

# MOSES 2; GENESIS 1

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## THE CREATION

### Overview

While important details were added to the text of Genesis 1 in Joseph Smith's translation of Moses 2, the creation story as a whole was not significantly reshaped. However, Latter-day Saints should note that the descriptions of the days of Creation in Genesis and the book of Moses differ from those found in the book of Abraham and taught in modern temples. In contrast to those in the book of Abraham and in modern temple accounts, the narratives of the Creation story in Genesis and in the book of Moses seem to have been deliberately shaped to highlight symbolic resemblances between the organization of the cosmos and the architecture of the tabernacle. With this idea in mind, Hugh Nibley famously called the temple "a scale-model of the universe."<sup>1</sup>

The story of Creation has always been associated with the temple. Indeed, the idea that Creation provides a model for temple building and temple rituals is found not only in Israel but also throughout the ancient Near East. This is made explicit in Hugh Nibley's<sup>2</sup> reading of the first, second, and sixth lines of *Enuma Elish*:

At once above when the heavens had not yet received their name and the earth below was not yet named . . . the most inner sanctuary of the temple . . . had not yet been built.<sup>3</sup>

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1. Hugh W. Nibley, "The Meaning of the Temple," in *Temple and Cosmos: Beyond This Ignorant Present*, ed. Don E. Norton, The Collected Works of Hugh Nibley 12 (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book, 1992), 14–15.

2. Hugh W. Nibley, *Teachings of the Pearl of Great Price* (Provo, UT: Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies [FARMS], 2004), 122.

3. Hugh W. Nibley, "Return to the Temple," in *Temple and Cosmos*, 71–73. For a summary of arguments in favor of Nibley's translation, see Jeffrey M. Bradshaw and Ronan J. Head, "The Investiture Panel at Mari and Rituals of Divine Kingship in the Ancient Near East," *Studies in the Bible and Antiquity* 4 (2012): 12n32.

Understanding the correspondence that Moses’s account makes between the temple and the days of Creation explains the story’s divergences from strictly scientific accounts. For example, in seeming contradiction to scientific understanding, the description of the creation of the sun and moon in Genesis and the book of Moses appears *after* rather than before the creation of light and of the earth. In subsequent chapters, it can be seen that accounting for temple symbolism in Creation is essential to understanding the layout of the Garden of Eden and the events of the Fall. Temple-going Latter-day Saints are in the best position of any group now living to interpret these stories in their ancient ritual context.

### **Source**

Book of Moses Minute by Jeffrey M. Bradshaw

### **Related verses**

Moses 2; Genesis 1

## **Moses 2:1–2; Genesis 1:1–2. Prologue**

**2:1; 1:1. “created the heaven, and the earth.”** The idea of God’s organizing the world from pre-existing matter was a part of many ancient cosmologies; however Jewish scholars later began to favor the alternative doctrine of *creatio ex nihilo* (that is, creation from nothing). *Ex nihilo* creation subsequently became the prevalent interpretation in Christian tradition. Consistent with more ancient traditions, Joseph Smith stated that the word “created” should be rendered “formed, or organized.” This is because the term “does not mean to create out of nothing; it means to organize—the same as a man would organize materials and build a ship. Hence we infer that God had materials to organize the world out of . . . chaotic matter.”<sup>4</sup> Current theological and scientific evidence agrees with Joseph Smith’s teachings.<sup>5</sup>

**2:2; 1:2. “my Spirit moved upon the face of the water.”** The Hebrew term here translated as “moved” is used in Deuteronomy 32:11 to describe an eagle hovering attentively over its young. Consistent with such a picture, Abraham 4:2 employs the term “brooding.” The imagery of brooding not only highlights the loving care of the Creator but may also allude to atonement symbolism, which is arguably the central symbolism of Israelite temples. Atonement may be reflected not only in the symbolism of day one of Creation but also in the overall schema for the unfolding of the universe. While the Creation story opens with the

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4. Joseph Smith Jr., April 1844, in Joseph Fielding Smith, comp., *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith* (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book, 1969), 350–351.

5. See Kevin L. Barney, “Examining Six Key Concepts on Joseph Smith’s Understanding of Genesis 1:1,” *BYU Studies Quarterly* 39, no. 3 (2000): 107–124. See also John H. Walton, *Genesis 1 as Ancient Cosmology* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2011), 108–112.

themes of distinction and separation, God’s work in the final dispensation will culminate when He “gather[s] in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him” (Ephesians 1:10).

