

thou standest. And thou shalt write the things which I shall speak.⁴¹ And in a day when the children of men shall esteem my words as naught and take many of them from the book which thou shalt write, behold, I will raise up another like unto thee, and they shall be had again among the children of men, among as many as shall believe.”

EPILOGUE: AN INJUNCTION TO SECRECY

⁴²These words were spoken unto Moses in the mount, the name of which shall not be known among the children of men. And now they are spo-

ken unto you. Show them not unto any except them that believe. Even so. Amen.

GOD REVEALS THE CREATION TO MOSES

(GENESIS 1:1-2:3; ABRAHAM 4:1-5:3)

2 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.

Great Price since 1878. In the OT1 rendering, the work of the Father in bringing about the immortality and eternal life of humankind is depicted more forcefully as being commensurate or proportional with the increase of His glory. In other words, as more of His children attain immortality and eternal life, the glory of the Father increases. This subtly anticipates teachings made by the Prophet Joseph Smith toward the end of his life that the eternal life and exaltation of God and His children compound as they continue to progress through the eternities. **1:42** This injunction to secrecy is especially appropriate when the account is viewed as a temple text and an apocalypse—that is, a revelation that unveils mysteries or secrets about the world, its destiny, and God’s plans for humanity (see the commentary for 7:65–67). A common feature in Jewish and Christian apocalyptic literature is the urge to keep the contents of revelations secret or otherwise shielded from profane or unworthy readers (compare Daniel 8:26 and also Matthew 17:9; Mark 9:9, where Jesus swears the disciples to secrecy after His own transfiguration on a high mount).

2 This chapter commences the first of two Creation accounts found in the book of Moses that correspond to Genesis 1:1–2:3. OT1 and OT2 respectively begin this chapter by designating it as “chapter first” and “The Book of Genesis Chapter first,” which seems to indicate some intention behind its being the opening chapter of the Prophet’s inspired revision of Genesis. As mentioned previously, it is unclear if the preceding chapter describing Moses’s visionary experience on the mount is a standalone revelation or a prologue to the narrative that commences with this chapter. (Based on internal textual cues, the latter seems more likely.) **2:1** *The Lord spake unto Moses.* In a radical departure from the Genesis text, which features an anonymous third-person narrator throughout, this chapter opens at first with an anonymous third-person narrator (Moses?) but then immediately shifts to the Lord narrating the details of Creation directly to Moses in the first person. In this respect, the text bears striking resemblance to the apocryphal book of Jubilees, which also begins with Moses’s being summoned to a high mountain where the Lord (or the angel of the Lord) gives an account of the Creation and other events from early biblical history that Moses is commanded to record. *This heaven and this earth.* As at Moses 1:35–36, 40, the text makes it clear that the details of Creation

THE FIRST DAY: CREATION OF THE HEAVEN AND EARTH

“Yea, in the beginning I created the heaven and the earth upon which thou standest. 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. ³ And I, God, said, ‘Let there be light,’ and there was light. ⁴ And I, God, saw the light, and that light was good. And I, God, divided the light from the darkness. 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.

THE SECOND DAY: GOD DIVIDES THE FIRMAMENTS AND THE WATERS

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. 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. ⁸ And I, God, called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day.

THE THIRD DAY: GOD DIVIDES THE EARTH AND THE SEA

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. 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. ¹¹ And I, God, said, ‘Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed should be in itself upon the earth,’ and it was so even as I spake. ¹² And the earth

