

BH Porter
Moses 2 & Abr 4
Part 3

Faith of an Observer

A lot of questions come up about the Temple, and years ago BYU produced a DVD about the life of Brother Hugh Nibley, with whom I used to work. The DVD is titled, Faith of an Observer. It's a series of discussions with Br Nibley and his observations as an educator at BYU and from his experience in Egypt and with his research into and with the Book of Abraham. In this DVD you will gain insight not only into the life of Br Nibley but also things that have to do with the Temple and Abraham. It is exceptional.

When this DVD first came out, there was a dinner at the Hotel Utah before the actual premier showing of this work at the Joseph Smith Building. At this dinner were invited General Authorities and uppity-up professors from BYU. I had team taught with Br Nibley for a while and was still a graduate student, really less than a nobody, and Br Nibley invited me to attend this dinner and premier. When I arrived, there were guards at the doors, and they would not let me in. Br Nibley saw me, came over and got me in. Elder Maxwell, Elder Oaks and others were there. After the really good meal, we all went over to the Joseph Smith Building to the viewing of this work for the very first time. It's an exceptional insight into the man, the legacy of his work and the contribution he made to the lives of so many.

Temple Texts

In our continuing discussion of these creation accounts found in our scriptures, everything discussed in the Temple Drama is found in **2 Nephi Chapter 2**. This chapter is a Temple Text. This chapter should be read with the Temple in mind. The things discussed in the Temple are also things that are taught in chapter 2. The things we learn from Moses and from Abraham are also taught in Chapter 2. We see the need for opposition in all things, Satan being there and why there is opposition. All things are taught in Chapter 2 that are learned in the other creation accounts and the stories we will go into regarding Adam and Eve in Moses 2-3.

**Without a knowledge of these things we have no power
over this life, but become as the beasts to live and die
obsessed with, and consumed in,
the worldly satisfaction of pride and the flesh.**

Knowledge is the Key

<p>25 Wherefore, he has given a law; and where there is no law given there is no punishment; and where there is no punishment there is no condemnation; and where there is no condemnation the mercies of the Holy One of Israel have claim upon them, because of the atonement; for they are delivered by the power of him. ...</p> <p>27 But wo unto him that has the law given, yea, that has all the commandments of God, like unto us, and that transgresseth them, and that wasteth the days of his probation, for awful is his state! (2 Nephi 9: 25, 27)</p>	<p>This is for those who have not known the law or when the Gospel may have not been on the earth.</p> <p>The mercies of Christ will deliver them by the power of His Atonement.</p> <p>Wo unto the Latter-day Saints who DO have the Law, and who do not abide by it.</p> <p>The days of their probation are wasted!</p>
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Keep in mind that in the spirit world, we can learn and understand the Gospel perfectly because there is space between death and the resurrection. The Proverb (22:6) that says, "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it", means that when your children get to the other side, they will remember the things they were taught in their youth, and they will remember them to be true and will come back. It is important to remember that the spirit world exists for us to be given the opportunity to learn and remember and change our character.

That's why we don't have to worry so much about our children who may have fallen away...they will have an opportunity to learn and progress, if they want to. Ninety-Nine point nine percent (99.9%) of all of the emotional pain we experience is because someone else has exercised his or her own agency.

If one does not "**act** in futurity" upon this Divine Endowed **power** of knowledge and exaltation, then this endowment of knowledge may become the **power** of condemnation.

Three Pillars of the Gospel

The three pillars of the Gospel are: the Creation, the Fall, and the Atonement. In our Book of Mormon, when Ammon goes to teach King Lamoni, he laid before him the scriptures and began with the creation of the world and the fall of Adam. (Alma 18: 36) When Aaron taught the father of King Lamoni, he, too, read from the scriptures, "how God created man after his own image, and the God gave him commandments, and because of transgression man had fallen. And Aaron did expound unto him the scriptures from the creation of Adam, laying the fall of man before him, and their carnal state and also the plan of redemption, which was prepared from the foundation of the world, through Christ, for all whosoever would believe on his name." (Alma 22: 12-13)

Understanding these concepts about the Creation, the Fall and the Atonement endows mankind with a power to that the rest of the world continues to seek, and will never find, except through the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the Plan of Salvation.

The Creation

Our creation accounts are given so that we can establish relationships between God, mankind and the environment in which man must work out his salvation. Each relationship is intimately connected to the salvation and exaltation of our spirits. It is the understanding of these relationships established by the ritually repeated creation epics that provide and endows the believer with power to work out his salvation in this lone and dreary world. It all comes back to the two great commandments of loving God and loving our fellowman. That's the character we are going to need on the other side. Remember, Sin is whatever distracts you from loving God and loving your fellowman. I really cannot say that enough. This is the character required for our exaltation.

