. But when this did not happen he became more confident. In the light he saw a glorious person who called Joseph by name and introduced himself to the boy as God the Eternal Father. Moments later another personage appeared in the light and God introduced Him to Joseph saying: “Joseph, this is my Beloved Son, hear Him.” (Joseph Smith – History 1:17)

When Joseph was able to speak again, he asked the question which he had which was, of all the churches on earth, which one is the true church? He was told that Jesus’ true church was not on the earth and that he was to join none of them. He was told that through him the church and priesthood would be restored again. Joseph was told many other things in this vision about the coming forth of the gospel on the earth again.



THE BOOK OF MORMON

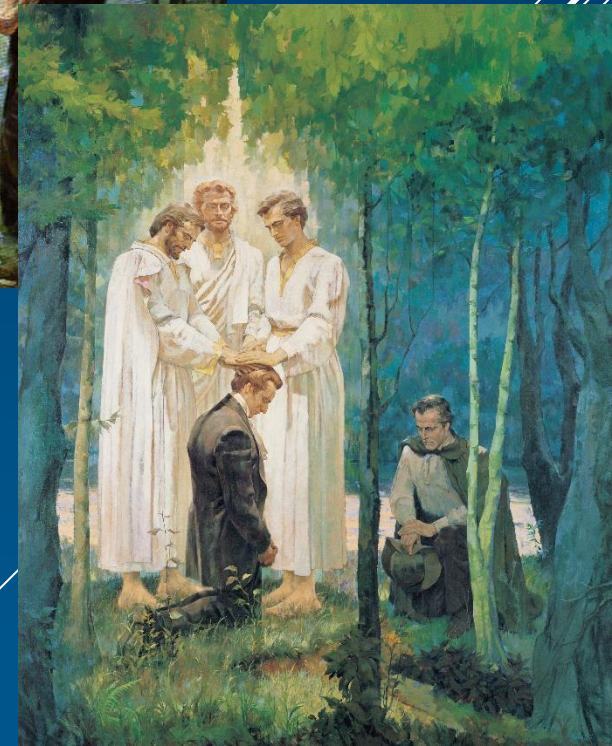
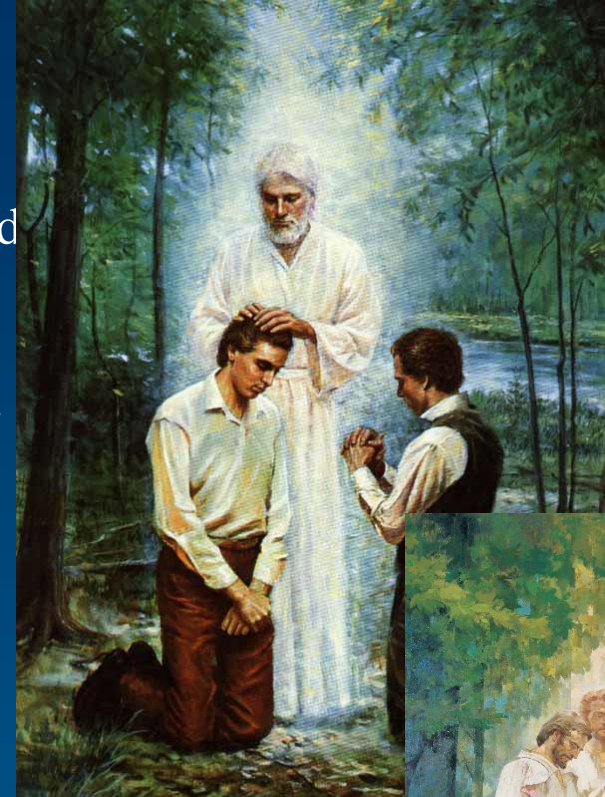
During his lifetime, Joseph had many visits from angels. Moroni, a prophet who lived on the American continent told Joseph of plates of metal that were hidden in a hill and that Joseph would be the means by which this record would be translated from its reformed Egyptian language into English. This book would become The Book of Mormon, Another Testament of Jesus Christ. It is the history of two sets of people who lived on the American continent. One group who came over about the time of the confusion of languages at the Tower of Babel. And the other group was a family that left Jerusalem around 600 B.C. and lived until about 400 A.D. The book includes the visit of Jesus Christ to these people shortly after his resurrection in the Old World. He ministered among these people and established His church among them, the same as He did in Israel.



RESTORATION OF PRIESTHOOD AUTHORITY

During the translation of the book, John the Baptist appeared to Joseph and Oliver Cowdery and gave them the Aaronic Priesthood which restored the authority to baptize by immersion. Peter, James, and John, three of the ancient Apostles who had served during the ministry of Jesus appeared and gave Joseph and Oliver the Melchizedek Priesthood, which was the authority of the Apostleship and power to organize the church again upon the earth.

Eventually others would also come to give Joseph and Oliver priesthood power; Moses restored the keys of the gathering of Israel, Elias restored the authority of the Abrahamic covenant and Elijah restored the keys of the sealing power, or the power to bind families together eternally.




With the restoration of priesthood authority, the church was again organized on the earth, with the same organization that Jesus established during His mortal ministry. Apostles and prophets, seventies and bishops, quorum presidents, and so on. Also, women would be given authority to minister in the Church as presidents of the women's organizations and to minister in the temples. The name of the Church is the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. There are congregations throughout most of the world today, and it continues to grow and prosper.



OPPOSITION IN ALL THINGS

As the world continues to go on in wickedness, there are many good and wonderful people on the earth who are trying their best to live good lives and to love their fellow man. Catholics, Methodists, Muslims, and Jews, who are trying to be good people and are going about their lives quietly helping and blessing all they meet. There are also those who are doing whatever they want, not believing in God or that their actions will have any lasting consequences upon them at all. Does any of this matter? Most definitely!



“If a thing is free to be good it is also free to be bad. And free will is what has made evil possible. Why, then, did God give them free will? Because free will, though it makes evil possible, is also the only thing that makes possible any love or goodness or joy worth having.”

