

GARY STRADLING - LOS ALAMOS FAITH AND SCIENCE FORUM - SUMMER 2021 LECTURE SERIES

ADAM'S ORIGINS AND PURPOSE

- Why Adam and Eve are essential to Christian Theology and to the development of Humanity
- How they can plausibly fit into the scientific view of paleontology
- Answer Chick Keller's question: "Can Neanderthals Go to Heaven?"

DISCLAIMER:

**THIS IS NOT A CATHOLIC, PROTESTANT, OR LDS TALK.
IT IS A FAITH AND SCIENCE TALK.**

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NOT CATHOLIC, PROTESTANT, OR LDS - A FAITH AND SCIENCE TALK

IT IS MY SYNTHESIS, INFORMED BY SCRIPTURES I HAVE READ,
THE SCIENCE I HAVE STUDIED,
MY ANALYSIS AND THE UNDERSTANDING I HAVE COME TO.
PARTS OF IT ARE ORIGINAL THOUGHT!

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**NOT CATHOLIC, PROTESTANT, OR LDS - A FAITH AND SCIENCE TALK
MY SYNTHESIS, MY ANALYSIS, MY ORIGINAL THOUGHTS!**

**I BELIEVE THE BIBLE
WITH THE ADDITIONAL BENEFIT OF THE SCRIPTURES OF THE
THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS (LDS)**

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MY SYNTHESIS, MY ANALYSIS, MY ORIGINAL THOUGHTS!
BIBLE + LDS SCRIPTURES**

**I BELIEVE IN GOD AND JESUS CHRIST, AND IN THE CREATION
AS DESCRIBED IN SCRIPTURE AND AS EVIDENCED BY SCIENCE**

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BIBLE + LDS SCRIPTURES

GOD, JESUS CHRIST, AND CREATION: TOLD BY GOD, AND SCIENCE

I BELIEVE:

**ALL THAT GOD HAS REVEALED,
ALL THAT HE DOES NOW REVEAL,
AND I BELIEVE THAT HE WILL YET REVEAL
MANY GREAT AND IMPORTANT THINGS
PERTAINING TO THE KINGDOM OF GOD.**

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BIBLE + LDS SCRIPTURES

**GOD, JESUS CHRIST, AND CREATION: TOLD BY GOD, AND SCIENCE
I BELIEVE IN CONTINUING REVELATION ABOUT GODS WORK**

I BELIEVE SCIENCE DATA, IF MEASURED CORRECTLY

I VALUE SCIENCE ANALYSIS, IF DONE RIGHT

I RESPECT SCIENCE THEORY- UNTIL IT DEVIATES FROM DATA

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GOD, JESUS CHRIST, AND CREATION: TOLD BY GOD, AND SCIENCE

I BELIEVE IN CONTINUING REVELATION ABOUT GODS WORK

I BELIEVE IN SCIENCE

**I HAVE UNDERScoreD LDS CONCEPTS AND *ITALICIZED*
BIBLICAL CONCEPTS. HOWEVER, THERE ARE A NUMBER OF
CONCEPTS HERE THAT ARE MY OWN.**

CHICK AND MORRIE PRESENTED ALTERNATE VIEWS

- **Chick Keller: Scientific Constraints on the Existence of Adam and Eve (July 7)**
- **Morrie Pongratz: Christology without the ‘fall’: Do we need Adam and Eve? (July 14)**

MORRIE AND CHICK PRESENTED ALTERNATE VIEWS

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**IS THERE A RELIGIOUS PERSPECTIVE THAT FRAMES
THE CREATION AND ADAM AND EVE IN A WAY THAT IS COMPATIBLE WITH SCIENCE?**

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IS THERE A RELIGIOUS PERSPECTIVE THAT FRAMES THE CREATION AND ADAM AND EVE IN A WAY THAT IS COMPATIBLE WITH SCIENCE?

- I will present a coherent **religious** “**Theory of Mankind**” that synthesizes evolutionary science, biology, a **mostly-literal** reading of scripture, and the “Hereafter”.
- This is not a **scientific theory** that aligns **science** with **the Biblical account**, but a **religious theory** that puts a literal reading of scripture and science together with meaning. My theory mostly supports accepted science.
 - Makes **physical and theological** sense
 - **It is not allegorical.**
 - May not fully align with your interpretations of the Bible or traditional theological analysis- **but that gap between classical Christian interpretation of the Bible and science was the problem in the first place!**
 - **You will likely feel a visceral rejection of unfamiliar ideas.**
Please hold an open (scientific) mind and ask:
“Does this perspective enable me to understand Adam and Eve and the Creation from both a scientific and religious basis?”

