

Engaging Gospel Doctrine (Episode 80.2)

LESSON 3 (FULL)

The Creation

Hook	It is more important to appreciate creation than understand how it got here, but the hows remain valuable
Goal	Class members should pause and appreciate the miracle of creation, both our bodies and existence and the world's, and appreciate the contributions of different accounts of creation (reword)

Overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sunday School <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Reflections on faith and science (talk about what the scriptures are, that learning new information can feel disorienting, but the strongest approach to theology in my mind is understanding the world best we can and then coming to theological conclusions. I spent years extrapolating from the literal narratives, so I get it)</li> <li>○ Some challenges (go over Church leader statements about evolution and creation, but also share McConkie’s cool quote.</li> <li>○ Propose that there is much to gain from each creation account <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Discussion of Moses passages</li> <li>▪ Discussion of Abraham passages (focus on my gods waiting to see if they are obeyed point)</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Reflections on creation</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Additional Passages <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Talk about the worldview of the ANE (context of other creation stories such as the Enuma Elish Ps 74:12-17 (another version of the creation, likely older), also look at Ps 104</li> <li>○ A few helpful things to know to understand the Genesis accounts (talk about two creation accounts, the “water above, water” below worldview, city as order and wilderness as chaos, idea of God conquering chaos</li> <li>○ Go through Genesis reading with comments</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Study Notes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Give an overview of the Documentary Hypothesis</li> <li>○ Introduce the issues with evolution</li> <li>○ Introduce the issues with creation of the universe</li> <li>○ Comments on philosophical arguments for the existence of God, faith vs. proving (more in discussion)</li> <li>○ Conclusion</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Conclusion	

## Church Statements about Evolution

(But also see Henry Eyring's Reflections of a Scientist and the fact BYU teaches evolution)

Church statements on Evolution:

Feb 2002 reposted the 1909 statement! <https://www.lds.org/ensign/2002/02/the-origin-of-man?lang=eng>

Editorial intro: "In the early 1900s, questions concerning the Creation of the earth and the theories of evolution became the subject of much public discussion. In the midst of these controversies, the First Presidency issued the following in 1909, which expresses the Church's doctrinal position on these matters. A reprinting of this important First Presidency statement will be helpful as members of the Church study the Old Testament this year."

It is held by some that Adam was not the first man upon this earth and that the original human being was a development from lower orders of the animal creation. These, however, are the theories of men...Man began life as a human being, in the likeness of our Heavenly Father.

True it is that the body of man enters upon its career as a tiny germ embryo, which becomes an infant, quickened at a certain stage by the spirit whose tabernacle it is, and the child, after being born, develops into a man. There is nothing in this, however, to indicate that the original man, the first of our race, began life as anything less than a man, or less than the human germ or embryo that becomes a man.

Bible dictionary: In the [Bible Dictionary](#) of the LDS Church, the entry for "Fall of Adam" includes the following statement: "Before the fall, Adam and Eve had physical bodies but no blood. There was no sin, no death, and no children among any of the earthly creations."<sup>[14]</sup> Under the entry, "Flesh", it is written: "Since flesh often means mortality, Adam is spoken of as the "first flesh" upon the earth, meaning he was the first mortal on the earth, all things being created in a nonmortal condition, and becoming mortal through the fall of Adam

And yet evolution is straight up taught at BYU. Clearly there is tension here.

(find the "we are not scientists we will leave that to scientists" quote)

Nelson on the Big Bang, just in 2012

Anyone who studies the workings of the human body has surely “seen God moving in his majesty and power.”<sup>18</sup> Because the body is governed by divine law, any healing comes by obedience to the law upon which that blessing is predicated.<sup>19</sup>

Yet some people erroneously think that these marvelous physical attributes happened by chance or resulted from a big bang somewhere. Ask yourself, “Could an explosion in a printing shop produce a dictionary?” The likelihood is *most* remote. But if so, it could never heal its own torn pages or reproduce its own newer editions!

### McConkie Quote

Elder Bruce R. McConkie has written: "Christ and Mary, Adam and Eve, Abraham and Sarah, and a host of mighty men and equally glorious women comprised that group of 'the noble and great ones,' to whom the Lord Jesus said: 'We will go down, for there is space there, and we will take of these materials, and we will make an earth wherein these may dwell.' (Abr. 3:22-24, emphasis added.) This we know: Christ, under the Father, is the Creator; Michael, His companion and associate, presided over much of the creative work; and with them, as Abraham was, were many of the noble and great ones."<sup>1</sup>

<http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/24763/Adams-role-goes-beyond-first-man.html>

Hutchinson, Mormon Midrash: [http://dialoguejournal.com/wp-content/uploads/sbi\\_old/articles/Dialogue\\_V21N04\\_13.pdf](http://dialoguejournal.com/wp-content/uploads/sbi_old/articles/Dialogue_V21N04_13.pdf)

III.

### **Documentary Hypothesis**

Early thinkers noted that Moses could not have written all of the Pentateuch, since Deuteronomy reports his death! (Deut 34). Also comments such as “to this very day” or “over in the land of Canaan” which presuppose a later time. Two such thinkers were Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679) and Benedict Spinoza (1632-77)

Classical statement by Julius Wellhausen in 1800s, synthesized earlier research (Kugel tells of an American Scholar, Charles Briggs, tried for heresy based on these ideas.

Based on names of God, suggested four primary sources:

J: (Yahweh) written in 800s, Judah

E (Elohist), written before 700s, Northern Israel

JE combined in 600s

D (Deuteronomist) Core in about 622, found in our Deut and subsequent books

P: Priestly document, the ones who finished up the Pentateuch and gave it its current form, most concentrated in Leviticus.

Currently, everyone agrees that Pentateuch is a composite document composed using older sources over centuries. But details differ

- 1) It is difficult to argue there was a "Yahwist Source" (J); instead we should speak of "Narrative Cycles"

- 2) Redactional work took several steps; most of this process was likely during/after the Deuteronomistic and Priestly stages

- 3) "P" should be seen not so much as a Priestly Source but a redactional layer (commentary or complement to older sources) So even though the DH is a great starting point, recent research has called key points into question. So the distinct older sources of the DH are gone, reduced to older traditions, and as far as dating goes, the end has become the beginning (with the Priestly source being one of the earlier steps instead of the last). D seems to have the most lasting power.

I like Ska's views of the Pentateuch coming together as a national epic necessitated by disputes after the Babylonian exiles returned to Judea post 539. (Ska, Introduction to Reading the Pentateuch [Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2006])

2) Cosmological arguments: <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/cosmological-argument/>