The book of Moses differs from Genesis in small but significant ways. A brief affirmation that the account derives from the words of the Lord directly to Moses is added in verse 1. The repetition of the phrase “I, God” throughout the chapter also emphasizes its firsthand nature. The fact that all things were created “by mine Only Begotten” (Moses 2:1) is made clear, as is the Son’s identity as a cocreator at a later point in the chapter when God says, “Let us make man” (Moses 2:26; emphasis added). The book of Abraham goes further to describe a plurality of Gods participating in Creation (see Abraham 4:1). In addition to the Father and the Son, this included Michael, the premortal Adam.

### **Source**

Book of Moses Minute by Jeffrey M. Bradshaw

### **Related verses**

Moses 2:1–2; Genesis 1:1–2

## **Moses 2:3–5; Genesis 1:3–5. The First Day**

**2:3; 1:3. “there was light.”** Some understand this phrase as describing the birth of our universe as a sudden burst of light and energy of unimaginable scale. Others see it as referring to a local event whereby the natural light of our sun was created. It is, of course, a given that the sun was created prior to the fourth day, though from the vantage point of earth no light would “appear in the firmament” until a later time (Moses 2:14–19). Perhaps a better interpretation is to see this light as something over and above mere physical light like the light described in Doctrine and Covenants 88:4–13. The idea of God Himself as the source of this special light is consistent with many ancient sources. President John Taylor wrote that God “caused light to shine upon [the earth] before the sun appeared in the firmament; for God is light, and in him there is no darkness.”<sup>6</sup> Some ancient sources see this light as also including the angels or premortal spirits of mankind.<sup>7</sup>

**2:4; 1:4. “I, God, divided.”** The process of Creation involves the making and naming of distinctions. In the beginning, all is unorganized matter; later God divides the light from the darkness, the water

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6. John Taylor, in *Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. (London, England: Latter-day Saints’ Book Depot, 1854–1886), 18:327. See Doctrine and Covenants 88:7–9.

7. For example, see Jubilees 2:2. See also Margaret Barker, *An Extraordinary Gathering of Angels* (London, England: MQ Publications, 2004), 29.

above from that below the firmament, and the dry land from the sea. He then differentiates among the different species of plants and animals “after their kind,” between man and the animal kingdom, between man and woman, and finally between the seventh day and the other days.

**2:5; 1:5. “evening and the morning were the first day.”** The first notion of time appears only after the primeval unity was first divided. Note that evening and morning signify not the earth’s daily sunset and dawning but rather the suspension and resumption of distinct periods of divine creativity, corresponding to groups of works performed. Thus, as recent Church leaders have affirmed, we are not limited to supposing that the Creation was accomplished in six solar days or six thousand years but rather can view the “week” of Creation as part of seemingly overlapping periods of potentially long and varying length.<sup>8</sup>

### **Source**

Book of Moses Minute by Jeffrey M. Bradshaw

### **Related verses**

Moses 2:3–5; Genesis 1:3–5

## **Moses 2:6–8; Genesis 1:6–8. The Second Day**

**2:6; 1:6. “Let there be a firmament.”** Verse 6 describes how, during the Creation, the waters were “divided’ between the surface of the earth and the atmospheric heavens that surround it.”<sup>9</sup> Figuratively, however, ancient sources confirm that the verse alludes to the veil that divided the Holy of Holies from the Holy Place in the temple.<sup>10</sup>

A closer look at the word *firmament* in Hebrew substantiates this interpretation. Joseph Smith translated Abraham 4:6 as “expanse” instead of “firmament.” The Prophet’s choice is consistent with the Hebrew grammar book he used during his Hebrew study in Kirtland, which gives *expanse* the basic meaning of “extending.” This could well apply to the idea of the spreading of a curtain or veil in the earth or the heavens, as when Enoch exclaimed, in a phrase unique to the book of Moses, “Thy curtains are stretched out still” (Moses 6:30).

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8. See Alma 40:8; Bruce R. McConkie, “Christ and the Creation,” *Ensign*, June 1982, 11; Brigham Young, in *Journal of Discourses*, 18:231.

9. Bruce R. McConkie, “Christ and the Creation,” *Ensign*, June 1982, 11.

10. See, for example, P. Alexander, “3 (Hebrew Apocalypse of) Enoch,” in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, ed. James H. Charlesworth, 2 vols. (New York, NY: Doubleday, 1983), 1:223–315. See also ancient sources cited in Louis Ginzberg, ed., *The Legends of the Jews*, 7 vols., trans. Henrietta Szold and Paul Radin (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998), 1:51.