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**IS THERE A RELIGIOUS PERSPECTIVE THAT FRAMES
THE CREATION AND ADAM AND EVE IN A WAY THAT IS COMPATIBLE WITH SCIENCE?**

**“There is no conflict between science and religion.
Conflict only arises from an incomplete knowledge of
either science or religion, or both”**

Russell M. Nelson- Prophet

President: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

- Research Scientist - Heart Replacement Pioneer

RICHER DATA USUALLY LEADS TO CLEARER UNDERSTANDING

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The Bible

BIBLICAL DATA ON ADAM AND EVE ARE VERY SPARSE:

OLD TESTAMENT (1184 PAGES) 11 REFS

NEW TESTAMENT (405 PAGES), 5 REFS

TOTAL: 1589 PAGES, 16 REFS OF ADAM

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LDS Scripture

ADAM AND EVE, THE GARDEN, THEIR PURPOSES AND IMPACTS: ARE DISCUSSED BY GOD IN NUMEROUS OTHER REVELATIONS, IN A VARIETY OF CONTEXTS, including three separate creation accounts, IN OTHER SCRIPTURAL WORKS:

THE BOOK OF MORMON (530 PAGES), 19 REFS

PEARL OF GREAT PRICE (61 PAGES), 10 REFS

DOCTRINE AND COVENANTS (300 PAGES) 11 REFS

TOTAL: 891 PAGES, 40 REFS OF ADAM

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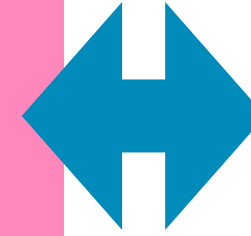
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Together: 2480 pages of inspired scripture, 56 references to Adam

LDS Scripture nearly quadruples the number of references to Adam in scripture

Greatly extends the factual, contextual and theological impact

RICHER DATA USUALLY LEADS TO CLEARER UNDERSTANDING



2480 Pages of inspired scripture
56 references to Adam

WHICH OF THESE IMAGES BEST REPRESENTS YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF:

- GOD ?
- HIS PURPOSES ?
- ADAM AND EVE ?
- WHO WE ARE ?
- OUR DESTINY AS HUMANS ?

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THE CLARITY OF OUR UNDERSTANDING IS A MEASURE OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF OUR APPROACH AND THE CONTENT OF OUR SOURCES

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HOWEVER, WIKIPEDIA SAYS THAT MOST MAINSTREAM CHRISTIAN CHURCH'S CONSIDER GENESIS ACCOUNTS OF THE CREATION AND ADAM AND EVE TO BE ALLEGORICAL: FALSE STORIES WITH USEFUL MORALS: E.G.

- GOD CREATED THE UNIVERSE
- THE SEVEN DAY WORK WEEK IS BLESSED BY GOD

[HTTPS://EN.WIKIPEDIA.ORG/WIKI/ALLEGORICAL_INTERPRETATIONS_OF_GENESIS](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Allegorical_interpretations_of_Genesis)

