

CREATION AND EVOLUTION

A Witness of Prophets

A Transcript of the Video

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(A WITNESS)

“It has been truthfully said that organic evolution is Satan’s chief weapon in this dispensation in his attempt to destroy the divine mission of Jesus Christ.” (Joseph Fielding Smith, *Man, His Origin and Destiny* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1954], 184 – 185.)

“It is . . . apparent to all who have the Spirit of God in them that Joseph Fielding Smith's writings will stand the test of time.” (Ezra Taft Benson, *This Nation Shall Endure* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1977], 27.)

(CONFUSION)

(Animation)

Ichthus

\ɪkˈθʊs\, n. [Greek] In the early Christian Church, founded by Jesus Christ, this secret symbol was used to recognize a true follower during times of persecution. The word ichthus is formed from the Greek words meaning “Jesus Christ, God’s Son is Saviour.”

“In the beginning, there was a fish on the back of a car. And it begat a ‘Darwin fish.’ . . . The new design, created in the 1980s, was meant as a poke at biblical creationism. . . . Call it an end-of-the-century version of the 1925 Scopes trial, played out not in courtrooms but on bumpers. The Darwin fish folk are rebutting creationist teachings . . .” (Gary D. Robertson, Associated Press writer, *SouthCoast Today*, October 21, 1996.)

In my hands I hold possibly the two most influential books of the last two centuries. In my right, I hold the revelations of God as compiled in the Bible. The Bible was a primary text in schools

throughout most of the 19th century. During the 20th century, the Bible was largely replaced by the ideas of Charles Darwin, many of which are contained in this other book, *On the Origin of Species*. This presentation will explore what latter-day prophets of God have taught in response to this shift. (James F. Stoddard III, Founder – ZionVision)

(DOES IT MATTER)

A WORLD EVER LEARNING

Does Truth Matter?

“Moses was caught up into an exceedingly high mountain, and he saw God face to face, and he talked with him.” (Moses 1:1-2)

The Creation story is included in the standard works several times. The Bible opens with the record of God creating man and the world in Genesis. Two detailed accounts are included in the Pearl of Great Price, one in the book of Moses and another in the book of Abraham. The Creation is a major theme of the Book of Mormon and is commonly discussed throughout the scriptures. Furthermore, another detailed account is rehearsed in the temple ceremony. In addition to all of these scriptural witnesses, the Creation of man and the earth has been a frequent topic of latter-day prophets from the day of the Prophet Joseph Smith, until today. Time and time again the Lord repeats that He is the Creator and that the Creation was performed by the Word of His Power.

Creations of God, or random chance?
Does it really matter?

“And in nothing doth man offend God, or against none is his wrath kindled, save those who confess not his hand in all things.” (D&C 59:21)

(BEAUTY)

A WITNESS IN NATURE

Beauty

Beauty is something often forgotten in our modern world of business and technological advancement. In our faith, however, music, poetry and art are essential and bring purpose to life. Are there witnesses of God in the beauty of His creations? President Boyd K. Packer has taught:

“Beauty itself cannot be imagined as having come by accident.” (Boyd K. Packer, *The Law and the Light*, Book of Mormon Symposium, BYU, 30 October 1988)

The composer Joseph Haydn, after studying the Bible and viewing the wonders of God's Creation, bore this witness in musical majesty:

“The heavens are telling the glory of God,
The wonder of His work displays the firmament.”
(Joseph Haydn, “The Heavens are Telling,” from *The Creation*)

Do the works of God testify of His Power and Majesty or have these things come by chance? Is the awe of a star filled night, or the sunbeams of an early morning, the testimony of the priesthood power of an omniscient Father or the randomness of an evolving universe?

There is another witness that diverged from this divine understanding of nature. In his autobiography, Charles Darwin commented on the changes that came over him as he pursued his studies through an agnostic perspective.

“The old argument of design in nature which formerly seemed to me so conclusive, fails, now that the law of natural selection has been discovered. We can no longer argue that, for instance, the beautiful hinge of a bivalve shell must have been made by an intelligent being, like the hinge of a door by man. There seems to be no more design in the variability of organic beings and in the action of natural selection, than in the course which the wind blows.” (Charles Darwin, *The Autobiography of Charles Darwin*, p. 87)

As Darwin lost his faith in God and his faith that God had created the universe, he lost his love of nature and its beauty. Darwin further expressed his experience:

“I have said that in one respect my mind has changed during the last twenty or thirty years. Up to the age of thirty, or beyond it, poetry of many kinds . . . gave me great pleasure. . . . I have also said that formerly pictures gave me considerable, and music very great delight. But now for many years I cannot endure to read a line of poetry: I have tried lately to read Shakespeare, and found it so intolerably dull that it nauseated me. I have also almost lost any taste for pictures or music.—Music generally sets me thinking too energetically on what I have been at work on, instead of giving me pleasure. I retain some taste for fine scenery, but it does not cause me the exquisite delight which it formerly did.” (*Id.* at p. 138)

As Darwin’s view changed from nature being the work of an Omniscient hand to God having no part in the Creation, he no longer saw the beauty in nature. Darwin explained that it was not a general loss of his mental functions, but only a loss of sensibility and feeling:

“This curious and lamentable loss of the higher aesthetic tastes is all the odder, as books on history, biographies and travels (independently of any scientific facts which they may contain), and essays on all sorts of subjects interest me as much as ever they did. My mind seems to have become a kind of machine for grinding general laws out of large collections of facts, but why this should have caused the atrophy of that part of the brain alone, on which the higher tastes depend, I cannot conceive.” (*Id.* at p. 139)

Note the striking contrast to the composers, who grew in their love of nature and music as their understanding of God's hand in them increased.

“The loss of these tastes is a loss of happiness, and may possibly be injurious to the intellect, and more probably to the moral character, by enfeebling the emotional part of our nature.” (*Ibid.*)

(CELEBRATION)
POST CHRISTIAN BEGINNINGS
A New Era

On June 22, 1909, after two years of preparation, scholars and dignitaries met for a three-day celebration at Cambridge University to honor the centennial of the birth of Charles Robert Darwin. During these proceedings, presentations were delivered from leading delegates of prestigious universities, colleges and academies. The presentations focused on Darwin's life, thought and rapidly growing influence in the world, both in scientific and in religious thought.