– C.S. Lewis,

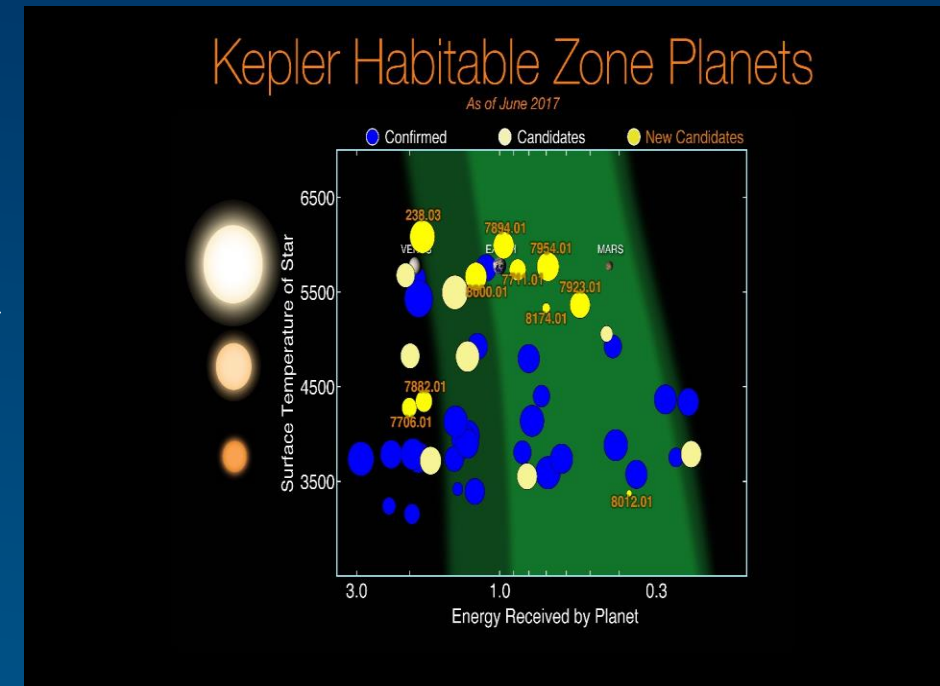
The Shocking Alternative,
“Mere Christianity”

LDS Liberty

As mentioned before, this test of mortality is a test of obedience. Obedience to God's laws. We have forgotten our pre-mortal existence, but there are prophets upon the earth who have been taught by God and angels to teach the rest of us the way to live to be happy both here and hereafter. We have NOT been left helpless. Every person born on earth is given the Light of Christ so that he and she can know the difference between good and evil. However, with repeated choices to ignore the promptings to make good choices, that light will diminish until it is barely a spark. Sometimes we are given experiences that try to awaken that spark. The death of a loved one can do that. A job loss or other tragedy can cause us to think deeply about the purpose of this life and why we are here and what lessons we are to learn from this mortal experience we are having together.

THIS EARTH IS NOT THE ONLY PLANET WITH PEOPLE

If this gospel and the plan are true, do you suppose it is used on other planets besides our earth? Of course. When Moses had a vision of the history of the earth, he was shown everyone and every particle of the earth, but was told that he would only have a knowledge of this earth and none of the other ones. However, he was also shown that those on other planets have witnessed or were told about certain major events that occurred on this earth. For example, they saw how all the people of earth were destroyed when the waters covered the entire earth at the flood of Noah. Those who lived on other planets were so sad that the vision says they wept because of the wickedness of those people who died during the great flood. Why were they shown events of this earth? Why would it be important for them to know what happened here? Is our earth so special? Is there something that happens here and nowhere else? Yes to all these questions.



OUR EARTH IS UNIQUE AMONG GOD'S OTHER EARTHS

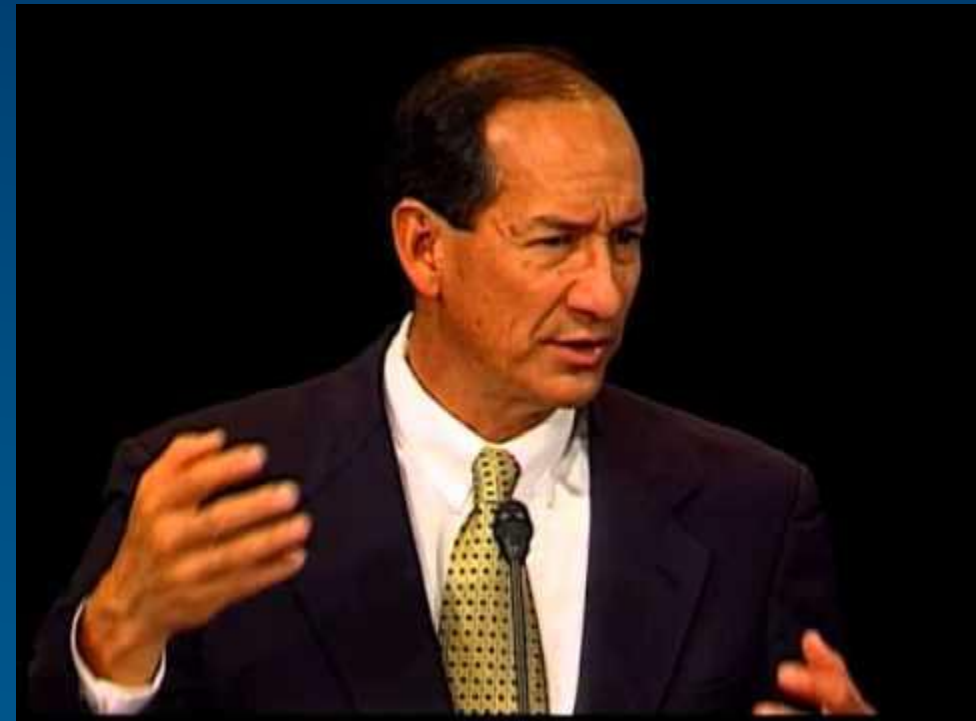
This earth would be the only one of God's creations where Jesus would come and work out the Atonement, because the Atonement is not just for all of us on our planet, but for all of God's other children on all of His inhabited planets. It is an infinite Atonement. Why did Jesus come to this earth? We are told that among all of the children of God, this planet has the most wicked people. It would be necessary for Jesus to come to the most wicked of all planets so that He could receive the greatest test by overcoming evil on the most wicked of all of God's creations. But if this is the most wicked of all of God's creations, the most righteous of His children must also be here. There must be an opposition in all things, so as wicked as people may be here on earth, there would be people who would be equally as righteous. Jesus, it is said, descended below all things, and therefore came to the most wicked planet to be tested to the full. This was the only planet that had people wicked enough to kill Jesus. This was necessary so He could complete His Atonement and be resurrected, overcoming death and hell for us.



In the book of Moses, Chapter 7, verses 36-37 it reads:

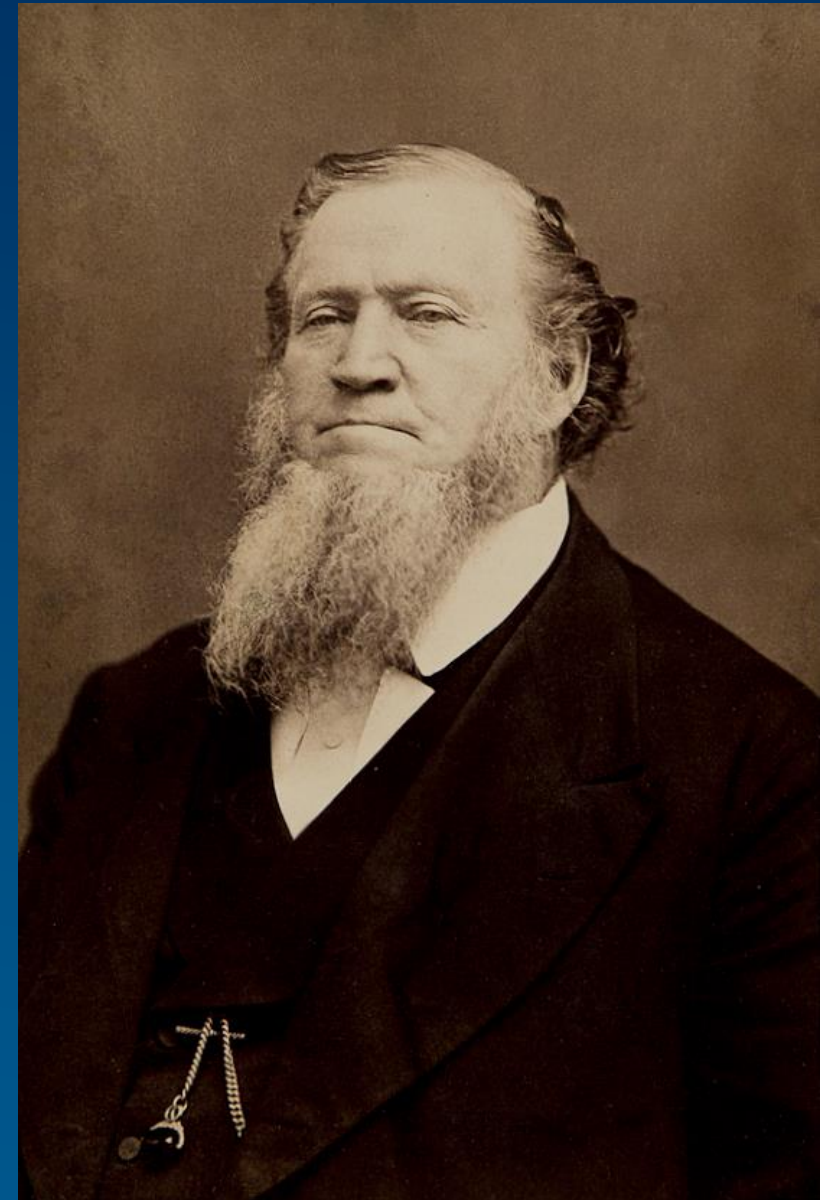
”Wherefore, I can stretch forth mine hands and hold all the creations which I have made; and mine eye can pierce them also, and among all the workmanship of mine hands there has not been so great wickedness as among thy brethren. But behold, their sins shall be upon the heads of their fathers; Satan shall be their father, and misery shall be their doom; and the whole heavens shall weep over them, even all the workmanship of mine hands; wherefore should not the heavens weep, seeing these shall suffer?”

In a talk given at BYU Education Week in 2004, Jack S. Marshall said the following: “Take a look at verse 37. What can you deduct about this earth compared to other worlds from verse 37? If all my creations will weep over this event, that tells you and me that other worlds have knowledge of specific events that have happened on this earth. The most obvious event that all worlds have a knowledge of that has taken place on this earth and this earth alone is what? The Atonement. Jesus Christ came to this earth and this earth alone to work out the Atonement, for who? All the worlds of the millions of the earths which were created. That’s kind of unique.”



OUR EARTH IS UNIQUE AMONG GOD'S OTHER EARTHS

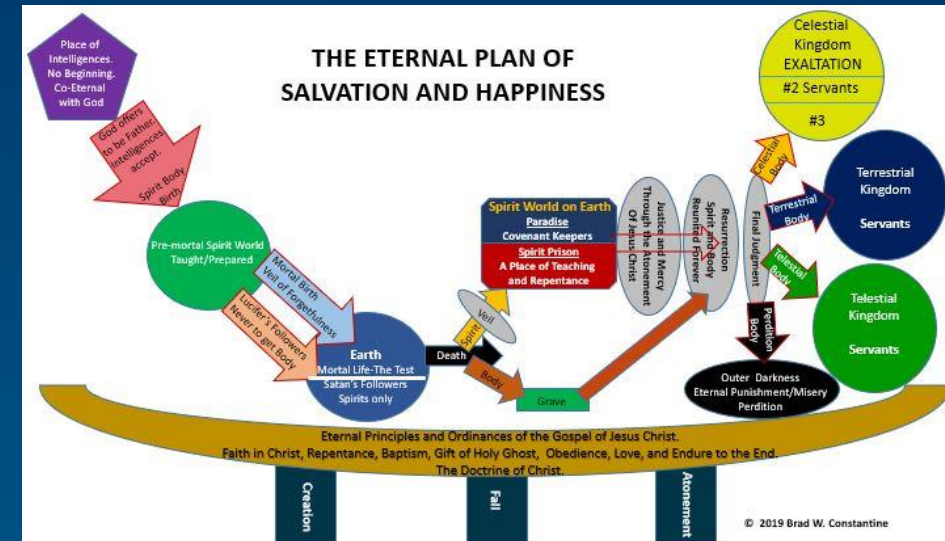
Brigham Young said: “We are inhabitants of a world of sin and sorrow; pain and anguish, every ill that can be heaped upon intelligent beings in a probation we are heirs to. I suppose that God never organized an earth and peopled it that was ever reduced to a lower state of darkness, sin and ignorance than this. I suppose this is one of the lowest kingdoms that ever the Lord Almighty created, and on that account is capable of becoming exalted to be one of the highest kingdoms that has ever had an exaltation in all the eternities. In proportion as it has been reduced so it will be exalted, with that portion of its inhabitants who in their humiliation have cleaved to righteousness and acknowledged God in all things. In proportion to our fall through sin, so shall we be exalted in the presence of our Father and God, through Jesus Christ and by living the righteousness of his Gospel.” (Remarks by President Brigham Young, made in the Tabernacle, Great Salt Lake City, May 24, 1863. Reported by G. D. Watt.)