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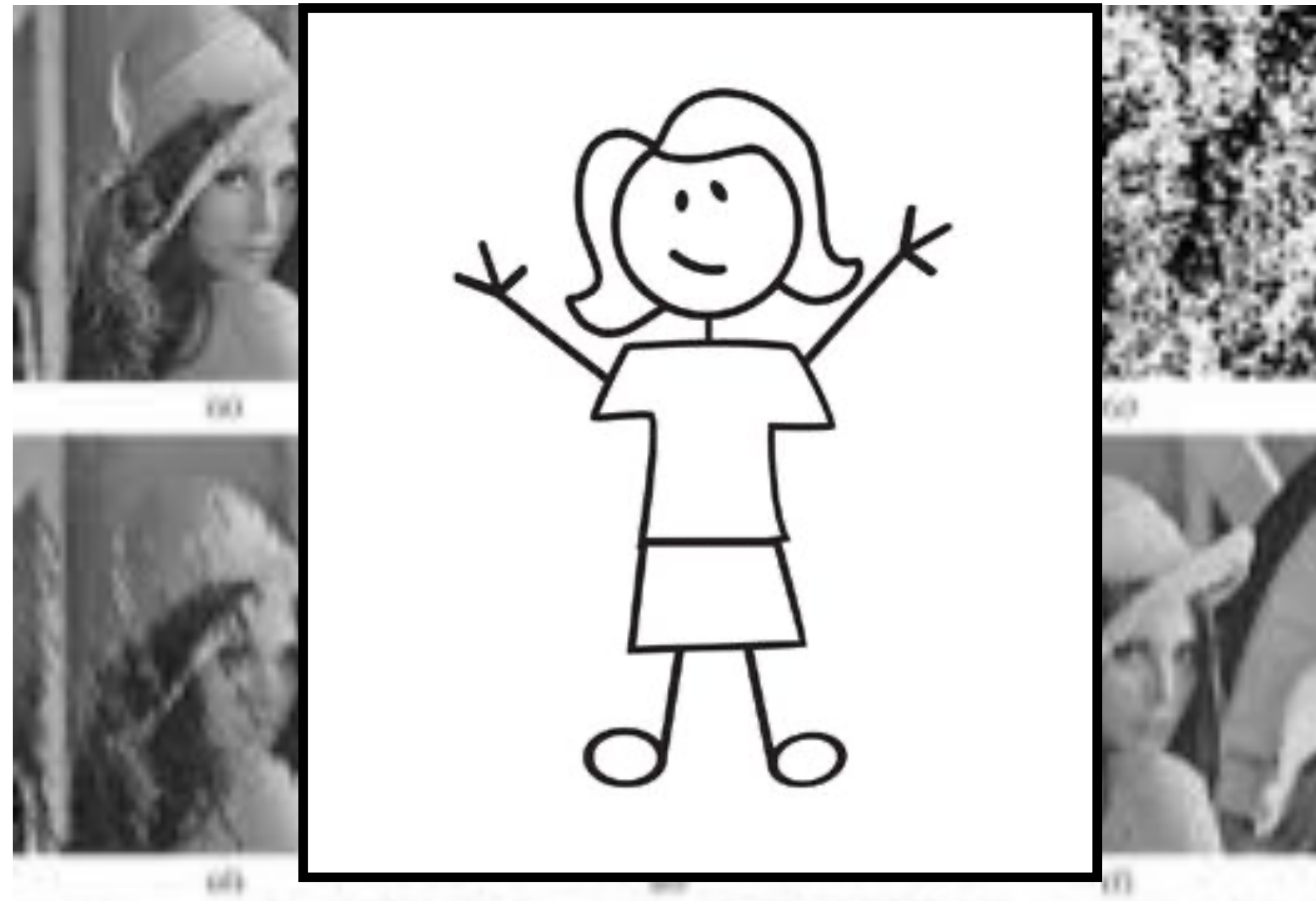
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SO INSTEAD OF BUILDING UP AN ACCURATE IMAGE, A CARTOON IS SUBSTITUTED INSTEAD.

RICHER DATA USUALLY LEADS TO CLEARER UNDERSTANDING



SCIENCE SAYS THAT REAL THINGS HAVE TEXTURE, DEPTH, LAYERS, COMPOSITION, ETC. THAT CAN BE EXAMINED AND UNDERSTOOD.