“Darwin felt to the full all the ignorance that lay hidden under specious phrases like 'The Plan of Creation.'”

“It is interesting to note that the very word 'Creator' has nowadays almost passed into the region of mythology.”

“ . . . The Temptation . . . The confusion of tongues at the tower of Babel . . . The doctrine of Original Sin . . . The Virgin Birth . . . Vicarious Atonement, and the Resurrection . . . ”

“It is hard for the present generation, unless their breeding has been singularly archaic, to realize that these amazing doctrines were literally held and believed . . . ”

“It is the doctrine of evolution that has made this outlook possible and even necessary.”
(Jane Ellen Harrison, *The Influence of Darwinism on the Study of Religions*, 1909
Darwin Commemoration at Cambridge University)

Darwin's work was quickly becoming a standard in biology, anthropology, geology and other branches of science. Additionally, these concepts were increasingly being applied to history, theology, philosophy and other social sciences.

“Darwin's view of nature was dark—black Where most men and women generally believed in some kind of design in nature—some kind of plan and order . . . Darwin wanted them to see all life as empty of any divine purpose.” (Browne, Janet. 1995. *Charles Darwin: Voyaging, A Biography*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 542.)

(PROPHETS SPEAK)
MEANWHILE IN SALT LAKE CITY . . .
Church Response

At this time, President Joseph F. Smith, President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, watched the unfolding of these events with considerable interest. In November of the same year the First Presidency, Presidents Joseph F. Smith, John R Winder and Anthon H. Lund, would publish in the *Improvement Era* what has become one of the most controversial statements ever published by the Church as an official statement. In reference to the theories of Charles Darwin, the Presidency announced:

“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. The word of the Lord declares that Adam was 'the first man of all men' (Moses 1:34), and we are therefore in duty bound to regard him as the primal parent of our race.” (First Presidency of the Church, *The Origin of Man*, Improvement Era, Nov. 1909, 75–81) (see also *Ensign*, February 2002, p. 26)

Those following the theories of men and hailing Darwin’s ideas believed that an understanding of the origin of man should rightfully be gained by observation and through the principles of science. The First Presidency countered these arguments by declaring:

“Man, by searching, cannot find out God. Never, unaided, will he discover the truth about the beginning of human life. The Lord must reveal Himself, or remain unrevealed; and the same is true of the facts relating to the origin of Adam's race--God alone can reveal them.” (*Ibid.*)

The opposition centered upon whether it was the place of science and the learning of the world or rather the Lord and his prophets to declare the origins of life. The First Presidency Message continued by declaring that man is a child of God—both directly as a Spirit son or daughter and lineally through the physical body.

“The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, basing its belief on divine revelation, ancient and modern, proclaims man to be the direct and lineal offspring of Deity.” (*Ibid.*)

Because God is the Father of the human race, He alone can declare the facts relating to the origin of man. Again, the First Presidency declared that we do know the origin of man:

“What was the form of man, in the spirit and in the body, as originally created? In a general way the answer is given in the words chosen as the text of this treatise. 'God created man in his own image.' It is more explicitly rendered in the Book of Mormon thus: 'All men were created in the beginning after mine own image' (Ether, 3:15).” (*Ibid.*)

This was not the first time that a prophet of God had declared these theories to be false. In making this statement, the Presidency affirmed that it was not announcing anything previously unknown or untaught.

“In presenting the statement that follows, we are not conscious of putting forth anything essentially new . . . A restatement of the original attitude of the Church relative to this matter is all that will be attempted here.” (*Ibid.*)

These doctrines, as they state eternal truth, have never changed. President Boyd K. Packer, current acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve, made this statement in 1988:

“Twice the First Presidency has declared the position of the Church on organic evolution. The first, a statement published in 1909 entitled *The Origin of Man* was signed by Presidents Joseph F. Smith, John R. Winder, and Anthon H. Lund. The other, entitled *Mormon View of Evolution*, signed by Presidents Heber J. Grant, Anthony W. Ivins, and Charles W. Nibley, was published in 1925. It follows very closely the first statement,

indeed quotes directly from it.” (Boyd K. Packer, *The Law and the Light*, Book of Mormon Symposium, BYU, 30 October 1988)

The 1909 Presidency statement was made at the time of the 1909 Darwin Celebration held at Cambridge. The Heber J. Grant Presidency message, mentioned by President Packer, was a restatement at the time of the Scopes Monkey Trial in 1925.

“The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, basing its belief on divine revelation, ancient and modern, proclaims man to be the direct and lineal offspring of Deity.” (First Presidency of the Church, *The Origin of Man*, Improvement Era, Nov. 1909, 75–81) (see also *Ensign*, February 2002, p. 26)

“It is only . . . arrogance which made our forefathers declare that they were descended from . . . gods.” (Charles Darwin, *The Descent of Man*, pp. 31-32)

(SCOPES)
TRIAL OF THE CENTURY
A Nation Divided

The Scopes trial, often classed as “the trial of the century,” pitted the ACLU and acclaimed atheist lawyer, Clarence Darrow, against William Jennings Bryan, a famous Presidential candidate, who believed in the miracles of the Bible, including God’s hand in the Creation of the Earth.

In question was the Butler Act, passed a few months earlier by the Tennessee General Assembly, which declared:

“. . . that it shall be unlawful for any teacher in any . . . public schools of the State . . . to teach any theory that denies the story of the Divine Creation of man as taught in the Bible, and to teach instead that man has descended from a lower order of animals.” (Tennessee General Assembly, *Butler Act*, 1925, Chapter 27, House Bill No. 185, Section 1).

The issue at stake was the teaching of evolution in public schools. Bryan contended that evolution was morally pernicious, citing Darrow’s defense of two wealthy and well educated murderers, Leopold and Loeb, the previous year. Darrow’s words to the court had produced such emotion as to bring the Judge and many others to tears. Darrow had explained that the killers, although executing premeditated sexual molestation and murder, could not be held accountable as they were merely products of heredity and environment, neither of which was in their control. These young men were victims of inheritance, both biologically and in their social system of excessive wealth and education.

