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## **Analyzing the Pearl of Great Price**

### **Introduction**

The Pearl of Great Price is one of the canonized scriptures of the Mormon Church, legally and officially referred to as The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. It includes the supposed writings of Moses and Abraham.

Their other books of canon include the Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants (abbreviated as D&C) and the Bible (primarily the King James Version). The Community of Christ (another sect of Mormonism) uses the Joseph Smith Translation of the Bible. The larger group, abbreviated as the Mormon Church, cites certain verses of this translation to correct or better understand the King James Version. Joseph Smith (their first prophet) believed he was called by God to modify, add, and remove certain passages.

The title "Pearl of Great Price" may have been adopted from Matthew 13:45-46: "The kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls: Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it."

The Book of Abraham is said to be Joseph Smith's translation of ancient Egyptian papyrus scrolls that were brought to Kirtland, Ohio in 1835 by Michael Chandler.

With a careful study of the teachings in the Pearl of Great Price, one soon discovers that it departs from biblical truth and even contradicts certain Mormon Church teachings.

## **The Council of Heaven**

The Mormon Church believes there was a council in heaven to discuss the creation of the earth and the salvation of human beings.

Heavenly Father supposedly called a grand council in heaven to present his plan for our progression (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, 1938, pp. 348-349, 365; D&C 121:32). Other Gods were present but their identities are unknown. People learned that if they followed this plan they would become like him—a god.

They also learned God would provide an earth for them where they would be tested—because being tested in the pre-mortal existence was not sufficient (Abraham 3:24-27). A veil would cover their memories so they would forget their heavenly home, where they existed once with Heavenly Mother and Father. The children of Heavenly Father were called “spirits” (vv. 18-19), “intelligences” (v. 22), and “souls” (v. 23).

Lucifer offered to redeem mankind at this council: “That Satan ... he came before me, saying—Behold, here am I, send me, I will be thy son, and I will redeem all mankind, that one soul shall not be lost ... But, behold, my Beloved Son ... said unto me—Father, thy will be done, and the glory be thine forever” (Moses 4:1-2).

There is another aspect of this council of heaven that Latter-day Saints have not considered. Suppose you have a person called John at this council. He learns that Jesus will be his redeemer on the future planet that will be created. While on earth, he meets a nice lady called Jane and they get married in a temple, and they follow all the precepts of the Mormon Church.

If this process is true, then John becomes exalted to a god with Jane by his side. They receive the same power as their Heavenly Father and they become heavenly parents of another planet. They have twelve billion spirit children for example. John organizes his own council of heaven and another version of Jesus and Lucifer (maybe even with the same name) offer to redeem his creation. John chooses this other Jesus to be the redeemer. John creates his version of Adam and Eve in his own Garden of Eden and he (John) is worshipped as the God and Heavenly Father of his earth. As time passes by, John sends his only begotten son to his earth to redeem his children from their sins. Remember that Joseph Smith taught spirits are not created; they are co-eternal with God (D&C 93:29-33; Abraham 3:18).

Go back in time now to when John was just a spirit child at the council of heaven, where he learned that Jesus would atone for his sins and one day he would become a god. Where are John and Jane’s twelve billion spirit children that they will have in the future by following the LDS gospel? Are they not co-eternal with them too?

## **Who created the world?**

“Gods” are said to have created the heavens, the earth, and man (Abraham 4:1, 26-27), but *Religion 430-431 – Doctrines of the Gospel Student Manual* says, “We know that Jehovah-Christ, assisted by many of the noble and great ones did in fact create the earth and all forms of plant and animal life. But when it came to placing man on earth, there was a change in Creators. That is, the Father himself became personally involved” (p. 18). Do you see the difference?

This has its roots in Abraham 3:23-24:

“And God saw these souls that they were good, and he stood in the midst of them, and he said: These I will make my rulers; for he stood among those that were spirits, and he saw that they were good; and he said unto me: Abraham, thou art one of them; thou wast chosen before thou wast born. And there stood one among them that was like unto God, and he said unto those who were with him: We will go down, for there is space there, and we will take of these materials, and we will make an earth whereon these may dwell”.