being recounted to Moses pertain only to this world as a sort of singular narrative microcosm embedded within the larger scope of Creation. *By mine Only Begotten*. In another departure from the biblical text, the participation of God’s Only Begotten in the process of Creation is explicitly evoked. This will feature more prominently later (at 2:26) and is in harmony with the book of Abraham’s depiction of Creation, which also speaks of more than one divinity participating (Abraham 4:1). **2:2** The earth being without form and void (*tôhû wā-bôhû*), with “darkness” (*hōšek*) being upon the face of the “deep” (*têhôm*), all evokes a sense of the cosmos in its primordial, uninhabitable condition (compare Abraham 4:2). **2:3** *My Spirit*. The Hebrew word used in Genesis 1:2 for “spirit” (*ruah*) can also mean “wind, breath.” Alongside the presence of God’s Only Begotten and Word (Moses 2:5), it is difficult not to read the text as describing the presence of each member of the Godhead in this scene. **2:4** OT1 has the definitive article “the” instead of the demonstrative “that” modifying “light.” **2:5** OT1 has “Word” capitalized. Although it cannot be demonstrated conclusively, it is not hard to imagine that this was deliberate given the appropriateness of describing the Only Begotten as the Word of God’s power (see also 1:32, 35). **2:6** This celestial firmament (*raqia*’; compare Facsimile 1, fig. 12; Facsimile 2, fig. 4) was envisioned by the ancients as something of a solid dome that was

brought forth grass, every herb yielding seed after his kind; and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed should be in itself, after his kind. And I, God, saw that all things which I had made were good. ¹³ And the evening and the morning were the third day.

THE FOURTH DAY: GOD MAKES THE GREATER AND LESSER LIGHTS

¹⁴ “And I, God, said, ‘Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night, and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and for years. ¹⁵ And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth,’ and it was so. 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. ¹⁷ And I, God, set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth, ¹⁸ and the sun to rule over the day, and the moon to rule over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness. And I, God, saw that all things which I had made were good. ¹⁹ And the evening and the morning were the fourth day.

THE FIFTH DAY: GOD CREATES ANIMAL LIFE

²⁰ “And I, God, said, ‘Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl which may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven.’ ²¹ And I, God, created great whales, and every living creature that moveth which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind. And every winged fowl after his kind. And I, God, saw that all things which I had created were good. ²² And I, God, blessed them, saying, ‘Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the sea, and let fowl multiply in the earth.’ ²³ And the evening and the morning were the fifth day.

THE SIXTH DAY: GOD AND HIS ONLY BEGOTTEN CREATE HUMANKIND IN THEIR IMAGE

²⁴ “And I, God, said, ‘Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind: cattle, and creeping things, and beasts of the earth after their kind,’ and it was so. ²⁵ And I, God, made the beasts of the earth after their kind, and cattle after their kind, and everything which creepeth upon the earth after his kind. And I, God, saw that all these things were good. ²⁶ And I, God, said unto mine Only Begotten, which was with me from

stretched out overhead (compare Abraham 4:6–8). **2:14–19** See the commentary at Abraham 4:14–19. **2:21** The “great whales” (*tannīnim gēdōlim*) described in Genesis and elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible (see Job 7:12; Ezekiel 32:2; Isaiah 27:1; Psalm 74:13) are attested in other ancient Near Eastern sources as mythical sea serpents that personify evil and chaos. By listing them as part of God’s creations, the text domesticates them under God’s power. **2:26–27** Here God speaks directly to His Only Begotten, who is participating in the unfolding events of Creation, as They prepare to create humanity in Their image. At Abraham 4:26–27 an unspecified number of gods “counsel” together in this decision. Both texts thus evoke the presence of the

the beginning, ‘Let us make man in our image, after our likeness,’ and it was so. And I, God, said, ‘Let them have dominion over the fishes 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.’²⁷ And I, God, created man in mine own image, in the image of mine Only Begotten created I him; male and female created I them.²⁸ And I, God, blessed them, and said unto them, ‘Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it, and have

dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.’²⁹ And I, God, said unto man, ‘Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree in the which shall be the fruit of a tree yielding seed. To you it shall be for meat.³⁰ And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein I grant life, there shall be given every clean herb for meat.’ And it was so, even as I spake.³¹ And I, God,