## **Source**

Book of Moses Minute by Jeffrey M. Bradshaw

## **Related verses**

Moses 2:6–8; Genesis 1:6–8

## **Moses 2:9–13; Genesis 1:9–13. The Third Day**

**2:9; 1:9. “Let there be dry land.”** Creation stories in many ancient cultures begin with the appearance of the “primeval hill,” or the first land mass rising out of the receding waters. In ancient Israel, the holiest spot on earth was the Foundation Stone in front of the ark within the temple at Jerusalem. According to John M. Lundquist, Jewish tradition affirmed that “it was the first solid material to emerge from the waters of Creation (Psalm 104:7–9), and it was upon this stone that the Deity effected Creation.”<sup>11</sup> This is one reason why temples are nearly always built on a high elevation, consistent with the idea of the temple as a sacred mountain.

**2:11; 1:11. “Let the earth bring forth grass.”** In Jewish tradition, the grass corresponds to the temple symbolism of the shewbread. Nibley noted that the corresponding phrase in Abraham, “Let us prepare the earth to bring forth grass,” makes it clear that “what they ordered was not the completed product, but the process to bring it about, providing a scheme under which life might expand. . . . Note the future tense: the [earth is] so treated that [it] will have the capacity. The Gods did not make [grasses] on the spot but arranged it so that in time they might appear. They created the potential.”<sup>12</sup>

**2:11; 1:11. “after his kind.”** Elder Boyd K. Packer wrote, “No lesson is more manifest in nature than that all living things do as the Lord commanded in the Creation. They reproduce ‘after their own kind.’ They follow the pattern of their parentage.”<sup>13</sup> The Prophet Joseph Smith said that it is a “fixed and unalterable . . . decree of the Lord that every tree, fruit, or herb bearing seed should bring forth after its kind, and cannot come forth after any other law or principle.”<sup>14</sup>

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11. John M. Lundquist, *The Temple: Meeting Place of Heaven and Earth* (London, England: Thames and Hudson, 1993), 7.

12. Hugh W. Nibley, “Before Adam,” in *Old Testament and Related Studies*, ed. John W. Welch, Gary P. Gillum, and Don E. Norton, *The Collected Works of Hugh Nibley* 1 (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book, 1986), 70.

13. Boyd K. Packer, “The Pattern of our Parentage,” in *Let Not Your Heart Be Troubled*, 286-93 (Salt Lake City, UT: Bookcraft, 1991), 289.

14. Andrew F. Ehat and Lyndon W. Cook, *The Words of Joseph Smith: The Contemporary Accounts of the Nauvoo Discourses of the Prophet Joseph* (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 1980), 107.

While the laws of genetics ensure the usual, orderly pattern of parentage, the same laws also allow for adaptation over time. Although “the official position of the Church on man’s origin is not definitive in all respects,”<sup>15</sup> the first formal class in evolution was instituted at BYU in the fall of 1971 with the First Presidency’s approval, and it is currently a required part of the core curriculum for all BYU students in the biological sciences. According to Michael R. Ash, evolutionary biology has become “one of the largest and most successful graduate programs at BYU,”<sup>16</sup> with professors publishing in major evolutionary conferences and journals. Neither creationism nor intelligent design is taught at BYU.<sup>17</sup>

### **Source**

Book of Moses Minute by Jeffrey M. Bradshaw

### **Related verses**

Moses 2:9–13; Genesis 1:9–13

## **Moses 2:14–19; Genesis 1:14–19. The Fourth Day**

**2:14; 1:14. “Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven.”** Unlike the Genesis and Moses accounts, which describe the appearance of plant life before the sun and moon lighted the earth (consistent with Israelite temple symbolism), the Creation sequence presented in the temple endowment follows an ordering of events that is more in line with the scientific view.<sup>18</sup> In addition, Joseph Smith’s teachings support the fact that these heavenly bodies were created prior to the earth: “The starry hosts were worlds and suns and universes, some of which had being millions of ages before this earth had physical form.”<sup>19</sup> Hence, we may interpret verses 14–15 as describing not the creation of the sun, moon, and stars but rather the appearance of the sun after dust and debris had been removed from the atmosphere.