**2480 Pages of inspired scripture
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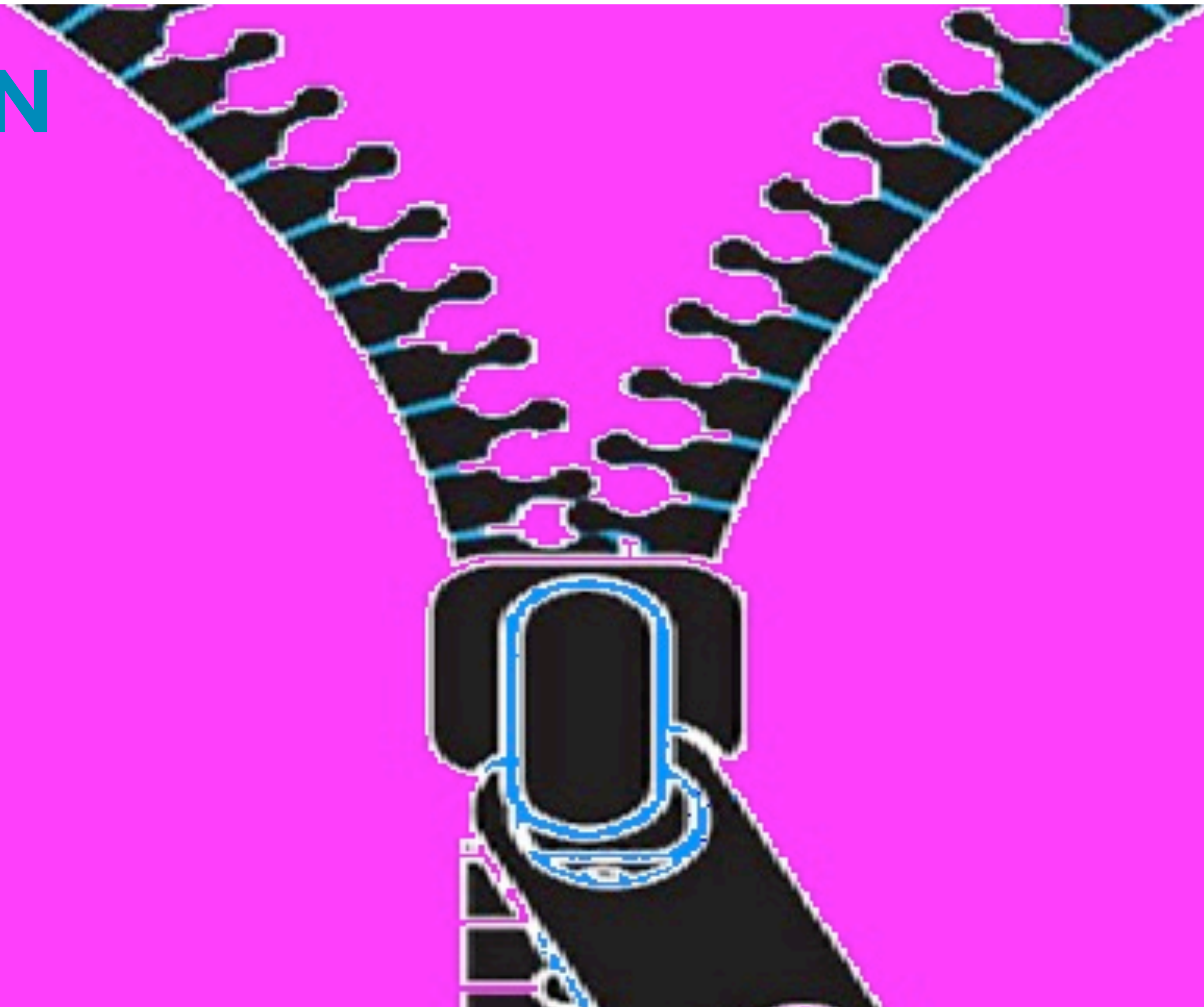
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CLOSING THE ZIPPER

RELIGION

SCIENCE



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RELIGION

SCIENCE

Mostly Practical

- Comprehensible
- Connected
- Causal
- Data rich
- Measurable & Repeatable
- Continuous refinement
- Life Changing for Better

CLOSING THE ZIPPER

RELIGION

Mystical or Practical?

- Symbolic — explicable?
- Miraculous — comprehensible?
- Episodic — connected?
- Cosmic — localizable?
- Allegorical — real?
- Static — evolving?
- Idealistic — real world?

SCIENCE

Mostly Practical

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CLOSING THE ZIPPER

RELIGION

Mystical or Practical

- Symbolic — experiential
- Miraculous — connected to the divine
- Episodic — connected to the past
- Cosmic — localized
- Allegorical — real world
- Static — evolving
- Idealistic — real world

IF A RELIGION IS:

- MYSTICAL AND CEREMONIAL
- ALLEGORICAL, AND PHILOSOPHICAL — WITHOUT CONNECTING TO REAL WORLD
- TRADITIONAL AND STATIC — DISCONNECTED FROM TODAY
- EPISODIC, UNPREDICTABLE, OR DISCONTINUOUS
- IF MIRACLES ARE “MAGICAL” WITH NO EXPECTATION OF COMPREHENSIBILITY