It is unspecified who this one “like unto God” is.

*Gospel Principles*, a teaching manual of the Mormon Church, reveals Adam helped to create the earth (Glossary section, p. 376). Adam is referred to as Michael the archangel (D&C 107:54) and the prince of all (D&C 27:11). There are two Michaels: the archangel and a regular angel—similar to Gabriel and Raphael (D&C 128:21). Joseph Smith and others are also thought to have helped God create the earth (*Religion 327 – Pearl of Great Price Student Manual*, pp. 7-8, 38).

Latter-day Saints do not specify how their Adam (Michael the archangel) can be in spirit prison (D&C 138:38-47) and yet be able to dispute with the devil for the body of Moses (Jude 1:9).

While Abraham 3:23-24 shows other beings (spirits) came down to make the earth, another passage says it was the Gods who came down to make the earth.

“And then the Lord said: Let us go down. And they went down at the beginning, and they, that is the Gods, organized and formed the heavens and the earth” (Abraham 4:1)

After the Gods counseled together to create everything, they counseled to rest from all their works (Abraham 5:2-3).

Everything was created spiritually before they naturally existed.

“And every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew. For I, the Lord God, created all things, of which I have spoken, spiritually, before they were naturally upon the face of the earth. For I, the Lord God, had not caused it to rain upon the face of the earth. And I, the Lord God, had created all the children of men; and not yet a

man to till the ground; for in heaven created I them; and there was not yet flesh upon the earth, neither in the water, neither in the air" (Moses 3:5).

## **The first flesh on Earth**

Moses chapter 3 speaks about the creation.

The Introduction Notes for the chapter says, "God created all things spiritually before they were naturally upon the earth—He created man, the first flesh, upon the earth—Woman is a help meet for man."

This is confirmed in Moses 3:5 – "For I, the Lord God, created all things, of which I have spoken, spiritually, before they were naturally upon the face of the earth ... for in heaven created I them; and there was not yet flesh upon the earth, neither in the water, neither in the air."

Adam is created on the sixth day, after the plants and animals, but he is mentioned as being the first flesh.

"And I, the Lord God, formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul, the first flesh upon the earth, the first man also" (Moses 3:7).

A seminary manual of the Mormon Church called "Religion 301 - Old Testament Student Manual Genesis–2 Samuel" explains what this "first flesh" means.

Former church President Joseph Fielding Smith taught, "It is simple when you understand it. Adam was the first of all creatures to fall and become flesh, and flesh in this sense means mortality, and all through our scriptures the Lord speaks of this life as flesh, while we are here in the flesh, so Adam became the first flesh. There was no other mortal creature before him, and there was no mortal death until he brought it, and the scriptures tell you that. It is here written, and that is the gospel of Jesus Christ."

So Adam becomes the first flesh after he eats from the forbidden tree. Apparently the animals did not have a body of flesh (did not become mortal) until after the Fall. Maybe all the plants and trees were not yet physical at the time and the "non-fleshy" Adam and Eve ate fruit from spiritual trees.

This creates another problem as seen in Moses 3:21-23.

"And I, the Lord God, caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam; and he slept, and I took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh in the stead thereof; And the rib which I, the Lord God, had taken from man, made I a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said: This I know now is bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of man".

If "first flesh" means the "first mortal" and flesh doesn't really mean flesh as in body, then the above makes absolutely no sense.

Adam could not be considered "fleshy" (mortal) when God put him into a deep sleep to form Eve and then to have God close up Adam's flesh because Adam was not mortal at the time. And Eve being flesh of Adam's flesh makes no sense since she was not mortal at the time of her creation either.

Do you see the obvious problem when the Mormon Church President tries to define what flesh means in order to solve another problem with the Book of Moses, which identifies Adam as the first flesh; the first to become mortal?

By the way, if "first flesh" means the first to become mortal, then the "first flesh" is Eve, not Adam.