**2:14; 1:14. “to divide the day from the night.”** Hugh Nibley wrote, “Such a division had already taken place at the beginning, but this was a new time-system for this earth.”<sup>20</sup>

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15. David H. Bailey, Jeffrey M. Bradshaw, John H. Lewis, Gregory L. Smith, and Michael L. Stark, eds., *Science and Mormonism: Cosmos, Earth, and Man* (Orem, UT: Interpreter Foundation; Salt Lake City, UT: Eborn Books, 2016), 474; see 445–484 for a thoughtful collection and extended discussion of statements made by Church leaders on this topic.

16. Cited in Bailey, Bradshaw, Lewis, Smith, and Stark, *Science and Mormonism*, 482.

17. Terryl L. Givens, *Wrestling the Angel: The Foundations of Mormon Thought: Cosmos, God, Humanity* (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 2015), 219.

18. Richard D. Draper, S. Kent Brown, and Michael D. Rhodes, *The Pearl of Great Price: A Verse-by-Verse Commentary* (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book, 2005), 189.

19. Cited in Edward W. Tulidge, *The Women of Mormondom* (1877; repr., New York, NY: n.p., 1997), 178.

20. Hugh W. Nibley, “Before Adam,” in *Old Testament and Related Studies*, ed. John W. Welch, Gary P. Gillum, and Don E. Norton, *The Collected Works of Hugh Nibley* 1 (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book, 1986), 74.

**2:15; 1:15. “to give light upon the earth.”** It is the earth, not the heavens, that requires the illumination provided by God’s light. Likewise, modern temples are made to shine brilliantly so as to light up their nighttime surroundings while at the same time having windows that limit outside illumination (compare Doctrine and Covenants 43:15–16). Thus, the temple’s function is symbolically portrayed as giving light, not receiving it from elsewhere. “The ancients said: ‘Whoever builds windows in his house, makes them wide outside and narrow inside, that they should bring in the light. Not so in the Temple; because there the light was within, and shone forth onto the whole world.’ ‘As oil gives light—so the Temple gives light to the world.’”<sup>21</sup> Consistent with the temple symbolism of Creation, Jewish temple tradition associated the creation of the “seven” lights in the solar system with the seven-branched candlestick (*menorah*) of the temple.<sup>22</sup>

Elder John A. Widtsoe wrote:

Spiritual power is generated within temple walls, and sent out to bless the world. Light from the house of the Lord illumines every home within the Church fitted for its reception by participation in temple privileges. The path from the temple to the home of man is divinely brilliant. Every home penetrated by the temple spirit enlightens, cheers, and comforts every member of the household. The peace we covet is found in such homes. Indeed, when temples are on earth, the whole world shares measurably in the issuing light; when absent, the hearts of men become heavy, as if they said, with the people of Enoch’s day, ‘Zion is fled’ (Moses 7:69).<sup>23</sup>

### **Source**

Book of Moses Minute by Jeffrey M. Bradshaw

### **Related verses**

Moses 2:14–19; Genesis 1:14–19

## **Moses 2:20–23; Genesis 1:20–23. The Fifth Day**

**2:20; 1:20. “that hath life.”** The Hebrew word translated here as “life” means specifically “animate life” and is used to distinguish between animals and plants. The recurrence of the special Hebrew

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21. Zev Vilnay, *Legends of Jerusalem*, vol. 1 of *The Sacred Land* (Philadelphia, PA: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1973), 82. Compare H. Freedman and Maurice Simon, eds., *Midrash Rabbah*, 3rd ed., vol. 3 of 10 (London, England: Soncino Press, 1983), 438.

22. Louis Ginzberg, ed., *The Legends of the Jews*, 7 vols., trans. Henrietta Szold and Paul Radin (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998), 1:51.

23. Cited in Alan K. Parrish, *John A. Widtsoe: A Biography* (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book, 2003), 44.

creation term *bara* in verse 21 suggests “the beginning of a new stage in the Creation, namely, the creation of ‘living beings.’”<sup>24</sup>

**2:21; 1:21. “and every winged fowl after its kind.”** Consistent with the temple symbolism of Creation, Jewish traditions associated the creation of birds with the creation of the winged cherubim woven into the outer curtain of the temple.<sup>25</sup>

**2:22; 1:22. “I . . . blessed them.”** After inspection and approval comes benediction. Victor P. Hamilton observed that “the divine blessing is reserved for the three most critical junctures in the narrative: the introductory statement ([Genesis 1:]1); the creation of organic life (v. 20); and the creation of human life (v. 26).”<sup>26</sup>

### **Source**

Book of Moses Minute by Jeffrey M. Bradshaw

### **Related verses**

Moses 2:20–23; Genesis 1:20–23

## **Moses 2:24–27; Genesis 1:24–27. The Sixth Day: Creation of Man and Woman**

**2:26; 1:26. “Let us make.”** The plural form of this expression has long been an interpretive problem for commentators that look at the Old Testament through the lens of strict monotheism. However, the view of many scholars, consistent with Latter-day Saint scripture,<sup>27</sup> is that God is addressing a heavenly council.<sup>28</sup> In this instance, the Father’s words are specifically addressed to His Only Begotten.