THAT MAY BE **BEAUTIFUL OR INSPIRING**

BUT IS A MAJOR LIMITATION

IN LINKING TO **SCIENCE**

AND THE WORLD IN WHICH WE LIVE

SCIENCE

Practical

Comprehensible

Tested

With

Observable & Repeatable

Continuous refinement

— Life Changing for Better



CLOSING THE ZIPPER

RELIGION

SCIENCE

THE GENESIS CREATION OF THE WORLD AND OF ADAM AND EVE ARE HISTORICAL POINTS OF DISCONNECT BETWEEN FAITH AND SCIENCE ...

... AS THE QUESTIONS OF ORIGINS AND HUMAN ASCENDENCY ARE POINTS OF FOCUS OF SCIENCE AND REMAIN A CORE FOCUS OF CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

CLOSING THE ZIPPER

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**SO THIS IS AN EXCELLENT AREA TO EXPLORE
CLOSING THE ZIPPER**

THEOLOGY AND SCIENCE APPEAR IN CONFLICT— HOW TO RESOLVE THIS?

CLASSICAL CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY (VARIOUS):

**GOD CREATED THE UNIVERSE, THE EARTH, AND LIFE
IN 7 (DAYS?)**

SCIENCE:

14 B YR UNIVERSE, 4.6 B YR EARTH AND 3.6 B YR LIFE

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SCIENCE:

**GOD CREATED THE UNIVERSE, THE EARTH, AND LIFE
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16 B YR UNIVERSE, 4.5 B YR EARTH AND 3.6 B YR LIFE

HUMANS ARE A CLASS APART FROM OTHER LIFE

HUMANS SAME AS OTHER LIVING THINGS

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OUR “SPIRIT SOUL” EXPLAINS EXCEPTIONAL HUMANITY

**A) HUMAN GROWTH IN EVOLUTIONARY FITNESS WAS MODEST OVER 5-7 M YRS.
B) ABRUPT 6000 YR LEAP IN MAN’S EVOLUTIONARY FITNESS IS MIRACULOUS**

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ALL HUMANS DESCENDED FROM ADAM AND EVE - ONLY 6000 YEARS AGO

HUMANS ARE A MIX OF SEVERAL ARCHAIC MEGAYEAR-SCALE PROTOHUMAN LINES—DNA

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DEATH AND HAPPENSTANCE FROM BEGINNING

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HEAVEN IN GOD’S PRESENCE IS GOAL- (FOR A CHOSEN FEW!)

SOCIETY DEVELOPED BASED ON VALUES/ETHICS, GOVERNANCE, HUMAN DISCIPLINE

FRAMEWORK OF THE THEORY

I am going to present a rational way to understand Adam and Eve by understanding God's work and how they were instrumental in accomplishing His plan.

- **GOD LITERALLY CREATED THIS EARTH, AND ITS HEAVENS (ATMOSPHERE), AND LIFE: IN 7 PHASES WITH DURATIONS AS OBSERVED BY SCIENCE**
- **ALL LIFE ARE GOD'S EXQUISITE CREATIONS, WITH SPIRITS*/SOULS—SPARROWS AND LILIES.**
- **THE PROCESS OF GOD'S CREATION IS EVOLUTIONARY, WITH PURPOSE, AND BY MECHANISMS NOT FULLY UNDERSTOOD BY SCIENCE OR RELIGION.**
- **DEATH, INDIVIDUAL CHOICE: BOTH ESSENTIAL PARTS OF HIS EVOLUTIONARY CREATION PROCESS**
- **MORTAL HUMAN BODIES ARE THE ULTIMATE OF GOD'S DEVELOPMENT, DESIGNED TO BRING US POWER AND JOY**
- **MANKIND ARE GOD'S CAPSTONE DEVELOPMENT — DEVELOPED FOR HIS PURPOSE, AS PARTNERS, NOT MINIONS!**
- **ADAM AND EVE AND THE GARDEN:**
 - **GOOD/EVIL DEFINED BY WILLING OBEDIENCE/DISOBEDIENCE TO GOD'S LAWS**
 - **THEY SINNED, REPENTED AND WERE FORGIVEN. ENJOYED BENEFITS OF GOD'S GRACE**
 - **RECEIVED GOD'S LAWS OF HEAVEN: ETERNAL MARRIAGE, FAMILIES, SOCIAL LAWS OF LOVE AND COOPERATION**
 - **INITIALLY ISOLATED IN GARDEN, BUT AFTERWARDS TAUGHT OTHER HUMANS**
 - **ENABLE SOPHISTICATED SOCIETY BASED ON INDIVIDUAL AGENCY AND GOD-GIVEN PRINCIPLES**
- **LAWS OF HEAVEN GUIDE PERSONAL CHOICE, WITH ASSISTANCE FROM GOD, JESUS, AND THE HOLY SPIRIT.**