THE PLAN FOR US IS THE SAME EVERYWHERE ELSE

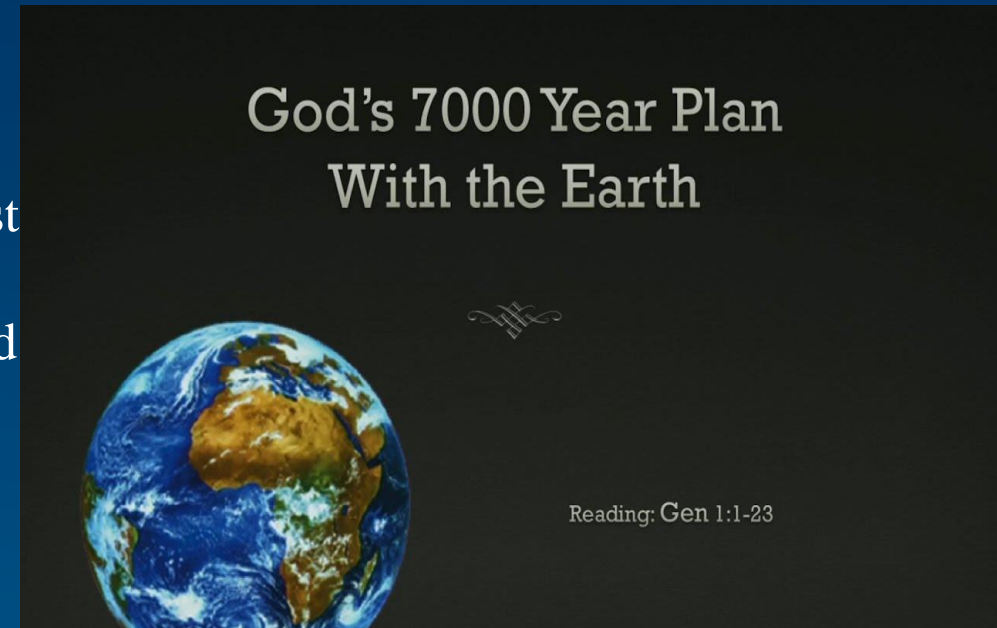
Are the other planets going through similar mortal experiences that we are having? Yes. Mortality is the test and the Plan is the same for all of the other planets where people live. Do people on other planets look like us? Yes. They too are children of God, in His image like us. Do the other planets have prophets, too? Yes. And they teach their people the Plan and about the Atonement of Jesus Christ, just like on our earth. There is only one Plan of Salvation, and it's the same on every other planet that God created. It's also the same Plan used by every other God throughout the Universe. Why? Because it is the only plan that works. It is the only way that children of God can return back to His presence and be redeemed from the fall, from sin, and from death. It has always been the Plan and it will always be the Plan.

But some may ask, but what if God finds out there is a better way to do the Plan? Since God knows all things, he is not continuing to learn, he knows that this is the only Plan.



THE EARTH WILL LAST FOR 7000 YEARS

When this earth was created, the Plan was that it's mortal existence would last about 7000 years. The first 6000 years have already happened where men tried to do their best and their worst to rule over the earth. Then during the last thousand years, Jesus, Himself, would be given rule over the earth as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. His reign is not too far in the future. We are waiting for His arrival in what is called the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.



HOW TO FIND TRUTH

Right now on earth, there are many who say that good is evil and evil is good. For many it is hard to find the truth. But God has established His Church upon the earth, with prophets and apostles to give guidance and provide the truth to the rest of the world. But there are not very many who have found the truth because they don't know where to find it. And so the Church sends out missionaries throughout the world, in countries where it is allowed.

Today there are over 16 million members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and we have congregations throughout the world. There are almost 200 operating Temples in the world providing the saving ordinances for the living and for those who did not have the opportunity of hearing the message of the gospel plan while they lived on earth. Here, they accept ordinances that are performed on their behalf. If they choose not to accept these ordinances, that is their choice. But we perform them now for them anyway, because we love them.

The Savior will return soon, and we are doing what we can to prepare for that event. There are some prophesied events leading up to His coming that have not been fulfilled yet, but will be before He comes. Also, His prophet will be told of His imminent arrival prior to its happening. Hopefully he will be permitted to tell the rest of us.



THE SECOND COMING OF JESUS CHRIST

At the Second Coming, Jesus will come in the clouds of heaven with holy angels. Those who have chosen to live a wicked life and have not repented will be burned with the fire that comes with Jesus. All things of a celestial nature will be destroyed from off the earth so that the earth can be returned back to its paradisiacal condition before the fall. The earth will become again like it was during the Garden of Eden. It will be paradise to those who live on the earth. The earth will be a terrestrial earth again, and the people will have terrestrial bodies. This is what is called the Millennium. Jesus will reign during this time for a thousand years, and there will be peace and harmony for everyone. There will be no death or disease, and all animals will be gentle and kind like during the Garden of Eden.

At the end of the book in the Appendix is some interesting information about the Second Coming to consider.

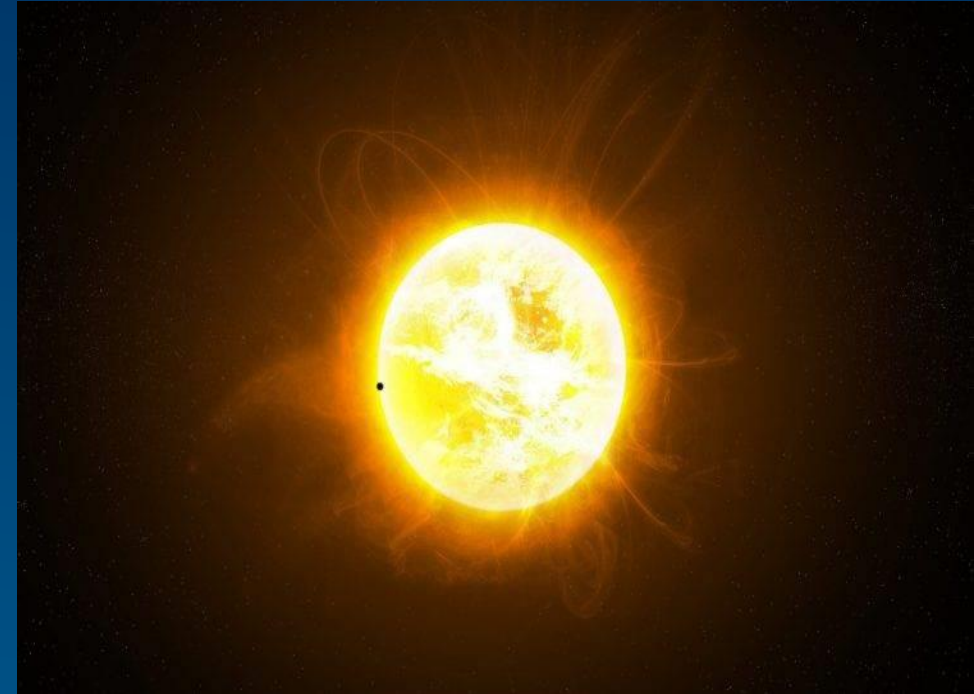


WRAPPING UP SCENES OF THIS EARTH

Eventually, because there is a finite number of people to come to this earth, there will be the last person born on earth. We don't know how many are destined to come to this earth, but it is a fixed, certain number.

Following the period of peace, at the end of the Millennium, Satan will gather up all of his followers and try one last time to defeat Jesus Christ and His kingdom. Satan will demand that the kingdom be given to him. Adam will step forward and by the power of the priesthood he holds, he will command Satan and his followers to depart one final time and they will be sent to "outer darkness." This will be a place where there is no kingdom, no light at all. This is where they will live forever, unable to do anyone any further harm.

Then this earth that we live on will physically die. Its spirit will leave the physical earth. Then it will be joined back again as a resurrected earth, never to die again. This earth will then become the place of the Celestial Kingdom, where those who are worthy will live for eternity and those in an eternal marriage relationship will be gods and goddesses and will have children and create worlds just like our Heavenly Parents are now doing. All worthy of that blessing will create children and worlds forever.



