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The creation is our topic, and our part in the creation is at the heart of the subject. We will be looking at the scope of the creation, the purpose of the creation, and why we should be properly awed and subdued by the creation.

We all have some idea about the creation and the order in which things were created. That is basic Bible knowledge. But seeing how this is Mormon Basics, let's spread things out and look at the creation to see how the various parts fit together.

The Creator

The scriptures tell us in the first few verses of John, in the New Testament, that the Word, who is Jesus, created all things. By "all things" the scriptures mean that anything that has been organized into something useful in the universe was organized (created) by Him. This includes worlds, galaxies, star systems, inhabitable planets, comets, etc. They were all created or organized from existing materials by Jesus.

That is a tall order. Did He just go out and willy nilly start throwing things together? No, He was operating under the direction of God, our Father. He was doing our Father's work as the first born, the Beloved, the Chosen one.

All my life I have viewed the universe and the work my Savior did for mankind as two completely separate and distinct things, having nothing much in common with each other. I knew why I was here on this planet. I'm here to learn to become more like my Savior so I can return home to live with my Father in Heaven once again. But why does

the universe exist? I had no idea that it served any specific purpose other than to give us light by stars at night. That would make it the most expensive night light in existence.

It wasn't until I started to study the texts from this lesson that the real light turned on. Here is the stated purpose of this lesson: To help class members feel gratitude that God created all things for our benefit and that we are created in his image.

What are the "all things" being referred to? Jesus, according to all the scriptures that talk about creation, created "all things." But according to this lesson those things were only created "for our benefit." According to my logic, that would mean that the universe as we know it only exists for our benefit. But what benefit would that be?

Reasons for being

First of all, the Father has innumerable planets with children living on them. Each and every one of them needs to have support planets and stars to make them livable for God's children. They are no different than earth. Earth needs the rest of the solar system to maintain its balance and distance from the sun so we don't either burn up or freeze. This is an enormous balancing act that had to be calculated down to very small degrees in order for everything to work properly. And Christ is the foreman for our Father's plan. He put everything in place so all of God's children have beautiful homes to go to when they enter mortality.

But what about when we leave earth and have been judged? Where do we go then? The scriptures tell us that Jesus has prepared many mansions (kingdoms) for all of God's children to inhabit for their growth and prosperity. In other words, the whole universe exists to house and prosper God's family. And as that is continually growing, so too is the universe. How is that for a grand idea?!

We only have record of our world, so to us the rest of the universe seems to be a disconnected place, but if you look at the scriptures, we are just one of countless worlds supporting God's children.

Below is Moses 1:31-39. Here are the things to look for: Moses was just shown the whole earth, every particle of it, as well as all the inhabitants of the earth, by the Spirit. He asked the Lord about all the other earths he was shown in vision, and the Lord's reply was 'That's my business, and I'll keep it to myself.' His exact words are the last

two sentences of verse 31. But he goes on to say that our Savior created all of them, worlds without number.

He then says that Adam means "many." And surely Adam is the father of many, even billions of posterity. He then tells Moses that the creation of planets is an ongoing process. As one expires it is done away with and a new one is created. God's works never finish. The key here is that with all this talk of planets and the creation of the universe, it is for nothing but to support the reason for God's work, which is to glorify His children.

> 31 And behold, the glory of the Lord was upon Moses, so that Moses stood in the presence of God, and talked with him face to face. And the Lord God said unto Moses: For mine own purpose have I made these things. Here is wisdom and it remaineth in me.
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> 32 And by the word of my power, have I created them, which is mine Only Begotten Son, who is full of grace and truth.
>
> 33 And worlds without number have I created; and I also created them for mine own purpose; and by the Son I created them, which is mine Only Begotten.
>
> 34 And the first man of all men have I called Adam, which is many.
>
> 35 But only an account of this earth, and the inhabitants thereof, give I unto you. For behold, there are many worlds that have passed away by the word of my power. And there are many that now stand, and innumerable are they unto man; but all things are numbered unto me, for they are mine and I know them.
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> 36 And it came to pass that Moses spake unto the Lord, saying: Be merciful unto thy servant, O God, and tell me concerning this earth, and the inhabitants thereof, and also the heavens, and then thy servant will be content.
>
> 37 And the Lord God spake unto Moses, saying: The heavens, they are many, and they cannot be numbered unto man; but they are numbered unto me, for they are mine.
>
> 38 And as one earth shall pass away, and the heavens thereof even so shall another come; and there is no end to my works, neither to my words.
>
> 39 For behold, this is my work and my glory—to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man.