Teach your children and provide opportunities for them to be charitable. That is the best step you can take with your children who do not want to go to church. It's not how many hours you sit on the pew in sacrament meetings, but it is the time you spend learning to love God and your fellowman by your own example.

Creation Epics are not rehearsed to establish a God-given explanation of **HOW** the cosmos was created, but they are given to establish **WHY** they exist for man's spiritual progression.

Moses and Abraham

Moses 2	Abraham 4
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As we go through this, the verses in Moses will be on the left and the verses from Abraham will be on the right. I will be mostly using the material from Abraham because that is what we ought to be reading. The insights from Abraham are greater than from Moses. During the Nauvoo Period, almost everything Joseph taught hinged on the things he had learned from the Book of Abraham. Almost everything he taught during the last two to three years of his life, the King Follett Discourse, and his Sermon at the Grove of the Temple, contained the doctrines he had learned from the Book of Abraham. Abraham's writings open up the windows into the eternities so that we can establish further our relationship with God. Moses was writing to the hard-headed, stiff-necked, hardhearted children of Israel. The children of Israel were a "Do-or-Die" people. They either kept the commandments or they were cast out. The Nephites and Lamanites were also Israelites; they either came into the presence of God, or they were cast out.

The Book of Mormon does not discuss anything about the various kingdoms of glory, or eternal progression, or any other such thing. The Old Testament and the Book of Mormon are “Do or Die” books. They are both records of a fallen people. When you look in the Book of **Deuteronomy Chapter 9**, the Lord tells the children of Israel:

“You're not chosen because you are righteous. I didn't like you before I met you, and I don't like you now. The only reason you are chosen is because you are the descendants of Abraham, and I promised Abraham his children would have these responsibilities. You're not worthy to possess this land, and the only reason it took so long for you to possess this land is because the people who did possess this land, and who did not even know me, weren't bad enough to kick out. The only reason you are here now is because you are descendants of my friend, Abraham.” (See **Deut 9: 4-7, 24-29; also 2 Chron 20: 7; Isa 41: 8**)

Geologic and Astral-Geologic Creations

In our creation accounts there are Geologic and Astral-Geologic creations. This is only a general aspect of the creation and it was thrown in there real quick because the creation of the heavens and the earth and the sun, moon and stars needed to be established. It's all very general and leads into the part that we need to deal with.

Worlds Without Number

Last month we talked about the requirements that would be needed for a sun like ours and an earth like ours to be inhabitable. We also discussed that in our own observable universe there could be an equivalent of 10,000,000,000,000,000 similar earths like ours. The Lord tells Moses, “no man can behold all my works, except he behold all my glory; and no man can behold all my glory, and afterwards remain in the flesh on the earth” (v 5). Moses learns that only an account of this heaven and this earth would be revealed unto him.

Establishing Personal Relationships

Near the end of **Moses 1, v 40**, the Lord speaks with Moses and says: “And now, Moses, my son, I will speak unto thee concerning **this earth** upon which thou standest; and thou shalt write the things which I shall speak”. And in **Moses 2: 1**, the Lord says, “Behold, I reveal unto you concerning **this heaven**, and **this earth**; write the words which I speak.” You may remember from Chapter 1 that the Lord told Moses, “worlds without number have I created”.

So...Moses is given a glimpse of the big picture, and then the Lord reduces it all down just to this earth in this cosmos. We are only going to learn the historical view point from Moses, and we will see the future viewpoint from Abraham. Abraham provides more insight than does Moses.

Moses 2	Abraham 4
<p>1 And it came to pass that the Lord spake unto Moses, saying: Behold, I reveal unto you concerning this heaven, and this earth; write the words which I speak. I am the Beginning and the End, the Almighty God; by mine Only Begotten I created these things; yea, in the beginning I created the heaven, and the earth upon which thou standest.</p>	<p>1 And then the Lord said: Let us go down. And they went down at the beginning, and they, that is the Gods, organized and formed the heavens and the earth.</p> <p>[Almost every ancient culture depicts a council of the Gods; there is a Supreme God and there is a council that sits with that God.]</p>

Even in our own D&C we see the mention of the Council of the Gods: **(D&C 121: 28,32)**

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

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.