OUR GOAL

Our goal, then, is to be worthy of this great blessing of becoming like our Heavenly Parents and repeat the work that They have shown us we can do. You can be gods, too. In fact, that is the purpose for your being here on earth. It's not to see what you can collect of this world's goods. It is to see what good you can do with what you were given by a generous God here on earth. And if you have not just done good but become good here, you will continue doing good into eternity and you will bless an infinite amount of intelligences who are just waiting for you to come to them and offer them the proposal of progressing from their current condition to become just like you.



OUR ETERNAL POSSIBILITIES

There are still an infinite number of intelligences or little “i”s that are just waiting for you to rescue them so that they can progress. Don’t disappoint them!

In the grand scheme of things, this earth life is such a short time compared to our eternal existence. Can you just be good for the two hours of God’s time that you are here so that you can inherit all that They have and do what They are now doing as Gods? It’s totally up to you. Shake off the mortal blinders that you are wearing and see the potential that is within you. You were born of a King and Queen! You were born to be Kings and Queens yourselves! The choice is yours.



WHAT HAPPENS TO US AFTER DEATH?

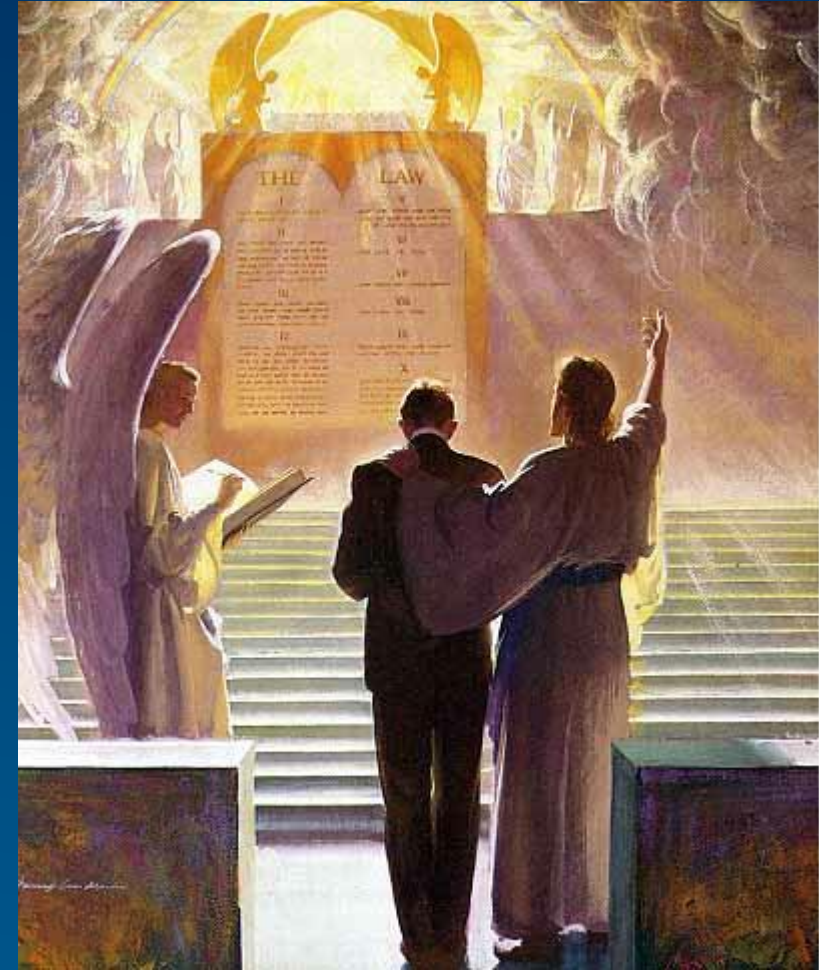
We've talked about our pre-earth life and how we got here, but what happens after death, after our mortal experiences?

Immediately upon our death, we are taken into the world of spirits. The spirit world is on this earth. Remember that when this earth was first created, it was created as a spirit, and that spirit still exists. Upon our arrival into the spirit world, there is a preliminary or partial judgment. Those who made sacred covenants in the waters of baptism and kept those covenants will enter into the paradise part of the spirit world. Those who were not baptized, or who did not keep their covenants enter into the spirit prison part of the spirit world. Prison does not mean a horrible place, but rather a place of learning, repentance, and preparation. There is a separation of the wicked and those who did not make covenants from those who did make covenants with God and kept them. Those in paradise enter into rest and peace, where they will be assigned to preach the gospel to those in spirit prison so that they too can accept the gospel plan, even though they are now dead. All who have not had a fair opportunity to accept or reject the gospel will be given that chance in the world of spirits. Those who had proper authority in mortality will be sent to those in the spirit world who need to hear the message of the gospel so that they may choose for themselves to accept the covenants and ordinances of the gospel in the spirit world. Those who accept the plan, will be given the opportunity to make the covenants they didn't have the chance to make while they were in mortality. But the ordinances of the gospel, which can only be done on earth, in temples dedicated for this very purpose, must wait until someone goes into a temple and performs the ordinances in their behalf. Then those for whom the ordinances are performed are permitted to leave the spirit prison part of the spirit world, and go to the paradise part of the spirit world, to join with those already there. Then they will be given authority to preach the gospel to others in spirit prison.