The creation of any world happens only because it has something to do with bringing to pass the immortality and eternal life of God's children. That sentiment is stated over and over again. So part of the Savior's work as the Savior was to create not only the

worlds on which God's children would come for their time in mortality, but He also created the worlds on which all of God's children will live after they are judged. And all of that before Adam and Eve were placed in the garden on this earth. Massive undertaking.

Point One: He who created this world also created everything else that exists. And everything has been created for the benefit and welfare of God's children.

Point Two: God claims us as His children. He has stated that all of this has been done for our welfare and benefit, for we are His work and His glory. We are the object of His love.

The account of creation

Because we believe in the doctrine of foreordination, which no other Christian sect believes in, we understand that before we came to earth we were partially judged and awarded positions of honor and positions of responsibilities that were uniquely ours during our time in mortality. For most of us we were blessed to be a part of the children of Israel. With that inheritance comes many earthly blessings unknown to the rest of the world. We have covenants and temples, priesthood power and eternal families. These are rewards from our behavior in our pre-earth life.

Each prophet was given assignments that no one else could fulfill but that prophet. For example, Adam was intimately involved in the creation of our world, yet the responsibility for the writing of the account of creation was given to Moses. Nephi was shown the history of the whole earth, but was told he was not allowed to write the ending of the earth because that responsibility had been assigned to John, the Apostle. John's account is contained in what we now have as the book of Revelation. And at one point it was plain and easy to understand. Sigh.

Point Three: Moses was given the assignment in the premortal world to write the account of the creation that would appear in the scriptures. Many prophets saw the creation in vision, but only Moses was commanded to write the account we have today. Much of the plain and precious parts of his account were lost due to unbelief, but through the revelations of Joseph Smith we now have Moses's account of the creation of the world. It is found in the book of Moses in the Pearl of Great Price.

Earthly bodies

The Bible says very little about pre-earth life. Occasionally something will be mentioned about a prophet being known by God before the prophet was born, but that is about it. See Jeremiah 1:5.

Because of Joseph Smith's account of the book of Moses, and that of Abraham's vision that included a glimpse into premortality, we have learned that when the Bible says we were created in God's image, that is a literal statement.

In Genesis 1:26-27 we learn a couple of things about ourselves.

> 26 ¶ And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.
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> 27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

"Let us make man ..." refers to what? Who is the us in that statement? Here is Moses 1:6. The premortal Jesus is speaking face to face with Moses, and is speaking for the Father.

> 6 And I have a work for thee, Moses, my son; and thou art in the similitude of mine Only Begotten; and mine Only Begotten is and shall be the Savior, for he is full of grace and truth; but there is no God beside me, and all things are present with me, for I know them all.

First off the Father declares to Moses that Moses is His son. And he doesn't do it just once, but at least three times in this chapter alone. He also states that Moses (and by extension all of us) were created in the similitude or to look like His Only Begotten, who is Jesus Christ. And we all know that Jesus said many times that He looks just like His Father, so that if you have seen Him (Jesus) you have seen the Father. So the "our" referred to Genesis 1:26 is the Father and the Son.

This is all recapped and spelled out in verse 27 when Moses says that we were created in the image of God. What does this tell us? This tells us that God has a body that looks like our bodies. The Son also. You have to work really hard to mess up that logic.

Lessons to be learned

What does all this have to do with us today? Is this supposed to make any meaningful difference in how we live our lives? Knowledge that cannot be applied is useless. So what is the take-away from this knowledge?

As sons and daughters of the creator of the universe, who has created all things for our benefit, we have a potential to be like our parents. This means we all have worth beyond our wildest imaginings. The question is, are we willing to give up the physical pleasures and temptations of this earth to attempt living up to the potential we have to become like our heavenly parents?

The possibility that we could become like God, the creator of all things, is so magnificent and overwhelming, it can be easy to succumb to the thoughts of inferiority and inability that prevent us from exercising faith in the promises of God. But once we have a glimpse of our heritage, and our possible inheritance, our only options are to either give up and give in to temptation, thus throwing all our potential out the window, or we put our heads down, pray to God and thank Him for the faith He has placed in our desires to do and be good, and then go to work to obey every commandment He has given us.

Final thoughts

We do not have an account of the creation in the scriptures just as an academic exercise, an effort to explain away the eternal question on every mortal's lips about where we might have come from. The account of the creation should be a shot in the arm, a boost of confidence that we, as children of God belong here. We have a purpose in mortality. We have things to accomplish, and things to become.

We have within us ability to become like God. All it takes is for us to choose to believe in our own potential, believe in the scriptures and liken them unto ourselves. When God the Father speaks to Moses and calls him His son, we should be thinking, if that were me he would have said my son, or my daughter, to me as well, for is not Moses my brother?

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The Creation

Week 03