What the Prophet Joseph taught regarding the Council of the Gods

Here, then, is eternal life—to know the only wise and true God; and you have got to learn how to be Gods yourselves, and to be kings and priests to God, **the same as all Gods have done before you**, namely, by going from one small degree to another, and from a small capacity to a great one; from grace to grace, from exaltation to exaltation, until you attain to the resurrection of the dead, and are able to dwell in everlasting burnings, and to sit in glory, **as do those who sit enthroned in everlasting power**. And I want you to know that God, in the last days, while certain individuals are proclaiming his name, is not trifling with you or me. **(TPJS p 346-347)**

I shall comment on the very first Hebrew word in the Bible; I will make a comment on the very first sentence of the history of the creation in the Bible—*Berosheit*. I want to analyze the word. *Baith*—in, by, through, and everything else. *Rosh*—the head. *Sheit*—grammatical termination. When the inspired man wrote it, he did not put the *baith* there. An old Jew without any authority added the word; he thought it too bad to begin to talk about the head! It read first, **“The head one of the Gods brought forth the Gods.”** That is the true meaning of the words. *Baurau* signifies to bring forth. If you do not believe it, you do not believe the learned man of God. Learned men can teach you no more than what I have told you. ***Thus the head God brought forth the Gods in the grand council.*** **(TPJS p 348)**

I will transpose and simplify it in the English language. Oh, ye lawyers, ye doctors, and ye priests, who have persecuted me, I want to let you know that the Holy Ghost knows something as well as you do. **The head God called together the Gods and sat in grand council to bring forth the world. The grand councilors sat at the head in yonder heavens and contemplated the creation of the worlds which were created at the time. (TPJS p 348-349)**

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

Now, I ask all who hear me, why the learned men who are preaching salvation, say that God created the heavens and the earth out of nothing? The reason is, that they are unlearned in the things of God, and have not the gift of the Holy Ghost; they account it blasphemy in any one to contradict their idea. If you tell them that God made the world out of something, they will call you a fool. But I am learned, and know more than all the world put together. The Holy Ghost does, anyhow, and He is within me, and comprehends more than all the world: and I will associate myself with Him. **(TPJS 349-350)**

<p>2 And the earth was without form, and void; and I caused darkness to come up upon the face of the deep; and my Spirit moved upon the face of the water; for I am God.</p>	<p>2 And the earth, after it was formed, was empty and desolate, because they had not formed anything but the earth; and darkness reigned upon the face of the deep, and the Spirit of the Gods was brooding upon the face of the waters.</p>
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Abraham gives us a little more insight..."the Spirit of the Gods was brooding upon the face of the waters." What does a chicken do when she is "brooding"? She is protecting and nurturing and incubating – watching what is going on. Things had been set in motion that was going to change everything.

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

<p>5 And I, God, called the light Day; and the darkness, I called Night; and this I did by the word of my power, and it was done as I spake; and the evening and the morning were the first day.</p>	<p>5 And the Gods called the light Day, and the darkness they called Night. And it came to pass that from the evening until morning they called night; and from the morning until the evening they called day; and this was the first, or the beginning, of that which they called day and night.</p>
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Again, Abraham is providing a little more insight into Day & Night. How did they have a morning and an evening if the sun was not there? In v 4, Abraham says the Gods **caused** the light to be divided from the darkness. These opening verses are the preview of the show that is about to come – it's like a movie trailer, setting the context for the body of the the drama or the presentation.

<p>6 And again, I, God, said: Let there be a firmament in the midst of the water, and it was so, even as I spake; and I said: Let it divide the waters from the waters; and it was done;</p> <p>[Waters, in Hebrew, is called Miyam, and the word for Heavens = Ha-sha-Miyam. The waters above and the waters below, and there is an expanse in between.]</p>	<p>6 And the Gods also said: Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters, and it shall divide the waters from the waters.</p> <p>[Firmament and Expanse mean the same thing. In Fig 4 of Fac #2, we see the Hebrew word, Raukeeyang, signifying firmament or expanse of the heavens.]</p>
<p>7 And I, God, made the firmament and divided the waters, yea, the great waters under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament, and it was so even as I spake.</p>	<p>7 And the Gods ordered the expanse, so that it divided the waters which were under the expanse from the waters which were above the expanse; and it was so, even as they ordered.</p>
<p>8 And I, God, called the firmament Heaven; and the evening and the morning were the <u>second day</u>.</p> <p>[In Abr v 5...the light and darkness was just called day and night...it is just a designation of light and darkness or in v 8: night and day.]</p>	<p>8 And the Gods called the expanse, Heaven. And it came to pass that it was from evening until morning that they called night; and it came to pass that it was from morning until evening that they called day; and this was <u>the second time</u> that they called night and day.</p>
<p>9 And I, God, said: Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and it was so; and I, God, said: Let there be dry land; and it was so.</p>	<p>9 And the Gods ordered, saying: Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the earth come up dry; and it was so as they ordered;</p>

Abraham is explaining the Gods ordered things, they set things in motion, and what was ordered was obeyed. (“the waters were gathered together unto one place and the earth came up dry”.)

