

2. Defining Adam and Eve’s “Creation” (Genesis 1–2; Moses 2–3; Abraham 4–5)

As God is the same yesterday, today, and forever, and is no respecter of persons, he will do for all what he does for one, provided they meet the conditions he stipulates. That includes his creating Adam and Eve. We can say with certainty, for example, that Adam and Eve could not have inherited Paradise without their own prior ascent to a high spiritual level. Otherwise God would not be *one*—the same to each of his children—but instead be a changeable and variable God. Rather than isolate God’s creation of Adam and Eve as something unique or outside the realm of possibility for the rest of humanity, therefore, let us scrutinize its salient points and determine whether it follows a scriptural pattern. The Genesis account states that God “formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life” so that the “man became a living soul” (Genesis 2:7). Still, God didn’t create the man *in* the Garden of Eden but placed him there afterwards: “And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden and there he put the man whom he had formed” (Genesis 2:8). Moreover, God caused a “deep sleep” to come upon Adam, after which he brought him his wife Eve (Genesis 2:21–22).

Putting such scriptural data together, we must conclude that the story of Adam’s creation “from the dust” (Genesis 2:7) isn’t something entirely unfamiliar. In the resurrection from the dead, are people not also re-created “from the dust” when their bodies arise? Aren’t the dead, whose spirits have left this world, depicted as “sleeping in the dust” (Job 7:21; Daniel 12:2)? Ezekiel portrays the resurrection from the dead as God’s causing “breath” to enter into the dry bones of those who had passed away (Ezekiel 37:1–14; cf. Genesis 2:7; Moses 3:7). Isaiah describes comparable phenomena when he predicts that the bodies of God’s people will “awake” and “arise” from the dust at the end of the world (Isaiah 26:19) and that Zion/Jerusalem will “awake” and “arise” from the dust to divine empowerment (Isaiah 52:1–2). Isaiah’s pattern of the *physical* rebirth and re-creation of God’s people “from the dust” at their resurrection thus typifies their *spiritual* rebirth and re-creation as they learn to observe God’s law and word.

Like those who become God’s elect sons and daughters and inherit Paradise in the earth’s millennial age (Isaiah 51:1–3; 65:17–25), Adam and Eve must have had prior life experience and similarly ascended to the spiritual level of God’s elect. If not, God would be a capricious God who will not do for one what he does for another who fulfills the same covenantal requirements. In a similar vein, as God’s elect know God personally, and as Adam and Eve were evidently created or re-created from the dust on the level of God’s elect, anything less than that level must be considered *less* than being created in the image and likeness of God. That is suggested by the Genesis account itself, as nowhere does the scripture say that *all* human beings are created in God’s image and likeness, only Adam and Eve or those who know God face to face. That Adam and Eve knew God personally is evident from the fact that God walked and talked with them in the Garden of Eden before they were cast out (Genesis 3:8–10).

In the Book of Isaiah, God’s sequential “creation” or “re-creation” of the heavens and the earth (Isaiah 40:12; 45:18), humanity as a whole (Isaiah 45:12), Jacob/Israel (Isaiah 43:1; 44:21), Zion/Jerusalem (Isaiah 52:1–2; 65:18), sons/servants (Isaiah 43:6–7), his endtime servant (Isaiah 42:6; 49:8), celestial bodies (Isaiah 40:26; 45:12), and the new heavens and earth (Isaiah 65:17) establishes a pattern of spiritual and physical ascent on a ladder to heaven. As noted, that pattern

may also operate in reverse: persons who descend the ladder—who choose evil and don't repent—are de-created. They spiritually mutate to the point of no longer resembling who they once were. Not only can such persons *not* be construed as being in the image and likeness of God, those who descend all the way to Perdition perish spiritually as well as physically. As candidates for the Pit of Dissolution (Isaiah 14:15; 38:17–18; Revelation 9:1–2), they ultimately undergo annihilation and all memory of them is erased (Isaiah 26:13–14).

As all blessings that come from God, are *covenant* blessings—ones that pertain to a covenant he made somewhere with someone—God's blessing of Adam and Eve with dominion over the earth tells us that he had made a prior covenant or covenants with them, and they with him, or such blessings could not occur. Additionally, as a Promised Land is an essential ingredient of God's covenants, in the case of Adam and Eve that Promised Land was the earth itself. Lastly, as with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, God's promise of an endless posterity—an ingredient of God's highest covenants—similarly pertains to God's covenant with Adam and Eve as they would now become the parents of this earth's inhabitants.

Ascent on a ladder to heaven thus nuances the story of Adam and Eve's creation as a re-creation, not a spontaneous materialization *ex nihilo*—out of nothing. Our first parents' "creation" on this earth, in other words, constituted a milestone in their advancing through successive levels of ascent. That process began long before their appearance in this world and will continue long after many of their children have themselves inherited Paradise (Isaiah 11:6–9; 35:1–4; 51:3), by such means qualifying as new Adams and Eves. In that light, all of humanity is struggling on higher and lower levels of ascent or descent that endure through endless eons, stretching into a vast eternity. How else shall men become "gods . . . sons of the Most High [God]" (Psalm 82:6–7), or "gods ascending from the earth" (1 Samuel 28:13)? Didn't Jesus assert that he had "ascended up to heaven" before he "came down from heaven" to accomplish *his* divine commission on the earth (John 3:13)?

(Much of this material is taken from *Endtime Prophecy: A Judeo-Mormon Analysis*, 19–21, 78.)