### **Six days of creation**

The earth was created in six days and God rested from his works on the seventh day according to the Bible.

"Morning came, evening came, one day." This is the simple meaning of the duration of one day. The same thing happens today. Morning comes, evening comes, and one day has passed.

If the six days are not literal days as the Bible explains, why have people made the assumption that the seventh day (the Sabbath) is a literal day consisting of twenty-four hours as we measure it?

But *Religion 430-431 – Doctrines of the Gospel Student Manual* says the heavens and the earth were not created in six literal days as we know it: "But first, what is a day? It is a specified time period; it is an age, an eon, a division of eternity. There is no revealed recitation specifying that each of the six days involved in the Creation was of the same duration" (p. 17).

The Book of Mormon seems to indicate the six days are in fact literal ones (Mosiah 13:17-19). One even finds a revelation of six literal days and a one thousand year reign of Christ in Doctrine and Covenants 77:12.

When we turn to the Pearl of Great Price, it seems like the creation of the earth took six Kolob days (six thousand Earth years). Kolob is apparently the star which is closest to God's throne.

"Kolob was after the manner of the Lord, according to its times and seasons in the revolutions thereof; that one revolution was a day unto the Lord, after his manner of reckoning, it being one thousand years according to the time appointed unto that whereon

thou standest. This is the reckoning of the Lord's time, according to the reckoning of Kolob" (Abraham 3:3).

"But of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the time that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die. Now I, Abraham, saw that it was after the Lord's time, which was after the time of Kolob; for as yet the Gods had not appointed unto Adam his reckoning" (Abraham 5:13).

### **The creation of Eve and other spirits**

The Bible teaches that Eve was created from Adam's rib.

"And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof. And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man" (Genesis 2:21-23).

A similar thing is taught in the Book of Moses.

"And I, the Lord God, caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam; and he slept, and I took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh in the stead thereof; And the rib which I, the Lord God, had taken from man, made I a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said: This I know now is bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of man" (Moses 3:21-23).

LDS president Spencer W. Kimball taught Eve was not literally created from Adam's rib. He said, "The story of the rib, of course, is figurative" (*Religion 327 – Pearl of Great Price Student Manual*, p. 11; "The Blessings and Responsibilities of Womanhood," *Ensign*, March 1976, p. 71).

The Mormon prophet Joseph Smith taught Adam and Eve were not created but are co-eternal with God – "Man was also in the beginning with God. Intelligence, or the light of truth, was not created or made, neither indeed can be. For man is spirit. The elements are eternal, and spirit and element, inseparably connected, receive a fulness of joy" (D&C 93:29-33).

"Howbeit that he made the greater star; as, also, if there be two spirits, and one shall be more intelligent than the other, yet these two spirits, notwithstanding one is more intelligent than the other, have no beginning; they existed before, they shall have no end, they shall exist after, for they are gnolaum, or eternal" (Abraham 3:18).

The Book of Mormon teaches Jesus created all the spirits and they are not eternal (Ether 4:15-16). The Bible teaches likewise (Colossians 1:16).

Moses 4:26 says it was God who named Eve.

"Adam called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living; for thus have I, the Lord God, called the first of all women, which are many". This wording has been interpreted by Latter-day Saint writers and commentators to mean that God had already given her the name "Eve", and Adam is simply repeating the name God gave her. One source for this is *The Encyclopedia of Mormonism*.

The Bible says, "And Adam called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living" (Genesis 3:20).

## **The Fall**

The Book of Mormon teaches man was carnal, sensual, and devilish since the fall of Adam (Mosiah 16:3), but Moses 5:13 says that men became carnal when Adam and Eve's grandchildren began to love Satan more than God. Later on, Moses 6:49 says men became carnal when Satan came and tempted mankind to worship him.

The Bible says Eve was deceived/beguiled (1 Timothy 2:14). Adam listened to Eve's voice, not Satan's (Genesis 3:17). He does not place any blame on Satan. This agrees with what the Pearl of Great Price teaches (Moses 4:5-6, 18, 23).