FINAL JUDGMENT

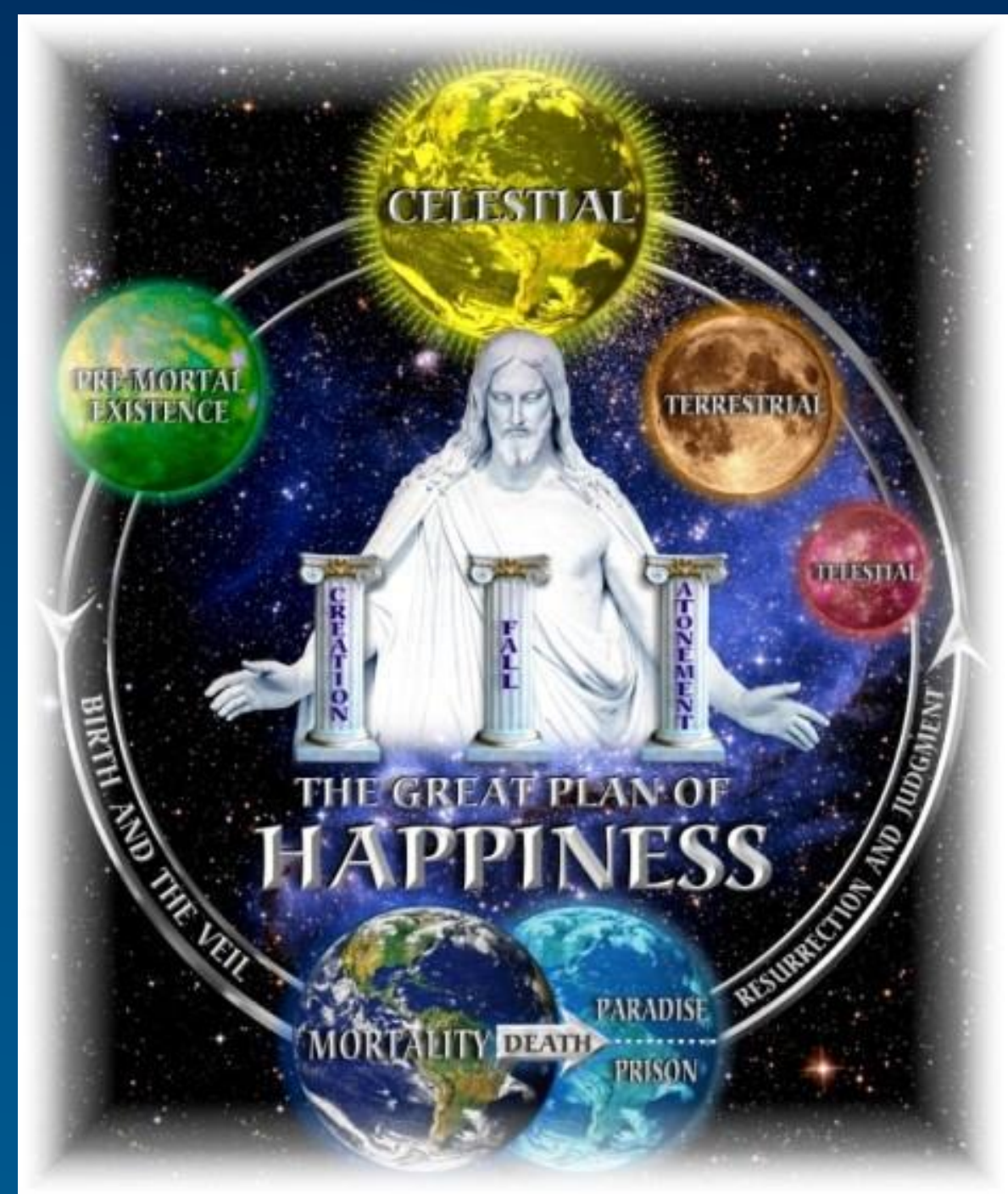
At the end of the Millennium, after everyone who has ever been born on earth, has had the opportunity to accept or reject the gospel plan, the final judgment will occur. Those who have repented of their sins, have taken full advantage of the Atonement of Jesus Christ, and have been sealed by the Holy Spirit of Promise, will receive their judgment. They will receive Celestial bodies and will go into the Celestial Kingdom. Those who entered into the eternal marriage covenant and kept their covenants, will be allowed to become gods and have their own worlds and children. Those who receive the Celestial Kingdom but who did not make eternal marriage covenants, will be servants to those who did.



The final judgment will be the time when everyone is assigned to the kingdom for which laws they chose to obey. Those who kept the laws of the Celestial Kingdom will receive Celestial bodies and go to the Celestial Kingdom. Those who kept the laws of the Terrestrial Kingdom will obtain Terrestrial bodies and go to the Terrestrial Kingdom. Those who lived the laws of the Telestial Kingdom will receive Telestial bodies and will go to the Telestial Kingdom. And then those who rebelled against God and would not repent and obeyed no laws of a kingdom will be sent into outer darkness with Satan and his followers. Each of the judgments is final, and there is no moving from a lower kingdom to a higher kingdom throughout eternity. Those in lower kingdoms will be servants to those in the higher kingdoms. Keep in mind that each of these judgments that determine which kingdom we go to will be perfectly acceptable to those who go to them because that is their choice by the sum of their choices and what they have become. Everyone will be happy in the final outcome, except those in outer darkness. Will they be disappointed because they didn't reach their full potential? Maybe, but what if someone who kept the law of the Telestial kingdom (the lowest kingdom) was told that he can go to the Celestial Kingdom. Would he feel comfortable there? No. He would be demanding something like: "Get me out of here!" We will be going to the place where we feel the most comfortable based on the type of persons we have become.

THIS EARTH WILL BE OUR CELESTIAL KINGDOM

This earth will become the Celestial Kingdom for those who qualify for a Celestial inheritance. The earth will be back in the presence of God, where it was originally created. These will then live in the presence of God and Jesus Christ forever.



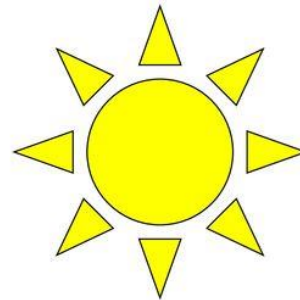
THE TERRESTRIAL AND TELESTIAL KINGDOMS

Those that inherit the blessings of the Terrestrial Kingdom will live on a Terrestrial planet. And those who are Telestial will live on a Telestial planet forever. Those in the higher kingdoms will be able to visit loved ones who are in lower kingdoms, but there is no upward visiting.

Every resurrected person will have a perfect body of flesh and bones. They will never die again. They will also be able to travel the speed of thought. If you want to be somewhere and sometime in the universe, all you have to do is think it and you are there.

D&C 76:70

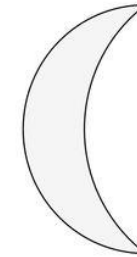
These are they whose bodies are celestial, whose glory is that of the sun, even the glory of God, the highest of all, whose glory the sun of the firmament is written of as being typical.



The celestial kingdom is the highest kingdom. It has a glory compared to the brightness of the sun.

D&C 76:71

And again, we saw the terrestrial world, and behold and lo, these are they who are of the terrestrial, whose glory differs from that of the church of the Firstborn who have received the fulness of the Father, even as that of the moon differs from the sun in the firmament.



The terrestrial kingdom is the middle kingdom. It has a glory compared to the brightness of the moon.

D&C 76:81

And again, we saw the glory of the telestial, which glory is that of the lesser, even as the glory of the stars differs from that of the glory of the moon in the firmament.



The telestial kingdom is the lowest kingdom. It has a glory compared to the brightness of the stars

ALL GODS' CHILDREN HAVE THE POTENTIAL OF BECOMING GODS

For those who obtain the Celestial Kingdom and become gods as eternal husbands and wives, they are the ones who will be able to create other worlds and children. They will be the ones who come to the group of intelligences that we talked about in the earlier part of this book and offer them the proposal of progress from their eternal condition as intelligences. These gods will be perfectly obedient to laws so that the intelligences can trust them to fulfill their promises, and these gods will love perfectly so that these intelligences know that these beings only have their best interest in mind. Their goal is to help other intelligences gain a physical body which will be immortal, and to live the kind of life that the gods live, and become as eternal parents, making it possible for other intelligences to progress and make the same offers to other intelligences. And the pattern continues for eternity. It is one continual round.