The defense had astounded the nation by carrying the theories of evolution into practical application. Darrow simply stated the facts. If we are merely products of an evolutionary chain, everything about us is determined by our genetics and the world around us, neither of which we can direct or even influence. Bryan cited Darrow’s own words:

“This terrible crime was inherent in his organism, and it came from some ancestor . . . Is any blame attached because somebody took Nietzsche's [evolutionary] philosophy seriously and fashioned his life upon it? . . . It is hardly fair to hang a 19-year-old boy

for the philosophy that was taught him at the university.” (Clarence Darrow, Leopold/Loeb Trial, 1924, see *World’s Greatest Court Trial, 178-79, 182, 332*)

Bryan cited Darrow’s own argument that the product of evolutionary teaching was excuse from moral responsibility. Darrow’s oration had overturned the death sentences of the murderers. The ACLU’s defense in the Scopes trial countered by arguing that the Bible should not be taken seriously on matters of science but should rather remain only a theological work in the realm of morality and ethics.

The highlight of the trial was Darrow’s calling of Bryan to the stand as a witness on the Bible. Darrow ridiculed the story of the whale swallowing Jonah, the account of the earth standing still, the teachings on the age of the earth and other miracles. He also scorned Bryan’s belief in the scriptures in these words:

“You insult every man of science and learning in the world because he does not believe in your fool religion. . . We have the purpose of preventing bigots and ignoramuses from controlling the education of the United States.” (Clarence Darrow, Scopes Trial, 1925)

The press coverage of the "Monkey Trial" was relentless. Newspapers carried the trial on the front page for days often ridiculing Bryan for his defense of the Bible. Debate was heated on both sides as Scopes was convicted by the court of opposing the Bible by teaching that man descended from a lower order of animals. The Creation/Evolution controversy became the talk throughout the nation.

Bryan died July 26, 1925, only five days after the trial ended, of a stroke caused by the exhaustion of the trial. In September of this same year, only a few weeks after the sentence of Scopes, the First Presidency republished portions of the original 1909 message including the phrases that affirm that mankind did not develop from lower orders of life, but was the direct and lineal offspring of Deity. These two Presidency statements assert an unbridgeable gulf between the theories of men and the word of God.

In addition to the First Presidency message published by President Grant in September of 1925, several of the general authorities in the October General Conference of the Church referenced the recent Scopes trial. President Heber J. Grant gave an honorable tribute to William Jennings Bryan explaining that Bryan had visited him in Utah and attended general conference. Bryan had been impressed with the teachings of the Latter-Day Saints and President Grant had been impressed with Mr. Bryan. President Grant added:

“I remember saying to my family that William Jennings Bryan ought to be a Latter-day Saint, because many of his views were in perfect harmony with our faith.” (President Heber J. Grant, *Conference Report, October 1925*, p. 4.)

George Albert Smith, who would later be President Grant’s successor as the President of the Church, added his own testimony in that same General Conference of the Church.

“Man did not come from a lower order of life. I am grateful that in the midst of the confusion of our Father's children there has been given to the members of this great organization a sure knowledge of the origin of man . . . that man came, not as some have believed, not as some have preferred to believe, from some of the lower walks of life, but our ancestors were those beings who lived in the courts of heaven. We came not from some menial order of life, but from our ancestor who is God, our Heavenly Father.

I am grateful that we are not laboring under a handicap such as I feel that some men are who feel that they have grown up and evolved from some unknown condition.” (George Albert Smith, *Conference Reports, October 1925*, p. 33.)

President Smith would later make a similar statement in 1946 as President of the Church:

“I said to a man one day, 'You can find out all about your ancestors if you will go with me to the Genealogical Library.' He said, 'I don't want to know anything about them.' I wouldn't either if I thought my ancestors could be traced back to an orangutan or a baboon. But like William Jennings Bryan [stated], 'Those who have any pride in that kind of ancestry will not connect me with their family tree.’” (President George Albert Smith, *Conference Report, April 1946*, p. 183.)

President Smith consistently taught that mankind has a royal pedigree descending from our Eternal Father in heaven rather than from lower orders of the animal creation.

“... which was the son of Seth, which was the son of Adam, which was the son of God.” (Luke 3:38)

Several other general authorities added their witness during the 1925 conference, including President Anthony W. Ivins, Joseph Fielding Smith, J. Golden Kimball and Orson F. Whitney. Elder Whitney of the Quorum of the Twelve, speaking of the Scopes Trial, noted:

“I wish to say that I was in full sympathy with the Great Commoner [William Jennings Bryan] in his general attitude on that historic occasion. I believe that when God made man in His own image, He made a man, and not a monkey, nor any other animal out of which man has evolved.” (Elder Orson F. Whitney, *Conference Report, October 1925*, Afternoon Session, 100.)

Finally, the colorful J. Golden Kimball quipped:

“I have never been more greatly impressed than by Colonel Bryan, a man of the world who died fighting for God and testifying as far as his knowledge went. What more can any man do? That is the way I feel.” (Elder J. Golden Kimball, *Conference Report, October 1925*, Closing Session, 159.)

It is clear that the leadership of the Church in 1909 and again in 1925 publicly opposed the advancing teachings that we descended from lower forms of life. Time has and will continue to prove the fruit of these teachings. Recently, President Thomas S. Monson quoted the evolutionary advocate, Clarence Darrow, in the April 2007 General Conference:

"No life is of much value, and . . . every death is [but a] little loss." (Clarence Darrow, *The Story of My Life* (1932), chapter 47, paragraph 34, as quoted by President Thomas S. Monson, April 2007 General Conference, see “I Know That My Redeemer Lives!” *Ensign*, May 2007, 22–25)

While William Jennings Bryan has been quoted by President Kimball:

“The humblest citizen of all the land, when clad in the armor of a righteous cause, is stronger than all the hosts of error.” (William Jennings Bryan, as quoted by President Spencer W. Kimball, *Humility*, BYU Devotional, January 16, 1963.)

The two rival lawyers in the Scopes case showing their true colors.