However, in Mormon teaching, the idea that Satan deceived is taught primarily in modern LDS scripture and other former church teachings.

Doctrine and Covenants 29:40 is the clearest, most direct statement: "Wherefore, it came to pass that the devil tempted Adam; and he partook of the forbidden fruit and transgressed the commandment, wherein he became subject to the will of the devil, because he yielded unto temptation".

In *Doctrines of Salvation*, former President Joseph Fielding Smith writes "Satan deceived our first parents and brought about the Fall, though Adam was not deceived in the same way as Eve".

## **Was God's creation good and very obedient?**

Abraham 4:31 says the creation of the Gods would be very obedient.

"And the Gods said: We will do everything that we have said, and organize them; and behold, they shall be very obedient".

The aspect of "they shall be very obedient" is not mentioned in the Bible. We know that Adam, Eve, and their children were not very obedient.

When the Gods created the earth, the waters, grass, seed, trees, herbs, light, darkness, and water creatures, they are seen by the Gods as being obedient (Abraham 4:10,12,18,21).

The Bible used another phrase – “and it was so”.

The Mormon Church teaches Adam and Eve could not have children because they had no blood in their veins. They were able to obey God’s command to be fruitful and multiply when they disobeyed him and ate from the forbidden tree. Mormon theology reveals Adam and Eve had to disobey in order to obey.

God’s creation was said to have been good and very obedient (Abraham 4:21-25, 31).

How could Adam and Eve be considered very obedient when they disobeyed one of God’s commandments and they lacked the ability to carry out his other one? Were the animals also unable to procreate before the Fall? Do you consider this as being a good creation of God or his creation being very obedient?

The Mormon teaching that Adam and Eve could not procreate before their disobedience is not biblical teaching. When God gave them the command to obey him, he also gave them ability and knowledge to do so. The same is true for the animals.

### **Other children before Cain and Abel?**

Cain and Abel appear not to have been the only children of Adam and Eve when Abel was murdered. Cain took one of his brothers’ daughters to wife. Satan conspired with Cain to kill Abel and made Cain and his brethren swear not to tell anyone about it (Moses 5:2-3, 28-30). But Genesis 4:1-2 shows Cain and Abel were the only children before Abel was murdered.

Eve said, “I have gotten a man with the help of the Lord” (Genesis 4:1). It’s not “I have gotten another man or woman with the help of the Lord”.

You wouldn’t say this if you already had many other children before Cain.

### **The birthright and the priesthood**

The right of the firstborn was right of holding the office of High Priest. Abraham is recorded as holding this office.

“I sought for the blessings of the fathers, and the right whereunto I should be ordained to administer the same; ... and to be a father of many nations ... I became a rightful heir, a High Priest, holding the right belonging to the fathers. It was conferred upon me from the fathers; it came down from the fathers, from the beginning of time, yea, even from the beginning, or before the foundation of the earth, down to the present time, even the right of the firstborn, or the first man, who is Adam, or first father, through the fathers unto me” (Abraham 1:2-3).

The lineage of Ham was cursed as to holding the priesthood.

The Mormon Church associates the birthright of the firstborn with the responsibility of the priesthood. It believes worthy Mormon males can hold either the Melchizedek or Levitical Priesthood.

Up until 1978, the Mormon Church denied the priesthood to Blacks of African descent. This was based on a revelation it believes originated from God. Today, they disavow such theories.

### **The curse of Ham**

"Now this king of Egypt was a descendant from the loins of Ham, and was a partaker of the blood of the Canaanites by birth.

From this descent sprang all the Egyptians, and thus the blood of the Canaanites was preserved in the land.

The land of Egypt being first discovered by a woman, who was the daughter of Ham, and the daughter of Egyptus, which in the Chaldean signifies Egypt, which signifies that which is forbidden;

When this woman discovered the land it was under water, who afterward settled her sons in it; and thus, from Ham, sprang that race which preserved the curse in the land" (Abraham 1:21-24).