**2:26; 1:26. “in our image, after our likeness.”** Unlike the earlier creatures who were each made “after his kind,” man and woman were made in God’s image and likeness. Moses 6:9 is more specific than verse 26 in saying that man was created “in the image of his [God’s] own body.” Joseph Smith spoke plainly about what this means: “God Himself who sits enthroned in yonder heavens is a Man like

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24. John H. Sailhamer, “Genesis,” in *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelin (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1990), 35.

25. Louis Ginzberg, ed., *The Legends of the Jews*, 7 vols., trans. Henrietta Szold and Paul Radin (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998), 1:51.

26. Victor P. Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 1–17* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1990), 132.

27. For example, Doctrine and Covenants 121:32; Abraham 4:26.

28 Jeffrey M. Bradshaw, *In God’s Image and Likeness 1: Creation, Fall, and the Story of Adam and Eve*, rev. ed., 2 vols. (Salt Lake City, UT: Eborn Books, 2014), 111.



unto one of yourselves—that is the great secret! If the veil were rent today . . . you would see Him in all the person, image, fashion, and very form of a man, like yourselves. For Adam was a man formed in his likeness and created in the very fashion and image of God.”<sup>29</sup>

**2:26; 1:26. “Let them have dominion.”** Hugh Nibley wrote that the word *dominion* comes from the Latin *dominus* (“lord”), “specifically ‘the lord of the household,’ in his capacity of generous host, . . . [responsible as] master for the comfort and well-being of his dependents and guests.”<sup>30</sup> Thus, to have dominion in the priesthood sense means to have responsibility for the ongoing care and nurture of an allotted portion of God’s vast creations—specifically in this instance as His steward on earth. As Nibley succinctly put it, humankind’s “dominion is a call to service, not a license to exterminate.”<sup>31</sup>

**2:27; 1:27. “created I him . . . created I them.”** The three lines of stately Hebrew poetry recorded here in the book of Moses are deliberately structured to successively draw our attention to three things: first, to the creation of man in the image of the Divine (“in our image, after our likeness”); second, to the fact that this resemblance exactly parallels the one that exists between the Father and the Son (“in mine own image,” “in the image of mine Only Begotten”); and third, to the essential distinction of gender (“male and female”).

With respect to the oneness of man and woman, Elder Erastus Snow expressed that “there can be no God except [it] is composed of the man and woman united, and there is not in all the eternities that exist, nor ever will be, a God in any other way.”<sup>32</sup>

### **Source**

Book of Moses Minute by Jeffrey M. Bradshaw

### **Related verses**

Moses 2:24–27; Genesis 1:24–27

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29. Joseph Smith Jr., April 7, 1844, as cited in Stan Larson, “The King Follett Discourse: A Newly Amalgamated Text,” *BYU Studies Quarterly* 18, no. 2 (Winter 1978): 200.

30. Hugh W. Nibley, “Man’s Dominion or Subduing the Earth,” in *Brother Brigham Challenges the Saints*, ed. Don E. Norton and Shirley S. Ricks, The Collected Works of Hugh Nibley 13 (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book, 1994), 7.

31. Nibley, “Man’s Dominion,” 18.

32. Erastus Snow, in *Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. (London, England: Latter-day Saints’ Book Depot, 1854–1886), 19:270.

**Moses 2:28; Genesis 1:28. The Sixth Day: Multiply and Replenish the Earth 2:28; 1:28. “be fruitful and multiply.”** The Hebrew phrase for “be fruitful and multiply” (*peru urebu*) may be a deliberate play on the “without form and void” (*tohu vabohu*) of verse 2. Adam and Eve and “the living creatures of God’s Creation are hereby empowered to perpetuate God’s life-giving creativity by bringing still more life into the world, by filling up and inhabiting that which was previously empty and uninhabitable.”<sup>33</sup> While the commandment to Adam and Eve resembles the blessing given to the fish and fowl in verse 22, the other creatures are not instructed to subdue the earth or to have dominion over every other living thing. The responsibility of stewardship over the earth is uniquely conferred upon the man and the woman.