As the world increasingly views life as originating and continuing by chance, the inspired statements of prophets will stand in contrast, upholding the sanctity of life. The prophetic wisdom of the First Presidency in 1909 and again in 1925 has and will continue to become more evident. President Boyd K. Packer affirmed both the 1909 and the 1925 Presidency statements as well as the many other inspired statements made by apostles and prophets in these words:

“The doctrines in both of them are consistent and have not changed . . . Statements have been made by other presidents of the Church and members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles which corroborate these official declarations by the First Presidency.” (Boyd K. Packer, *The Law and the Light*, Book of Mormon Symposium, BYU, 30 October 1988)

“At some future period, not very distant as measured by centuries, the civilised races of man will almost certainly exterminate and replace throughout the world the savage races.” (Charles Darwin, *The Descent of Man*, p. 178)

“He who would live must fight. He who does not wish to fight in this world where permanent struggle is the law of life, has not the right to exist.” (Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf* (My Struggle), LW p. 77)

(LOSS OF FAITH)
DARWIN REJECTS GOD
A World Loses Faith

(Footage of Columbine High shooting)

“When my son Dan was murdered on the sidewalk at Columbine High School on April 20, 1999, I hoped that would be the last school shooting. Since that day, I tried to answer the question, 'Why did this happen?' This country is in a moral free-fall. For over two generations, the public school system has taught in a moral vacuum, expelling God from the school and from government, replacing him with evolution, where the strong kill the weak without moral consequences. And life has no inherent value. We teach there are no absolutes, no right or wrong, and I assure you the murder of innocent children is always wrong.” (Brian Rohrbough, interview on CBS Evening News, October 2, 2006)

After one of the deadliest school shootings in the history of the United States, 15 lay dead and 24 wounded in Littleton, near Denver, Colorado.

Has the teaching of evolution promoted the removal of God from our schools and from our lives? Does believing that man evolved from lower forms of life negatively influence society? Does it matter if God is removed from science curriculums?

Charles Darwin did not initially doubt the literal truth of the Bible. He attended a Church of England school and studied theology to become a clergyman at Cambridge. At first, Darwin was convinced of the truth that design in nature proves the existence of God. Over time, however, his ideas began to shift as he formulated his thoughts of natural selection or the survival of the fittest.

“The old argument of design in nature . . . which formerly seemed to me so conclusive, fails, now that the law of natural selection has been discovered.” (Charles Darwin, *The Autobiography of Charles Darwin*, p. 87)

As Darwin doubted the hand of God in nature, his faith became weaker. The more he pursued his theories, the less he believed in the scriptures and the faith of his youth. The miracles of the Bible became fantastic tales.

“I had gradually come . . . to see that the Old Testament from its manifestly false history of the world, with the Tower of Babel, the rainbow as a sign, etc., etc. . . . was no more to be trusted than the sacred books of the Hindoos, or the beliefs of any barbarian.” (*Id.* at p. 85)

The teachings of the New Testament lost validity in his eyes as well. Accepting a position that man had advanced through the years, the historians of the past became intellectually naive. He began to feel that those of earlier ages were ignorant and superstitious, and that their words could not be trusted. There was no evidence for faith.

“By further reflecting that the clearest evidence would be requisite to make any sane man believe in the miracles by which Christianity is supported,—that the more we know of the fixed laws of nature the more incredible do miracles become,—that the men at that time were ignorant and credulous to a degree almost incomprehensible by us,—that the Gospels cannot be proved to have been written simultaneously with the events,—that they differ in many important details, far too important as it seemed to me to be admitted as the usual inaccuracies of eye-witnesses;—by such reflections as these . . . I gradually came to disbelieve in Christianity as a divine revelation.” (*Id.* at p. 86)

This change of attitude did not come suddenly, but after long reflection on and application of the ideals which he had formulated. Darwin described his loss of faith in these words:

“Thus disbelief crept over me at a very slow rate, but was at last complete. The rate was so slow that I felt no distress, and have never since doubted even for a single second that my conclusion was correct.” (*Id.* at p.87)

Is faith in God weakened by a belief in Darwin’s theory of organic evolution?

(EXCLUDING GOD)
THE FRUIT OF DARWINISM
God Excluded

“Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?” (Matt. 7:16)

The Lord gave us this test for discerning between truth and error.

“A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit . . . Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.” (Matt. 7:18, 20)

What are the fruits of Darwin’s hypotheses’ in his own life and in the lives of unnumbered followers through the years? President Joseph Fielding Smith answered this question:

“Mr. Charles Darwin was first trained for the ministry. He accepted belief in God. After making his research and reaching his deductions, he forsook belief in God. Sir Arthur Keith also was trained for the ministry and accepted a belief in Jesus Christ. After he joined the ranks of Darwinism, he renounced his faith and rejected the Bible. So it has been with the many scores of others.” (Joseph Fielding Smith, *Man, His Origin and Destiny*, p. 280.)

“In our evolutionary conception of the universe, there is absolutely no room for . . . a Creator.” (Friedrich Engels, *Socialism, Utopian and Scientific*, Foreign Languages Publishing House, p. 21.)

Clearly the fruit of Darwinism is a weakening of faith. From the day of inception these theories, which explain life without God in the picture, have sapped the strength of Christianity throughout the world. Evolution by natural selection proved to be a significant blow to notions of divine creation prevalent in the 19th century.

“Darwin's doctrine, then in vogue, was a powerful attraction, since it promised to provide an extraordinary thrust to understanding the universe.” (Sigmund Freud, Father of Psychoanalytic Psychology, *An Autobiographical Study*, 1925)

In recent years this weakening of faith has continued and even increased.

“Religion is an illusion . . . “ (Sigmund Freud, “A Philosophy of Life: Lecture 35,” *New Introductory Lectures on Psycho-analysis*, London: Hogarth Press, 1933)

Atheism and secularism are spreading through the world like wild fire.

“Faith in the prayer-hearing God is an unproved and outmoded faith.” (John Dewey, Father of Progressive Education, “Soul Searching,” *Teacher Magazine*, September 1933, p.33)

Many today believe that God, who is the greatest scientist, should be excluded from scientific discussion.

“By offering evolution in place of God as a cause of history, Darwin removed the theological basis of the moral code of Christendom.” (Will Durant, “*We Are in the Last Stage of Pagan Period*,” *The Daily Californian*, El Cajon, CA, for April 8, 1980, p. 5)

Is it conceivable that God, the author of science, the Creator and Revelator of all scientific truths, should be excluded from mention in classes of science? The facts prove the prophetic words of President Joseph Fielding Smith:

“. . . one who follows the theories of Darwin, will eventually, like Darwin, lose all faith in God the Eternal Creator. Verily, those who insistently follow the evolutionary theories, cannot at the same time accept and worship an intelligent anthropomorphic God!” (Joseph Fielding Smith, *Man, His Origin and Destiny* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1954], 84 - 85)

This modern world has largely bought into the deception of those who would like to harmonize the false philosophies of the scientific world with a weak, un-saving faith. For those who deny miracles

and reject the supernatural, some have found that the best way to accord dignity and respect to both science and religion is to keep them in separate compartments. Science controls the realm of facts, while religion deals with the realm of values. Many argue that it is principally wrong for religious beliefs to have empirical consequences. By keeping the two separate, neither can contradict the other and each can coexist in mutual respect. Religion is transformed into a feel good nothingness. President John Taylor referred to this as fried froth.