**I SEE THIS AS A REFINEMENT OF CLASSICAL CHRISTIAN VIEWS,
NOT IN CONFLICT WITH BIBLICAL TEXTS**

***SEE FUTURE TALK ON
A THEORY OF SPIRITS**

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**OBEDIENCE TO GOD'S LAWS
IS THE PRIMARY ENGINE
WHEREBY GOD BLESSES MANKIND**

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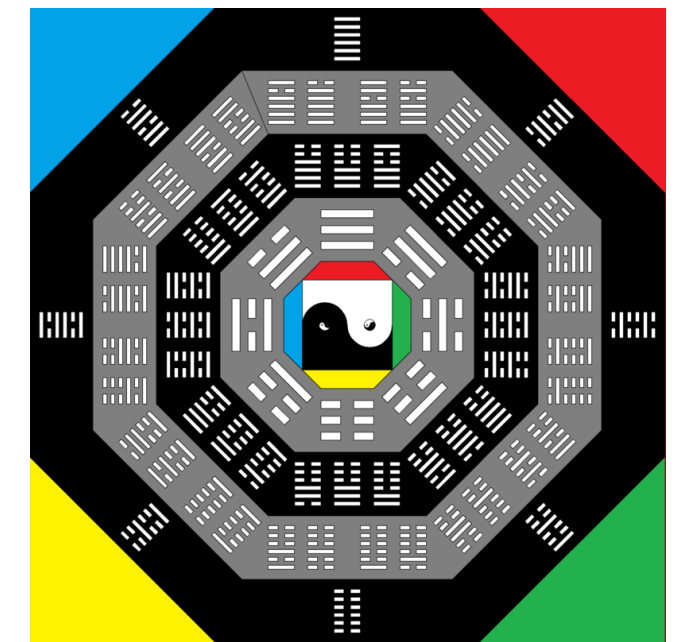
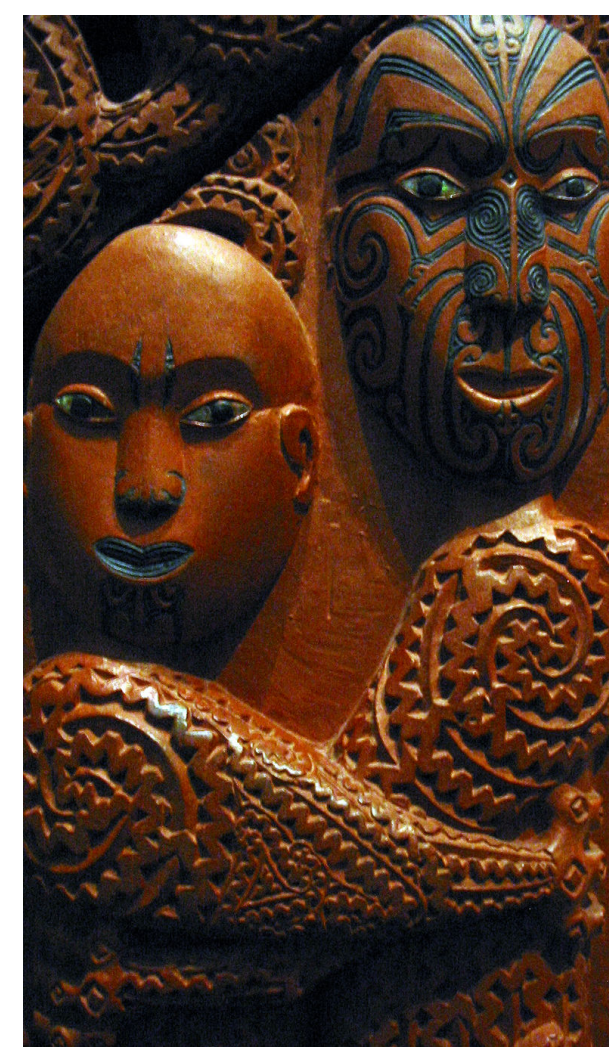
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THE CREATION: FAITH AND SCIENCE