LAWS THAT GOVERN THE UNIVERSE

If there is to be a final judgment to determine which kingdom we go to, then there must be absolutes regarding good and evil. When we were born on to the earth, we were given the Light of Christ as a guide to help us know good from evil. If we chose to follow good, the light continues with us and grows brighter with every good choice. If we choose evil, then the light diminishes until it almost completely disappears. But when good and evil are presented to us, we may choose one over the other. It is at those moments when we are accountable for our actions.

For example, earlier we talked about Cain and Able. Cain was jealous of his brother and wanted to kill him. God spoke with Cain and told him that his desire to kill his brother was wrong and if he persisted and turned his desire into action it would result in the most severest of judgments. Throughout history, God has spoken to many – his prophets and others, teaching us what is right and wrong. We can know what is right and wrong through the scriptures, words of the prophets and through the Spirit. So there actually is right and wrong.

God gave two main overarching commandments to us. Love God, and love our fellow men. If we just live these two commandments, we will live the others, too.

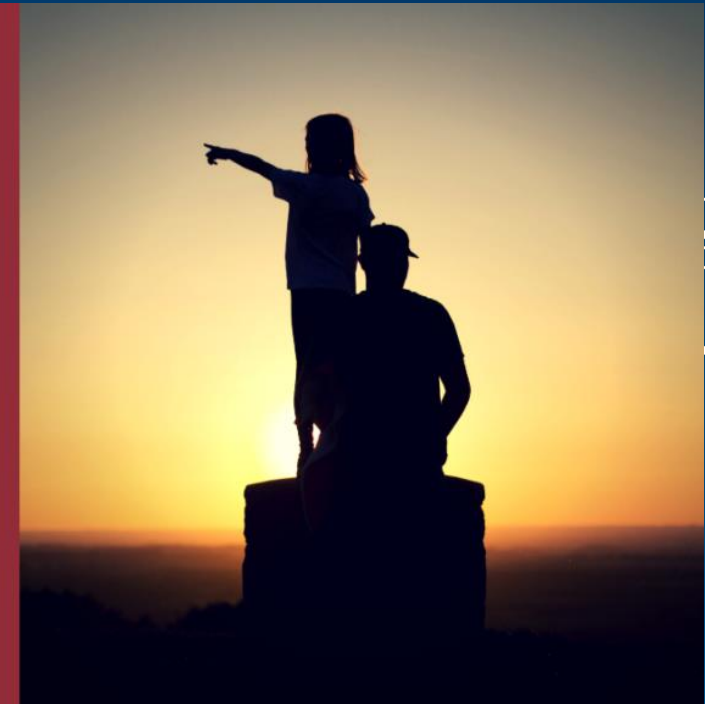
IT'S OUR CHOICE

Let's consider another case. What if I'm tempted to smoke a cigarette? Is it evil to smoke? No, it's not evil, it's just wrong. From everything we know about smoking, it's not good for health. But let's say that I'm tempted to smoke. The temptation to smoke and the prompting from the Spirit to not smoke are equal so that ultimately the choice to smoke is mine and not some overwhelming compelling force. Now, if I choose to smoke, I have begun to give up my freedom. If I stop smoking after that first one, repent, and never smoke again, I will be forgiven and by not smoking my health will not be harmed by smoking. On the other hand, if I continue to smoke until smoking becomes an addictive habit, then I have lost the freedom to choose because now the dependency that my body is feeling is overwhelming and I am compelled to smoke. I have almost totally lost the ability to choose to not smoke. Now it is going to be harder to quit smoking because of its addictive nature.

“
Choice, not chance,
determines your
destiny.

”
Aristotle

heartintelligencecoach.com



COMMANDMENTS

Other commandments are also absolutes. Thou shalt not kill, or do anything like unto it. Abortion comes under the category of murder. Those who knowingly perform an abortion will be held accountable for that. They may say in their hearts that it's not a living being, but they actually know that it is wrong to do it. They may have done it so long that the light of Christ is so dim that they don't remember, but when first done, they knew it was wrong. They may escape punishment here, they may even be applauded for doing it, but they will receive the ultimate punishment in the next life for the destruction of innocent lives and for depriving so many the opportunity of having a mortal experience like we are having.

The Ten Commandments

- 1. Thou shalt have no other gods before me.**
- 2. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven images.**
- 3. Thou shalt not take the Lord's name in vain.**
- 4. Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy.**
- 5. Honor thy Father and thy Mother**
- 6. Thou shalt not kill.**
- 7. Thou shalt not commit adultery.**
- 8. Thou shalt not steal.**
- 9. Thou shalt not bear false witness.**
- 10. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, wife or possessions.**

There has become a trend in the world to accept gay marriage. The claim is made that if two people love each other they should be able to be married. Gender has always been part of the Plan. There is only one way for children to be born, and that is from a man and woman. There is no way that two men will ever have a child together and there is no way that two women will have a child together. It is not possible. God wants us to be eternally happy, not just temporarily happy with our current circumstances. Just think for a minute if God allowed same-sex marriage to exist eternally.

If there are two men who were married eternally and they kept their covenants, how could they ever have their own children? Remember, God is bound by laws, too, and it is not possible, worlds without end, for two men, or two women to ever have their own children, on this earth or in the life to come. It is just not possible. Wouldn't that be cruel of God to promise that two same sex persons could be married for eternity, but not be able to actually be gods with their own children? So those who have strong attractions toward those of the same sex should control those urges, just like anyone else who is dealing with the weaknesses of the natural man in mortality.

All of us have challenges. Some more than others. But none is given a challenge so difficult that he can't overcome it, especially when that person relies on help from our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. He is the only one who can truly help. When He suffered for your sins and weaknesses, He also learned of the way to help you. Trust in Him. He knows the way.

THE STILL SMALL VOICE – THE CONSCIENCE

In quiet moments when there is no one else around, and we are in our own thoughts, we know what is really right and wrong. In our society we all want to be so kind and permissive of people's "rights" but is that right? For example, if I were to say that I believe in traffic laws for everyone else but they don't apply to me then I should be able to run stop signs, red lights, and park wherever I want. Most people would say that is wrong. But if I really felt strongly that it's right for me to do that, why is it wrong? You may never be personally affected by me running red lights so what difference does it make? Yet, you would be outraged if I persisted in this behavior. Why? Because it's wrong! Then you do believe in right and wrong!



NEVER LET THE
NOISE OF THE WORLD
OVERPOWER THE
STILL SMALL VOICE.

- L. TOM PERRY

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THE ATONEMENT OF JESUS CHRIST

Why must there be an Atonement?