“. . . eat it all day, and at night be as far from being satisfied as when you began.” (John Taylor, *The Gospel Kingdom*, p. 78)

What good is a religion that has no practicality in the real world? If science takes the practical world and religion is given ethics, there really is nothing left for religion to dictate. Note this rationale as used by an administrator in the Utah State Office of Education:

“I’ll occasionally have calls into our office [on evolutionary theory]. We always go back to what is science and what we believe and what we know based on evidence.” (Brett Moulding, science education specialist for the Utah State Office of Education, in *Evolution Taught the Mormon Way*, Associated Press, Oct. 4, 1999, by Hannah Wolfson: Associated Press Writer)

“. . . based on evidence.” In other words, “There is no rational or natural evidence for God, therefore He does not belong in a science class.” In our world, all educational subjects have striven to gain acceptance as science, whether physical science or social science. Should God be excluded from psychology, sociology and political science as well as other sciences? Should God be included in education at all? President Ezra Taft Benson gave us this warning:

“Today, students are subjected in their textbooks and classroom lectures to a subtle propaganda that there is a 'natural' or rational explanation to all causes and events. Such a position removes the need for faith in God.” (Ezra Taft Benson, *Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson*, p. 320)

President Brigham Young had this to say of those in the days of Joseph Smith who tried to separate the spiritual world from the physical world:

“In a public meeting of the Saints, I said 'Ye Elders of Israel . . . will some of you draw the line of demarcation, between the spiritual and temporal in the Kingdom of God, so that I may understand it?' Not one of them could do it . . . I finally requested them, either to draw the line of demarcation, between spiritual and temporal things, or ever afterwards hold their speech on that subject.” (*Journal of Discourses*, 10:363-4)

Do we really believe that we are justified in taking God out of science or God out of education? Have we not been repeatedly counseled otherwise? One such warning came from President David O. McKay nearly half a century ago. After hearing that the Supreme Court of the United States had removed prayer and religious instruction from public schools, President McKay made this stern prophetic statement:

“The Supreme Court of the United States severs the connecting cord between the public schools of the United States and the source of divine intelligence, the Creator Himself.” (David O. McKay, *Relief Society Magazine*, December 1962, p. 878)

Have we cut the connecting cord between the creations of God and the Creator Himself? The prophet Alma in the Book of Mormon testified:

“And also trust no one to be your teacher . . . except he be a man of God, walking in his ways and keeping his commandments.” (Mosiah 23:14)

(CONSEQUENCES)

MORAL LAW DISREGARDED

Resulting Consequences

“. . . some opponents of abortion respond that the fetus, unlike the dog or chimpanzee, is made in the image of God, or has an immortal soul. . . . But there is no evidence for these religious claims, and in a society in which we keep the state and religion separate, we should not use them as a basis for the criminal law . . .” (Peter Singer, Dept. of Bioethics, Princeton University, “Abortion, the dividing lines,” *Herald Sun*, August 25, 2007)

(Footage of children, ultrasound, abortion)

Abortion is one of the most common surgical procedures in the United States. One baby is aborted every 24 seconds. The clock is ticking . . .

Can a belief that man descended from lower forms of life be linked to serious issues like abortion? Prophets of God have so testified. President Boyd K. Packer has explained the serious consequences that arise from these teachings.

“Moral law regulates the behavior of human beings and sets man apart from, and above, the animal kingdom. If moral law is *not* an issue, then organic evolution is no problem. If moral law is an issue, then organic evolution as the explanation for the origin of man is *the* problem.” (Boyd K. Packer, *The Law and the Light*, Book of Mormon Symposium, BYU, October 30, 1988)

President Packer continued:

“The comprehension of man as no more than a specialized animal cannot help but affect how one behaves. A conviction that man did evolve from animals fosters the mentality that man is not responsible for moral conduct. Animals are controlled to a very large extent by physical urges. Promiscuity is a common pattern in the reproduction of animals. In many subtle ways, the perception that man is an animal and likewise controlled by urges invites that kind of behavior so apparent in society today. A self-image in which we regard ourselves as children of God sponsors one kind of behavior. A conclusion which equates man to animals fosters another kind of behavior entirely. Consequences which spring from that single false premise account for much of what society now suffers. I do not speak in theoretical terms; it matters very much in practical ways. The word abortion should suffice as an example.” (*Ibid.*)

(MISLEADING YOUTH)

MAN AS AN ANIMAL

Misleading Youth

President Packer also added how subtle the adversary is in his fostering of these teachings:

“Can you not see how careful, how clever, the adversary is? He need not even challenge the existence of moral laws; simply convince us that, as animals, we are not accountable and therefore exempt from them.” (Boyd K. Packer, *The Law and the Light*, Book of Mormon Symposium, BYU, October 30, 1988)

President Packer is not the only prophet of God to warn that the belief in man descending from lower forms of life can lead to serious consequences. President Ezra Taft Benson, while serving as President of the Church, spoke specifically on the subject of organic evolution. It is extremely rare for a prophet of God to name an individual when warning the Saints. In a caution to youth and their parents, he spoke of the deceptive theories of Charles Darwin:

“As a watchman on the tower, I feel to warn you that one of the chief means of misleading our youth and destroying the family unit is our educational institutions . . . if [parents] become alerted and informed, these parents can help expose some of the deceptions of men like . . . Charles Darwin and others.” (Ezra Taft Benson, *The Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson* [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1988], p. 307)

President Benson also repeatedly counseled students and parents to study the writings of the prophets to avoid deception on this vital subject.