Creation Myths

- **Creation ex nihilo:** the thought, word, dream or bodily secretions of a divine being.
- **Earth Diver Creation:** a bird or amphibian sent to plunge to the seabed through a primordial ocean to bring up sand or mud which develops into a terrestrial world.
- **Emergence Myths:** progenitors pass through a series of worlds and metamorphoses to reach the present world.
- **Dismemberment Myth:** Creation by the dismemberment of a primordial being.
- **Cosmic Egg:** Creation by the cracking of a cosmic egg.





THE CREATION: FAITH AND SCIENCE



THE CREATION: FAITH AND SCIENCE



The **Genesis account** is **shorthand** for **literal and detailed physical and spiritual processes- as Science would dictate** (This is an account from a group of shepherds in an agricultural society!)

There are additional scriptural clues to be incorporated.

THE CREATION: FAITH AND SCIENCE

- God created this planet, its heavens (local atmosphere), and all life on it, by processes, and in a sequence, which Moses described in minimal detail in Genesis, but which **roughly follow scientific plausibility** from the perspective of an observer on the Earth (Genesis: “Days” = Phases or Eons, may be overlapping)
 - **Material: Phase 1:** chaos-> order; darkness->light; **Phase 2:** differentiation of mixed materials -> water, atmosphere (Earth was a “Wet Planet”); **Phase 3:** separation of mixed materials-> seas, land; **Phase 4:** clearing of atmosphere to reveal sun, moon, stars
 - **Life: Phase 3:** earth generates -> plants; **Phase 5:** water generates -> sea life, flying things; **Phase 6:** land generates -> land creatures; reproduce according to species to limits of sustainability; humans- created out of earth-> dominion over all terrestrial life
 - **Then:** Adam, the Garden of Eden—after the creation narrative.



THE CREATION: FAITH AND SCIENCE

- God created this planet, and all life on it, as described in Genesis and by science



<http://www.talkorigins.org/faqs/abioprob/abioprob.html>

<https://www.cs.unc.edu/~plaisted/ce/abiogenesis.html>

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abiogenesis>

- **Science** research shows that **“spontaneous” origin of life is not credible: requires long, sustained series of extremely improbable events-**

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- **Protein, to virus, to prokaryote, to eukaryote, etc.**, requires a cooperative environment for survival and propagation **at every step**. Each of those highly improbable events must be **preserved, sustained, and propagated**, for life to come into being spontaneously.

THE CREATION: FAITH AND SCIENCE

- God created this planet, and all life on it, as described in Genesis and by science

- Science research shows that “spontaneous” origin of life is not credible: requires long, sustained series of extremely improbable events
- Abiogenesis discussions are currently focused on the spontaneous generation of a single protein, with very low probabilities.
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<http://www.talkorigins.org/faqs/abioprob/abioprob.html>

<https://www.cs.unc.edu/~plaisted/ce/abiogenesis.html>

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abiogenesis>

- A **passionate anti-theist scientific community**, staffed with the best and the brightest, **(the prize of inventing life!)** has been drilling that well for many, many decades and **have nothing to show for it.**

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**Spontaneous generation of life
is a shockingly unscientific theory, counter to all human experience,
and remains unsubstantiated**

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- **Science** says that **life changed this planet** from a desolate hostile place (like Mars/Venus), to its current diverse, beautiful, life-sustaining state.
- 2/3 of all minerals on Earth **come from presence of life*** - **the Great Oxidation Event, etc.**

Religion affirms that this was God's plan

*Patrick Rowe “An Introduction to Mineral Evolution” - Los Alamos Geological Society 7/20/2021

THE CREATION: FAITH AND SCIENCE

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- Science research shows that “spontaneous” origin of life is not credible
- God-created life changed Earth to its current diverse, beautiful, life sustaining state



- Moreover- Religion and Science together show God’s method:

If He could do it all in an instant, with the wave of a Magic Wand, then why did He take 4.5 billion painstaking years?