"Pharaoh, being a righteous man ... but cursed him as pertaining to the Priesthood. Now, Pharaoh being of that lineage by which he could not have the right of Priesthood, notwithstanding the Pharaohs would fain claim it from Noah, through Ham" (Abraham 1:26-27).

But Moses 8:27 says Noah and his three sons walked with God, so there was no curse in Ham's bloodline to preserve.

"And thus Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord; for Noah was a just man, and perfect in his generation; and he walked with God, as did also his three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth (Moses 8:27).

The story of Ham and a curse is found in the Bible, specifically in Genesis 9. After the flood, Noah became drunk, and Ham, one of his sons, saw his father's nakedness and told his brothers. As a result, Noah cursed Ham's son, Canaan, saying that he would be a servant to his brothers. It's important to note that the curse was specifically on Canaan, not Ham himself.

## **The seed of Cain**

"And Enoch also beheld the residue of the people which were the sons of Adam; and they were a mixture of all the seed of Adam save it was the seed of Cain, for the seed of Cain were black, and had not place among them" (Moses 7:22).

The seed of Cain were not black in the Bible.

The Book of Mormon associates black skin with the sign a curse upon a certain group of people. "And he had caused the cursing to come upon them, yea, even a sore cursing, because of their iniquity. For behold, they had hardened their hearts against him, that they had become like unto a flint; wherefore, as they were white, and exceedingly fair and delightsome, that they might not be enticing unto my people the Lord God did cause a skin of blackness to come upon them" (2 Nephi 5:21).

Oddly enough, another passage says the Lamanites were more righteous than the Nephites, even though the skins of the Lamanites were still cursed with black skin. "Behold, the Lamanites your brethren, whom ye hate because of their filthiness and the cursing which hath come upon their skins, are more righteous than you; for they have not forgotten the commandment of the Lord" (Jacob 3:5).

Another part says the mark of dark skin was placed on the Lamanites to preserve the Nephites. "And the skins of the Lamanites were dark, according to the mark which was set upon their fathers, which was a curse upon them because of their transgression and their rebellion against their brethren, who consisted of Nephi, Jacob, and Joseph, and Sam, who were just and holy men. And their brethren sought to destroy them, therefore they were cursed; and the Lord God set a mark upon them, yea, upon Laman and Lemuel, and also the sons of Ishmael, and Ishmaelitish women. And this was done that their seed might be distinguished from the seed of their brethren, that thereby the Lord God might preserve his people, that they might not mix and believe in incorrect traditions which would prove their destruction" (Alma 3:6-8).

In approximately 13 A.D., the curse was lifted from the Lamanites and their skin became white. "... Their curse was taken from them, and their skin became white like unto the Nephites" (3 Nephi 2:15-16).

However, the Nephites are never cursed with dark skin as wickedness again begins to creep in among them after about 200 years of peace and unity (4 Nephi 1). It is even recorded that the Nephites raped, tortured, and ate the dead bodies of Lamanite women (Moroni 9:8-10).

## **The father of many nations**

Abraham prophesied that he would be the father of many nations, even before he was commanded to leave the land of Ur.

"I sought for the blessings of the fathers, and the right whereunto I should be ordained to administer the same; ... and to be a father of many nations ... I became a rightful heir, a High Priest, holding the right belonging to the fathers. It was conferred upon me from the fathers; it came down from the fathers, from the beginning of time, yea, even from the beginning, or before the foundation of the earth, down to the present time, even the right of the firstborn, or the first man, who is Adam, or first father, through the fathers unto me" (Abraham 1:2-3).

Later in the Pearl of Great Price, God makes a promise to make of Abraham a great nation (singular) while he is still living in the land of Ur.

"And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee above measure, and make thy name great among all nations" (Abraham 2:9).

The Bible says that Abram did not make this statement of himself. This promise was revealed to him by God when he was 99 years old. He was living in the land of Canaan at that time, not the land of Ur. This also coincides with God changing his name to "Abraham".