“There will be times when you will have to choose between the revelations of God and the reasoning of men--between the prophet and the . . . professor.” (Ezra Taft Benson, *14 Fundamentals of Following the Prophet*, BYU Devotional, February 26, 1980)

President Brigham Young also warned of the dangers of teaching that man descended from lower forms of life. President Young felt that the theories of Charles Darwin and Thomas Huxley, who was known as "Darwin's Bulldog" for his advocacy of the theories of organic evolution, were corrupting the youth among the Saints in his day. Because of this, he used his own financial means to create an academy where these false philosophies could be refuted.

“We have enough and to spare, at present in these mountains, of schools where young infidels are made because the teachers are so tender-footed that they dare not mention the principles of the gospel to their pupils, but have no hesitancy in introducing into the classroom the theories of Huxley, of Darwin, or of Mill and the false political economy which contends against co-operation and the United Order. This course I am resolutely and uncompromisingly opposed to, and I hope to see the day when the doctrines of the gospel will be taught in all our schools, when the revelations of the Lord will be our texts, and our books will be written and manufactured by ourselves and in our own midst. As a beginning in this direction I have endowed the Brigham Young Academy at Provo.” (Brigham Young, *Letters of Brigham Young to His Sons*, p. 200)

Brigham Young Academy, the forerunner of Brigham Young University, was established to help refute the theories of Darwin, Huxley, Mill and Marx, all men who promoted the removal of God from their

respective fields. Charles Darwin and Thomas Huxley advocated eliminating God's hand in biology and science, while Mill and Marx desired God out of society and government.

"I know that I am, in spite of myself, exactly what the Christian would call, and, so far as I can see, is justified in calling, atheist and infidel." (Thomas Henry Huxley, letter to Charles Kingsley, May 6, 1863)

"I long to take vengeance on the One Who rules from above." (Karl Marx, "Invocation of One in Despair," poem written by Marx)

Brother Hugh Nibley has commented on this statement from Brigham Young:

"The purpose of the BYU, then, is to challenge the reigning philosophies of Darwinism and what today is commonly called Social-Darwinism (see Alma 30:17)—not to forbid their teaching but to present the gospel alternatives to it. Instead of which we still embrace both with uncritically open arms . . ." (Hugh Nibley, *More Brigham Young on Education*, Sperry Lecture, Brigham Young University, 11 March 1976)

President Young saw the dangers of false philosophies and desired Church schools to combat them. What of our schools today?

(AFTER THEIR KIND)
GOD'S LAW IN NATURE
After Their Kind

"And I, God, said . . .
Let the earth bring forth grass . . . after his kind
every herb yielding seed . . . after his kind
the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind whose seed should be in itself
Let the waters bring forth abundantly . . . after their kind
. . . and every winged fowl after his kind
Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind
. . . creeping things after their kind
. . . and it was so even as I spake."
(Moses 2)

The Lord repeats a form of the phrase "after their kind" in reference to His creative acts 38 times in the sacred scriptures. In addition, he teaches us repeatedly that all life possesses its own seed. In Abraham 4:12 the Lord repeats this phrase three times.

"The earth to bring forth grass from its own seed . . . the herb to bring forth herb from its own seed . . . the earth to bring forth the tree from its own seed." (Abraham 4:12)

These fundamental teachings are also continually repeated in the holy temples. This repetition provides essential instruction relative to God's Purpose and Design in the creation of man and other life on this earth.

Many Presidents of the Church have spoken plainly against the theories of organic evolution as they apply to man descending from lower orders of the animal creation. Presidents of the Church have also testified that animals did not come from a common ancestor, but were placed upon the earth in their respective kind. One such statement was made by President John Taylor, 27 years prior to the 1909 Presidency Message. Around the time of Charles Darwin's death in 1882, President Taylor, while President of the Church, wrote:

“The animal and vegetable creations are governed by certain laws, and are composed of certain elements peculiar to themselves. This applies to man, to the beasts, fowls, fish and creeping things, to the insects and to all animated nature These principles do not change, as represented by evolutionists of the Darwinian school, but the primitive organisms of all living beings exist in the same form as when they first received their impress from their Maker.” (John Taylor, *Mediation and Atonement*, p. 160)

There are those who feel that man did not evolve from lower forms of life, but that animals and plants may have. President Taylor taught clearly that animal life did not evolve as taught by Darwin, but that animated creation obeys those laws given by the Lord as stated in the scriptures. President Joseph Fielding Smith is a second witness to the accuracy of the scriptures in their declaration that animals and plant life did not come from a common source.

“The Lord placed a line of demarcation between the animal creation and the human family in the very beginning, before the foundations of this earth were laid. In fact there is an eternal decree that animals of different families, or species, shall remain separate from other species, and there are bounds they cannot pass.” (Joseph Fielding Smith, *Man, His Origin and Destiny* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1954], p. 167.)

More recently, President Boyd K. Packer humorously added his witness in story form in the 2006 BYU Women's Conference:

“Some years ago, I returned home to find our little children were waiting in the driveway. They had discovered a newly hatched batch of chicks under the manger in the barn.

As our little girl held one of them, I said in a teasing way, 'That little chick will make a nice watchdog when it grows up, won't it?' She looked at me quizzically, as if I didn't know much. So I changed my approach: 'It won't be a watchdog, will it?'

She shook her head, 'No, Daddy.'

Then I added, 'It will be a nice riding horse.'

She wrinkled up her nose and gave me that 'Oh, Dad!' look, for even a four-year-old knows that a chick will not be a dog or a horse or even a turkey; it will be a chicken. It will follow the pattern of its parentage. She knew that without having had a lesson or a lecture or a course in genetics.” (Boyd K. Packer, *Children of God*, BYU Women's Conference, May 5, 2006.)

After sharing this fun experience with his daughter, President Packer then applied the anecdote to issues of reproduction as taught in the scriptures:

“No lesson is more manifest in nature than that all living things do as the Lord commanded them in the Creation. They reproduce after their own kind (see Moses 2:12, 24–25). They follow the pattern of their parentage. Everyone knows that. Every four-

year-old knows that! A bird will not become an animal nor a fish. A mammal will not beget a reptile, nor 'do men gather . . . figs of thistles' (Matthew 7:16).” (*Ibid.*)

These witnesses harmonize with the writings of the Prophet Joseph Smith. The Prophet taught that as animals beget their own kind as commanded by the Lord, plant life conforms as well.