Let's consider what would happen if there were no Savior and no Atonement. By law, anyone who commits a sin is shut out of the presence of God, because no unclean thing can dwell with God. How could we get back? Even if we repented, we are still unclean because we sinned. The law of justice must apply for the person that sinned and his punishment is eternal banishment from God's presence. It's not God's fault, that is just the law that He also must abide by. So, then let's assume that God gives me the punishment that I deserve for my sin. The punishment still does not make me clean. It's just suffering to meet the demands of justice. But I'm still not clean. God can't make me clean just because He wants to. He is bound by laws, too. And if He broke the laws, He would no longer be God, and we would no longer exist.

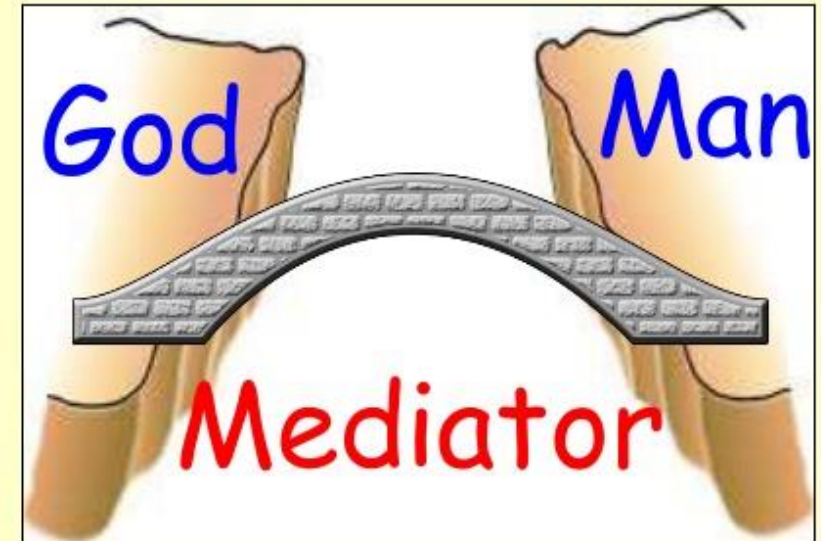
So God needed someone else to help Him make us clean to come back into His presence. This is the role of Jesus Christ as the Savior and Redeemer. Jesus, who lived a perfect life, qualified to return to God, because He was always clean in the presence of God. And because He was the literal offspring of God and a mortal mother, Mary, He was given power over life and death.

When Jesus Christ went into the Garden of Gethsemane on the Mount of Olives just outside of Jerusalem, He took upon himself the punishment for our sins, and then extended mercy to us on condition of our repentance. When Jesus did this, He didn't just experience the massive weight of everyone's sins, rather, He saw us each individually, our sins and weaknesses and trials, etc., one at a time. There was a long line of people that He encountered, one by one. This was how He also learned to help us in our difficulties. He is the Only One who truly knows how to help us, because He knows us perfectly and intimately. Why won't you let Him help you? He wants to. Oh, how He wants to! Be humble and let Him help you.



JESUS CHRIST IS OUR ADVOCATE

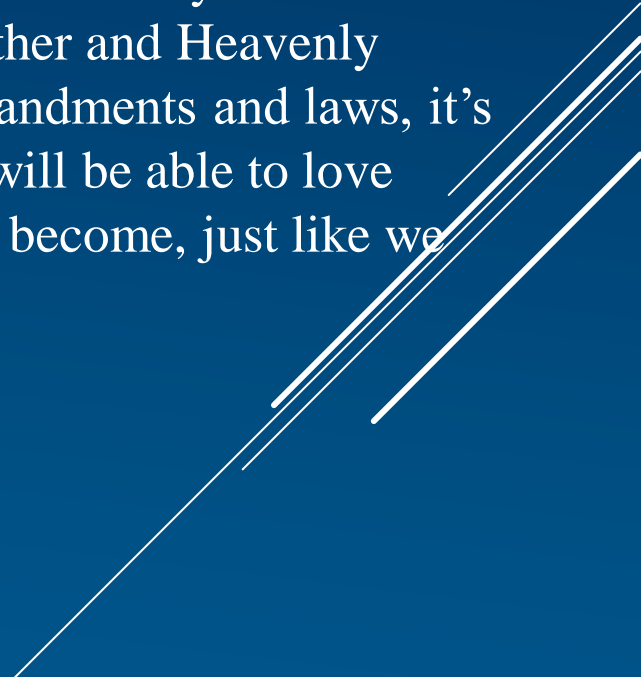
Then, when it's time for our final judgment, Jesus will stand next to us as we face God and He will say that we did the best we could, repented often, and that Jesus has extended mercy on us and that we should be permitted to enter God's presence. God is going to accept Jesus' recommendation every time. Jesus is on our side, always on our side. He wants to see us succeed, and He is doing everything He can to make that happen. It's up to us to take advantage of His help.



SO WHAT?

So what does all this mean? What is the purpose of this book?

The purpose of this book is to show that there really is a God, there is a Plan of Happiness, a Plan of Salvation, and that the Plan works perfectly if we are willing to fully participate in it. We can become just like our Heavenly Parents – Gods, able to create children and worlds for them to live upon forever. This all comes about because of love. God loves us with such a perfect and infinite love, which is why He has done all of this so that we can be eternally and perfectly happy, just like our Heavenly Father and Heavenly Mother. Our test is one of obedience and love. But it's not just about keeping commandments and laws, it's about becoming a loving, caring, giving, sacrificing, consecrating person, one who will be able to love others so completely as to provide them an opportunity to progress and develop and become, just like we are doing now. Jesus Christ and His Atonement make all this possible for us.



We need to somehow remove the mortal blinders that we are wearing and look to God and see who we really are and what we are becoming. Are we becoming more like God? Are we developing His attributes? Are we learning to love one another as He loves us? That is the test. As an Apostle said: “The first great *commandment* of all eternity is to love God with all of *our* heart, might, mind, and strength—that’s the first great commandment. But the first great *truth* of all eternity is that God loves *us* with all of *His* heart, might, mind, and strength. That love is the foundation stone of eternity, and it should be the foundation stone of our daily life. Indeed it is only with that reassurance burning in our soul that we can have the confidence to keep trying to improve, keep seeking forgiveness for our sins, and keep extending that grace to our neighbor.” (Jeffrey R. Holland, April 2016 General Conference.)

We must do and be the same if we expect ever to become like Them. There never were children who could not become like their parents. So it is with us. We can become like our Heavenly Parents, if we keep the Plan that has been set out for us to follow.

To sum up. There are an infinite number of gods, of intelligences, of people, of planets, and you can fully participate in creating worlds and children and providing those children an opportunity to become like the gods like you.

A vast field of galaxies in various colors and shapes against a dark background. The galaxies are scattered across the frame, with some appearing as bright, glowing clusters and others as more distant, faint points of light. The colors range from warm yellows and oranges to cool blues and purples, suggesting different stages of stellar evolution or different types of galaxies. The overall scene is a rich, multi-colored tapestry of cosmic structures.

THE END..... OR THE BEGINNING.
THE NEVER BEGINNING AND NEVER ENDING STORY!