"As for me, this is my covenant with you: You will be the father of many nations. No longer will you be called Abram; your name will be Abraham, for I have made you a father of many nations" (Genesis 17:4-5).

## **Enoch**

The Pearl of Great Price adds details to Enoch which are not present in the Bible and which contradict the account in Genesis.

- He is slow of speech (Moses 6:31).
- There is no city of Enoch, a descendant of Seth. It is Cain in the Bible that builds a city and calls it after another Enoch (Genesis 4:17).
- He pleads with the Lord never to send the floods again upon the earth (Moses 7:50-51). God makes a covenant with Enoch but no sign of the bow is given to Enoch.
- Enoch, the city he built, and all his people walked with God and were taken up into heaven (Moses 7:18-21,69).

When you include Doctrine and Covenants, there are more differences with Enoch as you compare that with the Genesis account.

- Enoch was 25 years old when he was ordained by Adam. He is blessed by Adam at age 65 (D&C 107:48). He is not depicted as walking with God between his birth and

ordination and between the ages of 25 and 65. It's only after he is blessed by Adam that his walk begins (D&C 107:49).

- Enoch was neither ordained nor blessed by Adam in the biblical account.
- Enoch walked with God 365 years, making him 430 years old when he was taken up to heaven (D&C 107:49).
- The Bible says Enoch walked with God 300 years (Genesis 5:22), making him 365 years old when he was taken up to heaven (Genesis 5:23).

Another significant event occurs in his lifetime when he is commanded to anoint his eyes with clay and then wash them. This enables him to see all the spirits created by God and other things not visible to the natural (non-spiritual) eyes (Moses 6:35-36). The word "natural" in verse 36 is cross-referenced to Moses 1:11. There it speaks of Moses, who saw God and was transfigured before Him. The Mormon Church, in volume 3 of History of the Church, even teaches Peter, James, and John were transfigured when Moses and Elijah appeared to Jesus.

In the Pearl of Great Price account, the face of Moses does not shine after he returns from the mountain. Another section teaches spirits are uncreated, eternal beings (Abraham 3:18).

Some have tried to connect Enoch's experience with Revelation 3:18, where the Laodiceans were counseled by God to buy gold, white garments, and possibly even the eye salve from Him. The emphasis is on spiritual renewal, not on becoming materially wealthy, physically clothed, or literally cured of blindness. We see this from the previous verse - "Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked."

Also, no Mormon leaders have been transfigured or commanded by God to anoint their eyes so that they can see with their spiritual eyes.

## **Kolob and the reckoning of time**

Kolob is the name of a star which is closest to God's throne.

"And I saw the stars, that they were very great, and that one of them was nearest unto the throne of God; and there were many great ones which were near unto it; And the Lord said unto me: These are the governing ones; and the name of the great one is Kolob, because it is near unto me, for I am the Lord thy God: I have set this one to govern all those which belong to the same order as that upon which thou standest" (Abraham 3:2-3).

One day on Kolob is equal to one thousand years on earth.

"Kolob was after the manner of the Lord, according to its times and seasons in the revolutions thereof; that one revolution was a day unto the Lord, after his manner of reckoning, it being one thousand years according to the time appointed unto that whereon thou standest. This is the reckoning of the Lord's time, according to the reckoning of Kolob" (Abraham 3:4).

The *Religion 327 – Pearl of Great Price Student Manual* equates “revolution” (Abraham 3:4) with proximity. It is unclear why the writer excluded “time” since that is the context of Abraham’s passage.

“Abraham learned that wherever there are two stars one will be greater than the other, and that there are other stars greater than those two, until Kolob, which is the greatest of all. He learned that it is not size that makes one star or planet greater than another, but rather its proximity to Kolob. So it is with the children of God—their greatness and glory will depend upon their proximity to the Creator, Jesus Christ, who is nearest unto the throne of God, the great one, the first creation” (p. 37).