“God has made certain decrees which are fixed and immovable . . . for instance, the oak of the forest, the fruit of the tree, the herb of the field—all bear a sign that seed hath been planted there; for it is a decree of the Lord that every tree, plant, and herb bearing seed should bring forth of its kind, and cannot come forth after any other law or principle.” (Joseph Smith, *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, selected and arranged by Joseph Fielding Smith [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1976], 197.)

“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 . . .” (Moses 2:25)

The scriptures and words of the prophets harmoniously teach that plants, animals and man all reproduce only as commanded in the Creation, “after their kind.”

(MIRACLES) ***TIMES OF DOUBT*** ***A God of Miracles***

“. . . faith in religious dogma has been eroded by natural explanations of its mysteries. . .” (*Evolution*, 3rd Edition, College Textbook, Monroe W. Strickberger, University of California, Berkeley.)

“Then spake Joshua to the LORD in the day when the LORD delivered up the Amorites before the children of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel, Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon.

And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies. . . . So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day.” (Joshua 10:12-13.)

Did the sun and moon literally stand still? Does God control the elements? Are the miracles of the scriptures only fairy tales or accounts that stretched reality as they improved over repeated telling?

The way we answer these questions shapes the way we look at the world and live our lives. President Joseph F. Smith taught that those who lack faith in the miraculous accounts of the Creation and Fall as recorded in the standard works will invariably lack faith in other scriptural witnesses as well.

“Some . . . limit the power of God to the power of men, and we have some of these among us and they have been among our school teachers. They would have you disbelieve the inspired accounts of the Scriptures . . . but we know better And I say, beware of men who come to you with heresies that things come by laws of nature of themselves, and that God is without power.” (Joseph F. Smith, *Gospel Doctrine: Selections from the Sermons and Writings of Joseph F. Smith*, compiled by John A. Widtsoe [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1939], 372.)

Beware of those who say that things come by laws of nature of themselves . . .

Who in our day is saying that the Creation came by the laws of nature alone? It would be difficult to summarize Darwin's theory of natural selection more elegantly.

"There seems to be no more design in the variability of organic beings and in the action of natural selection than in the course which the wind blows." (Charles Darwin, *The Autobiography of Charles Darwin*, p. 87)

We must decide if we believe in the miraculous accounts of the scriptures dealing with the Creation, the Fall, the universal flood, the dividing of the continents, the confounding of languages and the miracles of Jesus. The scriptural account differs greatly from modern academia. One modern biologist, who rejects the miracles of the scriptures, spoke in contempt of the universal flood:

". . . the story is ignored as childish nonsense in most of the academic world, given no more attention nor validity than Grimm's fairy tales." (Duane E. Jeffery, *Noah's Flood: Modern Scholarship and Mormon Traditions*)

This same intellectual has spent much of his life promoting the theories of Darwinism while belittling the words of latter-day Prophets of God. He has given this rationale for his rejection of the miracle of the flood:

"Can one really fit ten million species onto a single ocean-going vessel, feed and care for them all with their often very restrictive diets or living conditions (many of which we are helpless to duplicate even with modern systems), and keep it all going with just eight people for an entire year? The answer, plainly, is no." (*Ibid.*)

A belief in the scriptural account of the Creation and Fall and the miraculous narrative of the universal flood requires faith, including a belief in the power of God to perform miracles. The Prophets of God in this dispensation have possessed this faith. Note their uncompromising faith in the miracles of the scriptures contrasted with the quibbling knees of some moderns. President Howard W. Hunter has testified:

"The Old Testament unfolds the story of the creation of the earth and mankind by God. Should we now disregard this account and modernize the creation according to the theories of the modernists? Can we say there was no Garden of Eden or an Adam and Eve? Because modernists now declare the story of the flood is unreasonable and impossible, should we disbelieve the account of Noah and the flood as related in the Old Testament?" (Howard W. Hunter, *That We Might Have Joy* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1994], p. 22.)

Primary children are taught the realities of God and His work on this earth. In growing older, is this faith retained? President Hunter continued by quoting the Savior's words in Matthew relative to the universal Flood as a type of the Second Coming. As the earth was completely baptized and washed of all wickedness by the waters of the flood, so at the Savior's Second Coming will the earth be baptized by fire and completely cleansed yet again (Matt. 24:36-39). Commenting on this passage, President Hunter continued.

“In this statement the Master confirmed the story of the flood without modernizing it. Can we accept some of the statements of the Lord as being true and at the same time reject others as being false?” (*Id.*, at p. 23)

“. . . as the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. . . . Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left.” (Matthew 24:36, 41)

The Lord has asked each of us to strive for child-like faith. President Hunter continued by explaining that Jesus Christ believed in a literal universal flood; that same Jesus Christ who taught that He was the resurrection and the life. Faith in the miracles of the scriptures is essential to faith in the Atonement and Resurrection. President Hunter continued:

“How can we modernize the story of the flood, or refer to it as a myth, and yet cling to the truth of the [Atonement and Resurrection]? How can we modernize the Bible and still have it be a guiding light to us and a vital influence in our beliefs?” (Howard W. Hunter, *That We Might Have Joy* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1994], p. 23.)

Finally, President Hunter added his testimony of the literal miraculous events as found in the Bible record:

“There are those who declare it is old-fashioned to believe in the Bible. Is it old-fashioned to believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of the Living God? Is it old-fashioned to believe in His atoning sacrifice and the resurrection? If it is, I declare myself to be old-fashioned and the Church to be old-fashioned. In great simplicity, the Master taught the principles of life eternal and lessons that bring happiness to those with the faith to believe.” (*Ibid.*)

One must decide if the literalistic scriptural interpretation of the prophets of God, including the latter-day Presidents of the Church, is accurate.