<p>10 And I, God, called the dry land Earth; and the gathering together of the waters, called I the Sea; and I, God, saw that all things which I had made were good.</p>	<p>10 And the Gods pronounced the dry land, Earth; and the gathering together of the waters, pronounced they, Great Waters; and the Gods saw that they were obeyed.</p>
<p>11 And I, God, said: Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, the fruit tree yielding fruit, <u>after his kind</u>, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed should be in itself upon the earth, and it was so even as I spake.</p>	<p>11 And the Gods said: Let us prepare the earth to bring forth grass; the herb yielding seed; the fruit tree yielding fruit, <u>after his kind</u>, whose seed in itself yieldeth <u>its own likeness</u> upon the earth; and it was so, even as they ordered.</p>
<p>12 And the earth brought forth grass, every herb yielding seed <u>after his kind</u>, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed should be in itself, <u>after his kind</u>; and I, God, saw that all things which I had made were good;</p>	<p>12 And the Gods organized the earth to bring forth grass <u>from its own seed</u>, and the herb to bring forth herb <u>from its own seed</u>, yielding seed <u>after his kind</u>; and the earth to bring forth the tree <u>from its own seed</u>, yielding fruit, whose seed could only bring forth the same in itself, <u>after his kind</u>; and the Gods saw that they were obeyed.</p>

You will notice the repeating phrases in Abraham's account. In ancient languages, the repetition is for emphasis. The repetitive phrases, 'seed in itself', 'after his kind', is an emphasis the author wants to reader to know for sure how these things came to be. The grass, the herbs, and the trees has seed within themselves and in turn brought forth the same grass, the same herbs and the same fruit – they only produced after their own kind. They did not evolve!

The distinction between Moses and Abraham depends on the audience to whom these records are written. Moses is teaching the hard-headed, hardhearted, stiff-necked Israelites, whom God did not like from the very beginning. Abraham's audience is those who are seeking for further light and truth. We see the added insight from Abraham that the Gods organized and prepared the earth; they so ordered the waters, and the earth to bring forth those things, and when they saw that they were obeyed, they moved on to the next phase.

Question: Had not the Gods done these things over and over again? Didn't they know that it was going to work anyway?

Brigham Young stated that “no two temples could be built exactly alike”, indicating that to create is not to copy. Every creation was a new creation. It was not necessarily a copy. For instance, Joseph added an insight from the *Words of Joseph Smith*, p 61, “that it was not given Adam and Eve to partake of the fruit, but it was given unto them to die.” The Gospel is the same on every world, but every world was not necessarily created the same. Another sameness is that those who people every earth had to be formed in the image and likeness of God and for each to have the potential to become

like God.

Even Christ, with his resurrected body, still had the prints of the nails in His hands and in His feet because the Gospel is the same on every world, and He is the Savior for all other worlds, even worlds without number, who have been created by the Only Begotten. The same signs and tokens would also need to be recognized by those on other worlds, hence he still retained the prints of the nails in His hands and feet so that they could also recognize a true messenger sent from God when He came to them, just like the Nephites in 3rd Nephi 11.

Remember Thomas? He was not “doubting”. He had been taught to check or test those who claimed to be a true messenger sent from God, and would not believe until he had the opportunity to see for himself. See **John 20: 25-28**.

25 The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe.

26 ¶ And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: *then* came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace *be* unto you.

27 Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust *it* into my side: and be not faithless, but believing.

28 And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God.

Getting back to our creation accounts...these accounts are given for us to see the relationships between God and our created environment on which we are to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling. These verses we have just read are the previews of the “biologic creation”. The previous verses were the preview of the astral-geologic creation. This grass, these herbs, and the fruit trees are the ones that are going to be on the earth when Adam is placed on it. When Adam is placed on this earth, all of these things are already here. The record is giving us the knowledge in order for us to see the relationships we have with God, and our created environment, and with our fellowman who also have the opportunity work out their own salvation.

These verses are not talking about those plants and animals that existed *prior* to Adam. These are the things that are going to be on the earth when Adam gets here.