“The planet which is the lesser light [the moon] ... is above or greater than that upon which thou standest in point of reckoning ... the set time of the lesser light [the moon] is a longer time as to its reckoning than the reckoning of the time of the earth upon which thou standest. And where these two facts exist, there shall be another planet whose reckoning of time shall be longer still” (Abraham 3:5-8).

The footnotes section of the Pearl of Great Price says the expression “set time is a longer time” is a reference to the moon moving more slowly than the earth on its axis.

Using the movement of a heavenly body about its axis is understandable as another discussion point, but it cannot be used in the context of this passage because the seasons of the earth are not determined solely by its rotation on its axis. Its rotation around the sun must also be considered.

Mars or Venus, depending on which is farther from the star Kolob, will have a greater (or longer) reckoning time than the earth.

Let’s focus on the phrase “reckoning of time.” Joseph Smith’s revelation has several problems if you substitute two meanings of what the reckoning of time could be.

Scenario 1: the time for revolution around Kolob.

This explanation fits nicely with Joseph Smith’s intended purpose because the words “revolution” and “time” are mentioned in the Book of Abraham.

Earth, in the grand scheme of things, revolves around Kolob according to this passage. The sun in our solar system also revolves around Kolob. As Kolob’s revolution is one day (to God’s throne), the earth’s revolution is one thousand years (Abraham 3:4). Both the sun and the earth are governed, in the end, by Kolob (v. 3).

Joseph Smith revealed the reckoning time of the moon is greater than the earth and that the moon was above the earth (vv. 7, 17). Well, he was partly right and partly wrong. Sometimes the moon is below the earth, making the reckoning time of the moon less than the earth.

The times and seasons of Kolob are determined by its revolution around God's abode (v. 4). God set up Kolob to govern all those [planets] which belong to the same order as that upon which Abraham was standing (v. 3).

Scientifically speaking, Earth's seasons are dictated by its revolution around the sun in our solar system and not Kolob (unless Kolob is that sun). The moon's seasons are not determined by the sun because the moon has no seasons.

Scenario 2: the distance from the star Kolob. This is the context of the passage from *Religion 327 – Pearl of Great Price Student Manual*.

Depending on where the moon is in relation to its orbit around the Earth at a given moment in time, you have two variations: (1) Kolob <-> planet <-> moon <-> Earth <-> planet or (2) Kolob <-> planet <-> Earth <-> moon <-> planet.

Since the moon revolves around the Earth, why would Joseph Smith believe the moon's time of reckoning (its distance from Kolob) is greater than the Earth (vv. 7, 17)? The moon's time of reckoning would be less during some positions in its orbit around the Earth.

Recall the earlier teaching that proximity to Kolob gives a planetary object a greater glory than another (*Religion 327 – Pearl of Great Price Student Manual*, p. 37). So, you could make the statement that the moon has a greater glory than the Earth sometimes and the Earth has a greater glory than the moon at other times. Sometimes Earth could surpass Jupiter in glory and sometimes Jupiter could surpass the Earth in glory.

These planetary movements in their orbits make Joseph's teaching rather absurd. There are other stories in the Pearl of Great Price which go against biblical teachings and even contradict the Book of Mormon.

### **Abraham's age when he left Haran**

Abraham is sixty-two years old when he departed Haran.

"So I, Abraham, departed as the Lord had said unto me, and Lot with me; and I, Abraham, was sixty and two years old when I departed out of Haran" (Abraham 2:14).

The Bible says he was seventy-five years old.

"So Abram departed, as the LORD had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran" (Genesis 12:4).

## **Abraham's father wanted to kill him**

The Pearl of Great Price says Abraham's father was one of the people who sought to kill him.

"Accordingly a famine prevailed throughout all the land of Chaldea, and my father was sorely tormented because of the famine, and he repented of the evil which he had determined against me, to take away my life" (Abraham 1:30).

It's also recorded that other pagan priests sought to kill Abraham.

"And it came to pass that the priests laid violence upon me, that they might slay me also, as they did those virgins upon this altar" (Abraham 1:12). The priests were apparently those who worshipped pagan gods (of Elkenah, Libnah, Mahmackrah, Korash, and of Egypt). But it doesn't indicate if these are the names of gods or communities.