“And truth is knowledge of things as they are, and as they were, and as they are to come.” (D&C 93:24)

An additional warning comes from the Book of Mormon. Moroni, after seeing our day in vision, spoke of those who would deny the role of God in the Creation of man, the earth and the universe:

“Who shall say that it was not a miracle that by his word the heaven and the earth should be; and by the power of his word man was created of the dust of the earth; and by the power of his word have miracles been wrought?” (Mormon 9:17)

Miracles are those occurrences performed by the Priesthood authority of God which could not take place without His Supreme Intervention. The Prophet Jacob explained that faith to believe that God could create this earth through His Word is linked to faith in His ability to control the elements:

“Wherefore, if God being able to speak and the world was, and to speak and man was created, O then, why not able to command the earth, or the workmanship of his hands upon the face of it, according to his will and pleasure?” (Jacob 4:9)

Are the laws of chance responsible for the wonders of the universe? What role does the omnipotence of God play in the upholding of the cosmos? In response to the question of whether faith, priesthood authority and laws beyond scientific comprehension were involved in the Creation, the words of Joseph Smith add clarity:

“It was by faith that the worlds were framed. God spake, chaos heard, and worlds came into order by reason of the faith there was in HIM. So with man also; he spake by faith in the name of God, and the sun stood still, the moon obeyed, mountains removed . . . and all this by reason of the faith which was in him. . . without power there could be no creation nor existence!” (Joseph Smith, *Lectures on Faith*, p. 5)

(LAW OF WITNESSES)
THE VOICE OF CERTAINTY
A Law of Witnesses

“. . . often a cold shudder has run through me, and I have asked myself whether I may not have devoted my life to a phantasy.” -Charles Darwin
(Darwin, Francis ed., *Charles Darwin: His Life Told in an Autobiographical Chapter, and in a Selected Series of His Published Letters*, p. 213.)

“Science should be left to scientists. Prophets can have no understanding of the physical laws of science.”

“It is not legitimate to discount evolution as just a theory. Evolution is indisputable. It is a fact. It is scientific fact comparable to gravity. ”

“I need evidence that I can see. I cannot believe that these scientific theories could be wrong.”

When the subject of organic evolution is discussed, some seek to discredit the words of Latter-day prophets of God. Others seek to mingle the philosophies of men with scripture, bending the word of God to their earthly training. President Benson noted:

“. . . it is the living prophet who really upsets the world. 'Even in the Church,' . . . Why? Because the living prophet gets at what we need to know now, and the world prefers that prophets either be dead or mind their own business. . . . Some would-be authorities on evolution want the prophet to keep still on evolution.” (Ezra Taft Benson, *Fourteen Fundamentals in Following the Prophet*, BYU devotional, February 26, 1980)

President Benson then testified of the importance of the words of prophets of God:

“How we respond to the words of a living prophet when he tells us what we need to know, but would rather not hear, is a test of our faithfulness.” (*Ibid.*)

Often the theories of the world come into conflict with the words of prophets. Some with advanced degrees and training feel that they know more than the word of God in scripture or living prophets on a certain subject. When this conflict occurs, as it has with the theories of organic evolution, how should we respond? President Benson testified:

“Sometimes there are those who feel their earthly knowledge on a certain subject is superior to the heavenly knowledge which God gives to His Prophet on the same subject. They feel the prophet must have the same earthly credentials or training which they have had before they will accept anything the prophet has to say that might contradict their earthly schooling. . . . We encourage earthly knowledge in many areas, but remember, if there is ever a conflict between earthly knowledge and the words of the prophet, you stand with the prophet, and you'll be blessed and time will vindicate you.” (*Ibid.*)

There are two forces striving in this world.

“The ancient covenant is in pieces; man knows at last that he is alone in the universe's unfeeling immensity, out of which he emerged only by chance. His destiny is nowhere spelled out, nor is his duty.” (Jacques Monod, Biologist, Nobel Prize Laureate, *Chance and Necessity: An Essay on the Natural Philosophy of Modern Biology*, p. 167.)

Whose agenda would seek to weaken faith in and ignore the statements of prophets of God? President Joseph Fielding Smith asked this question:

“Did Adam bring death into the world? Are we laboring under a misapprehension? Are we wrong? Is it true that millions of years before Adam came into the world death was here? . . . Are these scriptures true? Are these brethren true—and I have quoted three of the Presidents of the Church, including the Prophet [Joseph Smith] himself? Are they true, or are we to discard their teachings and the teachings of the scriptures because the philosophies of men today declare a contrary doctrine?” (Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, 3 vols., edited by Bruce R. McConkie [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1954-1956], 1: 116.)

President Smith answered this question with a powerful testimony of the truth of the scriptures and words of the prophets of God on this subject. Speaking of those who advance the teachings of organic evolution, he taught:

“. . . so they guess that once many millions of years ago, life must have come on the earth spontaneously. They have no proof, they can discover no proof, and before any court where justice is dispensed and evidence is required, their case would have to be thrown out of court. In all seriousness, their case has been thrown out of court before the Just Judge who rules both on earth and in the heavens; and the day is not far distant when the advocates of this pernicious doctrine will have to answer for the countless souls they have blinded by their craftiness and turned away from worshiping the Living God!” (Joseph Fielding Smith, *Man, His Origin and Destiny* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1954], 160 - 161.)

The Lord's plan always adheres to the law of witnesses. The Book of Mormon and Doctrine and Covenants stand as witnesses of the Bible. The Lord established the truth of the Book of Mormon through Joseph Smith, the three witnesses and the eight witnesses for a total of 12.

The same is true of the doctrines of the gospel relating to organic evolution. At least eight Presidents of the Church have proclaimed that organic evolution and the theory that man descended from lower forms of life is destructive to faith and counter to the words of scripture (Brigham Young, John Taylor, Joseph F. Smith, Heber J. Grant, George Albert Smith, Joseph Fielding Smith, Harold B. Lee, Ezra Taft Benson).

Three additional Presidents of the Church have taught clearly that there was literally no death on this earth prior to the Fall of Adam which occurred less than 7000 years ago (Joseph Smith, Wilford Woodruff, Spencer W. Kimball). One additional President has entreated us not to modernize the story of the Creation according to the theories of modern science, denying a God of miracles (Howard W. Hunter). Together this makes a total of twelve. Additionally, there have been numerous other witnesses among those we sustain as prophets, seers and revelators who have testified of these principles as well.

“The Lord says: ‘Wo be unto him that rejecteth the word of God’ --as it comes to us through two, three, or eight witnesses. And that witness will stand against the world at the last day . . . “ (Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation Vol. I*, p. 228)

“President Joseph Fielding Smith taught that the theory of organic evolution was Satan’s chief weapon in this dispensation in his attempt to thwart the work of God. This statement is either true, or it is false. President Ezra Taft Benson and others have testified that Joseph Fielding Smith’s words on this subject would, indeed, stand the test of time. We humbly add our witness that this is a vital subject to correctly understand in our day.” (James F. Stoddard III, Founder – ZionVision)