**2:28; 1:28. “replenish the earth.”** The word “replenish” here can be misleading to modern English speakers. The corresponding Hebrew term, *male*, does not mean “to refill” but rather “to fill or make full.” Thus, Old Testament scholar Nahum Sarna rendered the command in this verse as “Be fertile and increase, fill the earth.”<sup>34</sup>

**2:28; 1:28. “subdue it.”** The commandment to subdue the earth implies settlement and agriculture. Sadly, humankind will repeatedly face the challenging consequences of its failure to care for the earth in righteousness. In the story of Adam and Eve and their posterity, these consequences are variously illustrated in the Fall, the Flood, the ongoing struggle to wrest food from an unyielding earth filled with weeds and thorns, and most of all, in their failure to care for Creation and each other in the fashion God had commanded.

Laurence Turner concluded, “Although humans increasingly dominate the animal creation and eventually rule despotically (an intensification of the original command), there is an ironic sense in which animals, through the serpent, exercise an ongoing dominion over the humans (a reversal of the original command). . . . Also, the earth becomes increasingly difficult to dominate. It overwhelms most of humanity in the Flood, and all of humanity in death.”<sup>35</sup>

### **Source**

Book of Moses Minute by Jeffrey M. Bradshaw

### **Related verses**

Moses 2:28; Genesis 1:28

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33. Bill T. Arnold, *Genesis*, New Cambridge Bible Commentary, ed. Ben Witherington III (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 42.

34. Nahum M. Sarna, *Genesis: The Traditional Hebrew Text with the New JPS Translation Commentary*, The JPS Torah Commentary, ed. Nahum M. Sarna and Chaim Potok (Philadelphia, PA: Jewish Publication Society, 1989), 13.

35. Laurence Turner, *Announcements of Plot in Genesis* (Sheffield, England: JSOT Press, 1990).

## **Moses 2:29–31; Genesis 1:29–31. The Sixth Day: Further Instructions and Blessing**

**2:29; 1:29. “to you it shall be for meat.”** For modern English speakers, “meat” would be better translated as “food.” Vegetarianism was given as the rule in the Garden of Eden, and using animals for food was not explicitly sanctioned until after the Flood (see Joseph Smith Translation, Genesis 9:10–11). Later, Doctrine and Covenants 49:18 condemned any commandment that would forbid the eating of meat. However, Isaiah appears to have foreseen all creatures again becoming herbivorous during the Millennium (see Isaiah 11:7; 65:25).

Joseph Smith taught, “Men must become harmless before the brute creation, and when men lose their vicious dispositions and cease to destroy the animal race, the lion and the lamb can dwell together, and the sucking child can play with the serpent in safety.”<sup>36</sup>

**2:30; 1:30. “clean herb.”** In Genesis and Abraham, the term “green herb” is used. In contrast, *clean* (the descriptor used in Moses) in the Old Testament sense referred to what was allowed or permitted by God’s law (see Genesis 7:2). Thus, the change of wording in the book of Moses might be seen as a signal to Adam and Eve that the diet of humans and animals is not simply a matter of creaturely preference but is an important subject of divine interest, regulated by commandment. In this way, the mention of clean herb anticipates the restriction that forbids Adam and Eve from partaking of the fruit of the tree of knowledge.

**2:31; 1:31. “very good.”** Unlike He did with other living things, God did not pronounce humankind “good” at the time of its creation. Now that man and woman are both created and blessed, God can pronounce the entirety of His Creation very good—meaning beautiful, appropriate, and complete. Humankind is not yet in itself good in the moral sense. In contrast to the rest of Creation, Adam and Eve still have to prove themselves morally good. “Always keep in view,” said Brigham Young, “that the animal, vegetable, and mineral kingdoms—the earth and its fulness—will all, except the children of man, abide their creation—the law by which they were made, and will receive their exaltation.”<sup>37</sup>

### **Source**

Book of Moses Minute by Jeffrey M. Bradshaw

### **Related verses**

Moses 2:29–31; Genesis 1:29–31

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36. Joseph Smith Jr., May 26, 1834, Joseph Fielding Smith, comp., *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith* (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book, 1969), 71.

37. Brigham Young, in *Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. (London, England: Latter-day Saints’ Book Depot, 1854–1886), 8:191.

## **Credits**

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