divine council in this portion of the narrative. *Image and likeness.* Besides the obvious implications this language has for divine anthropomorphism and corporeality (compare Genesis 5:3; Ether 3:15–17), the language of humanity being in the image and likeness of God and His Only Begotten hearkens to the prevalent ancient Near Eastern practice of placing an image of a deity in a temple or shrine. Here God and His Son are enshrined, as it were, in Their newly formed terrestrial temple—the earth—through the creation of humanity. Furthermore, royalty in the ancient Near East was sometimes said to be in the image or likeness of a given patron deity, meaning the monarch had been endowed with a divine nature and was thus the mortal representative of the deity on earth. This concept is democratized in here, in the book of Abraham, and in Genesis to extend to all of humanity. *Dominion over the earth.* Humanity is given dominion (*rādāh*; “to rule, have dominion”) over the forms of animal life heretofore created, putting them in the role, essentially, of God’s viceroys on earth. Far from granting humanity license to exploit or abuse the earth’s ecology, humanity’s lordship over other forms of animal life places on it a responsibility to treat the earth’s natural resources with care and equity, as any monarch ideally would to its subjects. Wanton bloodshed, the needless taking of life, and failure to show respect and restraint toward Creation is portrayed elsewhere in the text as Satanic (see Moses 5:31–33, 49–57). *Male and female.* Members of both sexes are said to be made in the image of the God and His Only Begotten. This extends the divine nature of God to both men and women. Restoration teachings affirm the reality that all humans are the sons or daughters of divine heavenly parents. Although Her presence is not explicitly depicted either here or in the Genesis and Abraham accounts, it is reasonable to infer the attendance of Heavenly Mother in the scene in light of modern revelation and the dichotomous male/female pairing so described (compare Abraham 4:26–27, where an unspecified number of gods create man and woman after their likeness). **2:28** Men and women are idealized as maintaining the natural order of Creation established by God through procreation. Their claim to dominion over the earth and all forms of animal life is contingent on their ability to establish a worldwide human dynasty, as it were, that will extend this dominion in perpetuity. **2:29–30** Vegetables, fruits, and animals are ordained as sustenance (“meat,” with the archaic meaning of simply “food”) for humanity. Modern revelation reaffirms that the ideal human diet consists of a balance between these types of food and also provides regulation on how each type should be used (see Doctrine and Covenants 89:10–17).

saw everything that I had made, and, behold, all things which I had made were very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.”

THE SEVENTH DAY: GOD COMPLETES CREATION AND RESTS

3 “Thus the heaven and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. ² And on the seventh day I, God, ended my work, and all things which I had made. And 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. ³ And I, God, blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it; because that in it I had rested from all my work which I, God, had created and made.

COMMENCEMENT OF A SECOND ACCOUNT OF CREATION

(GENESIS 2:4-25; ABRAHAM 5:4-212)

⁴ “And now, behold, I say unto you, that 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. ⁵ And every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew. For I, the Lord God, created all things, of which I have spoken, spiritually, before they were naturally upon the face of the earth. (For I, the Lord God, had not caused it to rain 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. ⁶ But I, the Lord God, spake, and there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground. ⁷ And I, the Lord God, formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. And man became a living soul, the first flesh upon the earth, the first man also. Nevertheless, all things were before created, but spiritually were

3 Following the structure of the King James Version of Genesis, the book of Moses begins this chapter by concluding the final day of the first Creation account and commencing a second Creation account that brings the focus onto the creation of Adam and Eve and the planting of the Garden of Eden. **3:2-3** God “rested” (*šābat*) on the seventh (*šēbī’ī*) day, forming a phonetic play on the Hebrew words that captures the significance of God completing His work of Creation on the seventh day. **3:4** This verse marks a second Creation account that zooms up more closely and intimately on the creation of humanity. Whereas the preceding account describes Creation on a broad, cosmic scale, this account focuses on the formation of humanity and the placement of Adam and Eve in the garden. **3:5** In a detail unique to the book of Moses, the Lord indicates that He had created all things “spiritually” before creating them “physically” (compare Moses 3:7, 9). The full implication of this declaration has yet to be completely explicated. What, precisely, does “spiritual” Creation look like? And why did the order of spiritual Creation depicted in the previous chapter differ from the order of “physical” (presumably) Creation depicted here? From modern revelation (Doctrine and Covenants 131:7-8), Latter-day Saints affirm that there is some kind of physical property to spirit, yet many questions remain about the nature of spirit and its relationship to the material world.