<p>13 And the evening and the morning were the third day.</p>	<p>13 And it came to pass that they numbered the days; from the evening until the morning they called night; and it came to pass, from the morning until the evening they called day; and it was the third time.</p>
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Abraham's account allows as long as needed for the plants, animals all creatures and fossil fuels to be prepared in the earth, when Adam is placed on it. Our relationship does not exist with those things that were on the earth before Adam, but only after he arrives.

**The Gods set things in motion.
They prepared the earth.
They organized the earth and
Watched until they saw they would be obeyed.**

Joseph later taught:

“In the beginning the head of the Gods brought forth the Gods,” or, as others have translated it, **“The head of the Gods called the Gods together.”**

The head God organized the heavens and the earth. I defy all the world to refute me. **In the beginning the heads of the Gods organized the heavens and the earth.**

“The head one of the Gods said, Let us make a man in our own image.” I once asked a learned Jew, “If the Hebrew language compels us to render all words ending in *heim* in the plural, why not render the first *Eloheim* plural?” He replied, “That is the rule with few exceptions; but in this case it would ruin the Bible.” He acknowledged I was right. I came here to investigate these things precisely as I believe them. Hear and judge for yourselves; and if you go away satisfied, well and good. In the very beginning the Bible shows there is a plurality of Gods beyond the power of refutation. It is a great subject I am dwelling on. The word *Eloheim* ought to be in the plural all the way through—Gods. **The heads of the Gods appointed one God for us;** and when you take [that] view of the subject, its sets one free to see all the beauty, holiness and perfection of the Gods. All I want is to get the simple, naked truth, and the whole truth. (TPJS p 371-372)

Let's go back to **Abr 2: 4-5**. I want to show you something.

4 And they **(the Gods)** comprehended the light, for it was bright; and **they divided** the light, **or caused it to be divided**, from the darkness.

5 And the Gods called the light Day, and the darkness they called Night. And it came to pass that from the evening until morning they called night; and from the morning until the evening they called day; and this was the first, or the beginning, of that which they **called day and night**.

We see the Gods dividing the light or causing it to be divided: there was a morning and an evening, and an evening and a morning. Here is **Abr 2: 14-15**:

14 And **the Gods organized the lights** in the expanse of the heaven, and **caused them to divide the day from the night**; and **organized them** to be for signs and for seasons, and for days and for years;

15 And organized them to be for lights in the expanse of the heaven to give light upon the earth; and it was so. (v 4-5 was the preview; v 14-15 is the show!)

The Astral-Geologic creation is not in linear time. The Gods **caused the lights to be divided**, and **organized them** to be for signs and for seasons. It took as long as it took to accomplish these things. The sequence of these events in Moses has been traditionally taught to be somewhat chronological, but Abraham gives us another point of view with added insight.

<p>16 And I, God, made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night, and the greater light was the sun, and the lesser light was the moon; and the stars also were made even according to my word.</p>	<p>16 And the Gods organized the two great lights, the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night; with the lesser light they set the stars also;</p> <p>[There is only one point in all of space where the Sun and the Moon look like they are the same size, and that is during an eclipse. Here we see another explanation of the division of the lights.]</p>
<p>17 And I, God, set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth,</p>	<p>17 And the Gods set them in the expanse of the heavens, to give light upon the earth, and to rule over the day and over the night, <u>and to cause to divide the light from the darkness.</u></p>

Again, **Abraham 4: 14-17** tells us the **HOW** the lights in the heaven caused the light to be divided from the darkness. Moses is only telling **WHAT** happened. Understanding Abraham's record gives us explanations so far removed from traditional thought.

We're out of time for today, but we will continue again next month. The Pearl of Great Price is an exciting Book of scripture. What we have covered so far is just informational stuff, and once we move into the rest of creation and into the other concepts connected with the creation, we will talk about life and death before the fall and life and death before Adam. We'll talk about fossil fuels and dinosaurs and cave dwellers. It is all very interesting now, but it will get real interesting when Adam is placed in the Garden of Eden.

Know that I know that the Gospel is true and the Church is true no matter what I say. I should not be your footnote. Your footnotes are these scriptures and the statements of Joseph Smith and those of the living prophets. Those are your footnotes. All I am is your guide through the scriptures, or one who points out something in a corner you might not have seen before. I might open up a window or two that might shed some light in an area that was once dark in your room. The Gospel is true. Jesus is the Christ. These scriptures are our standards by which even the prophets have declared that they must also adhere. I say these things in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.