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- God-created life changed Earth to its current diverse, beautiful, life sustaining state
- This is how God works.



- **Science** observes: All life—plant and animal (etc.) are one family; intimately related in genome, structure, operating processes, following a multi-threaded process of development and sustainment that has filled the Earth with life.
 - Religion tells us that this creation **was with intent**—part of a divine Plan. **Neither Religion nor Science understand the methods used.**
 - **Anti-theists recoil** at “intent”, but have **no answer** to the **origin of life** or the process of **sophisticated engineering of life forms.**

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- Anti-theists claim that “(c)reation” is the result of life or the process of spontaneous generation.

RANDOM MUTATIONS + NATURAL SELECTION ≠ EXQUISITE ENGINEERING OR ART SEEN IN LIFE!

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- All terrestrial life are one integrated family



- **Science** says the Universe is a **vast, stochastic, unfeeling, system,** described **imperfectly** by **General Theory of Relativity, the Standard Model, & Big Bang Theory.**
- **Religion: God brings creative development, intelligence, order, unity, peace, and safety to a dangerous universe.**

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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.

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.

MOSES 1:33-35

THE PRE-GARDEN “STATE OF NATURE” OF ALL LIFE: PLANTS, ANIMALS, PROTOHUMANS

- **Death Looms:** From the beginning, all life has struggled for survival and to thrive.
- **Choice:** All life makes continual choices to evade death, to optimize its prospects- from microbe, to whale, to aspen grove, to protohuman.
- **Paradise?** The world was full of opportunity and happenstance—**no sin, no good, no evil**, just circumstance to be dealt with.
- **Natural Man unconstrained by God’s Law:** Whatever is expedient for survival: “every man fared in this life according to the management of the creature; therefore every man prospered according to his genius, and every man conquered according to his strength; and whatsoever a man did was no crime.” Korihor (Alma 30:17)



**“LIFE IN THE STATE OF NATURE IS SOLITARY, POOR,
NASTY, BRUTISH, AND SHORT.” THOMAS HOBBS**

ADAM AND EVE



ADAM AND EVE

- “The first man Adam was made a living soul” (1 Cor 15:45)
- “Adam, who was the first man” (D&C 84:16)



ADAM AND EVE

- Adam was first “man”

- **BUT! PALEONTOLOGY FINDS HUMAN REMAINS AND DNA DATING FROM LONG BEFORE ADAM**

“There are **(only) thousands** of **(human)** fossils, **mostly fragmentary, often consisting of single bones or isolated teeth, with complete skulls and skeletons rare,**” from 7-8 million years ago to 5300 years ago. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_human_evolution_fossils,

Chick Keller describes the paleontological evidences, **but not the scarcity of the data.**

News article this week claimed that “only **1.5 to 7 per cent of the modern human** genome is unique to us” compared to Denisovan, Neanderthals. (<https://www.newscientist.com/article/2284331-just-1-5-to-7-per-cent-of-the-modern-human-genome-is-uniquely-ours/>)



ADAM AND EVE

- Adam was first “man”
- Other Humans preceded Adam

**I DEFINE “MANKIND” AS “HUMANS WITH THE LAW”
A METAPHORICAL SOFTWARE UPGRADE;
MANKIND = HUMAN 2.0**



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SEMANTICS CAN MATTER IN SCRIPTURE



ADAM AND EVE

- Modern “mankind” have ‘same’ genome as protohumans

— Adam’s creation/birth:

- Using **mechanisms already developed by God** through evolution: insemination in human mother, gestation, birth, nurturing. *(Like Jesus being born to Mary)*
- **“Breath of life,” same as for all living things**— incorporation of **previously-created spirit body** (Moses 3:5 Jeremiah 1:5) through natural growth and development of cells and systems.

(Chick Keller’s uniquely human “Spiritual Soul”, not Biblical, is an unnecessary constraint)

- **Pre-mortal Spirit Adam** was a leader in God’s work.
Adam was exceptional!



ADAM AND EVE

- Modern mankind have ‘same’ genome as protohumans
- Adam’s creation/birth: Natural processes

— Adam and Eve were married by God in the Garden

24 Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.

25 And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed. (Genesis 2)

— Full marriage relationship— no sexual sin

4 And he (Jesus) answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female,

5 And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh?

6 Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. (Matt 19:4-7)

