

Old Testament Lesson 3

THE CREATION

Prepared by Duane S. Crowther, January 2002

1. There are three major scriptural accounts of the creation.

A. **Genesis 1:1 - 2:25.** Written by the prophet Moses, who saw in vision the creation of the earth and then recorded his vision (*Moses 1:40, 2:1*).

B. **Moses 2:1-3:25.** Written by the prophet Moses, who saw in vision the creation of the earth and then recorded his vision. The Book of Moses is a portion of Joseph Smith's Inspired Translation of the Bible. In it he restores much of the fulness of Moses' account which has been lost from Genesis. Moses chapter 1 is an important prelude to the creation account.

C. **Abraham 4:1-5:21.** Written by the prophet Abraham, who saw in vision the creation of the earth and then recorded his vision. Abraham chapters 1 to 3 is an important prelude to the creation account. Abraham's account adds many details and insights to the two accounts written by Moses, and is the account we will use in this lesson.

2. The creation of our earth was the organizing of matter, not the creating of our earth out of nothing.

A. *Joseph Smith:* "The word create came from the [Hebrew] word *baurau* which does not mean to create out of nothing; it means to organize; the same as a man would organize materials and build a ship. Hence, we infer that God had materials to organize the world out of chaos—chaotic matter." [*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, 1976, pp. 350-351.] (See *Abra. 3:24; 4:1*.)

3. An outline of the creation account from the Book of Abraham. (*Abraham 4:1-5:21*)

Note the Heading to Abraham 4: "The Gods plan the creation of the earth and all life thereon—their plan for the six days of creation are set forth."

Correlations from Genesis, Moses, and earlier chapters of Abraham are inserted in italics.

The "First Time" [Abra. 4:1-5] (Moses 2:1-5; Gen. 1:1-5)

A. "They, that is **the Gods**, organized and formed the heavens and the earth." [4:1]

1. The account in Moses 2-3 is typically represented as "I, God, . . ." But Moses 3:18, speaking of the creation of man, says, "I, the Lord God, said unto mine Only Begotten, that it not good that the man should be alone, wherefore, I will make an help meet for him."

2. The account in Genesis 1-2 is typically represented as "God . . .," but Gen. 1:26-27 says, "God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness."

B. The earth was empty, desolate, dark. [4:3]

C. The Gods said "Let there be light; and there was light. They divided light from darkness and called light Day and darkness Night. [4:5]

1. "I caused darkness to come up upon the face of the deep; and my Spirit moved upon the face of the water, for I am God. . . . This I did by the word of my power" [who is Christ: see Jn. 1:1; D&C 93:8-11].

The "Second Time" [Abra. 4:6-8] (Moses 2:6-8; Gen. 1:6-8)

A. "The Gods ordered the expanse, so that it divided the waters" above and below it. [4:6-7]

B. "The Gods called the expanse, Heaven. [4:8] [Earth's "Heaven," not God's "Heaven.]"

1. God made a "firmament" and called the "firmament" heaven. (Mos 2:7-8)

The "Third Time" [Abra. 4:9-13] (Moses 2:9-13; Gen. 1:9-13)

A. The Gods gathered the waters under heaven into one place, let the earth come up dry. [4:9]

B. The Gods pronounced the dry land "Earth," and the waters "Great Waters." [4:10]

C. The Gods organized the earth to bring forth grass, herbs, and fruit, with seeds after their own kinds. [4:11-12]

D. The Gods numbered the days. [4:13]

The "Fourth Time" [Abra. 4:14-19] (Moses 2:14-19; Gen. 1:14-19)

A. The Gods organized the lights in the expanse of [the earth's] heaven for day and night, days, seasons, and years. [4:14-15, 17-18]

B. The Gods organized the two great lights [near the Lord's dwelling place], the greater light [*Kolob*, see *Abra. 3:3-4, 9, Fac. #2, Fig. 1*] to rule the day, and the lesser light [*Oliblish*, see *Abra. 3:5-8; Fac. #2, Figs. 2, 4*] to rule the night.

The "Fifth Time" [Abra. 4:20-23] (Moses 2:20-23; Gen. 1:20-23)

A. The Gods prepared the waters to bring forth [sea] life, and prepared winged fowls, and planned for them to be fruitful and multiply. [4:20-22]

The "Sixth Time" [Abra. 4:24-31] (Moses 2:24-31; Gen. 1:24-31)

A. The Gods prepared the earth to bring forth the animals of the earth after their kind. [4:24-25]

B. "The Gods took counsel among themselves and said: Let us go down and form man in our image, after our likeness; . . . So the Gods went down to organize man in their own image, in the image of the Gods to form they him, male and female to form they them." [4:26-27]

C. "The Gods said, We will cause them to be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it, and to have dominion" over the animals and plants. [4:28-29]

D. "The Gods said, We will do everything that we have said, and organize them; and behold, they shall be very obedient." [4:31]

The "Seventh Time" [Abra. 5:1-3] (Moses 3:1-5; Gen. 2:1-5)

A. "And thus we will finish the heavens and the earth, and all the hosts of them." [5:1]

B. "The Gods said among themselves: On the seventh time (1) we will end our work, which we have counseled; and (2) we will rest on the seventh time from all our work which we have counseled. And the Gods concluded upon the seventh time. . . ." [Abra. 5:2-3]

1. "And on the seventh day (1) I, God, ended my work, and all things which I had made; and (2) I rested on the seventh day from all my work, and all things which I had made were finished, and I, God, saw that they were good. . . . in it I had rested from all my work which I, God, had created and made." (Moses 3:2)

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

Implementation of the Plan during The Seventh Time [Abra. 5:4-21] (Moses 3:6-25; Genesis 2:6-25)

A. "There went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the earth." [5:6]

B. The Gods (1) formed man from the dust of the ground. (2) They took the man's spirit and put it into him. (3) They breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. *Result*: "Man became a living soul." [5:7] (See *D&C 88:15*: "The spirit and the body are the soul of man.")

C. "The Gods (1) planted a garden, eastward in Eden." (2) They put Adam [the first man] in the garden. (3) They made plants grow in the garden, including the tree of life and the tree of knowledge of good and evil. (4) They gave him commandments. [4:7-9, 11-13]

D. The Gods said, "Let us make an help meet for the man." They formed a woman, and brought her unto the man. [4:14-19]

E. "And out of the ground the Gods formed every beast of the ground, and every fowl of the air." Adam gave names to all the animals. [5:20-21]

Timing of the Creation

A. "I, Abraham, saw that it was after the Lord's time, which was after the time of Kolob; for as yet the Gods had not appointed unto Adam his reckoning." [Abra. 5:13] *John Taylor* wrote of "this earth, which had fled and fallen from where it was first organized, near the planet Kolob." ["The Mormon," (New York City, Aug. 29, 1857, as cited in Crowther, *Life Everlasting*, p. 106)]

B. "These are the *generations* of the heaven and of the earth, when they were created, in the *day* that I, the Lord God, made the heaven and the earth." (Moses 3:3)

C. "The length of time required for the Creation is not known. The term *day* in the scriptural account of the Creation does not represent a 24-hour period. The Hebrew word *yom* can be translated as "day," "time," or "period." [*Old Testament Gospel Doctrine Teacher's Manual*, 2001, p. 11]

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