For some reason, Abraham 2:13 mentions that God only delivered Abraham from the gods of Elkenah, not from all the other pagan gods mentioned above.

"Thou didst send thine angel to deliver me from the gods of Elkenah, and I will do well to hearken unto thy voice, therefore let thy servant rise up and depart in peace".

It's a little odd that the priest of Elkenah was also the priest of Pharaoh (Abraham 1:7). You figure the priest of Pharaoh would be the priest of the god of Pharaoh.

## **Abraham's lie**

God is said to be the one who told Abraham to lie to the Egyptians about Sarah being his sister (Abraham 2:22-25). But Genesis 12:11-13 says it was not God who told Abraham to lie. The "seed" of Abraham is considered to be his priesthood and the reason for the families of the earth being blessed (Abraham 2:11), whereas the Bible says the seed of Abraham are the children of the promise (Rom. 9:8). People would be blessed by Jesus who would come through the lineage of Isaac (the son promised to Abraham).

## **Abraham's name**

The Pearl of Great never uses the name Abram. The name is always specified as "Abraham", not understanding that God changed "Abram" to "Abraham" after Abram was already living in the land of Canaan (Genesis 17:4-5).

"Behold, my covenant is with you, and you shall be the father of a multitude of nations. No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham, for I have made you the father of a multitude of nations".

## **Abraham takes Lot**

The Pearl of Great says that God commanded Abraham to take Lot when he left the land of his father.

"But I, Abraham, and Lot, my brother's son, prayed unto the Lord, and the Lord appeared unto me, and said unto me: Arise, and take Lot with thee; for I have purposed to take thee away out of Haran, and to make of thee a minister to bear my name in a strange land which I will give unto thy seed after thee for an everlasting possession, when they hearken to my voice" (Abraham 2:6).

The Bible does not say God commanded Abraham to take Lot.

Here's how the text lays it out:

"Go from your country, your kindred, and your father's house to the land that I will show you."

This command emphasizes leaving, not bringing relatives along.

Just a few verses later, we're told: "So Abram went, as the Lord had told him... And Lot went with him."

The text states "Lot went", but it does not say God told Abram to take Lot.

Eventually, Abram and Lot separate because their households become too large.

After Lot leaves, God reaffirms and expands His promise to Abram (Genesis 13:14–17). God's renewed promise comes after Abram is fully separated from Lot.

Lot's presence appears to be Abram's choice, not God's instruction. This fits the original command to leave his kindred behind. Scripture doesn't criticize Abram directly, but the narrative implies that Lot's inclusion was not commanded by God.

## **The Flood**

The Pearl of Great Price records it repented Noah and grieved him at his heart that God had created man (Moses 8:25), whereas the Bible says it repented God and grieved him at his heart that he had created man (Gen. 6:6).

God is said to have sent the flood because the wickedness on the earth repented Noah and because wicked people sought to take away his life (Moses 8:26). The Bible teaches the flood came as a result of the violence and corruptness of those on the earth. There is no recorded attempt of murdering Noah in the Bible.

The Enoch in the Pearl of Great Price pleads with the Lord never to send the floods again upon the earth (Moses 7:50-51). God makes a covenant with Enoch but no sign of the bow is given to Enoch.

The Enoch of the Bible does not plead with God. God only makes the covenant with Noah never to kill all living things (Genesis 8:21-22). This follows Noah making an offering to the Lord. God gives the sign of the bow to Noah. It would be the token of that covenant (Genesis 9:12-17).

Joseph Smith incorrectly taught that viewing the bow in the heavens was a sign the Lord would not come that year (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church – Joseph Smith, 2008, p. 252*). Study Genesis 9:12-17 for the correct meaning.

Another interesting thing in the Pearl of Great Price is about the coming of God the Father in the last days to fulfil a covenant he made with Enoch.

“And it came to pass that Enoch continued his cry unto the Lord, saying: I ask thee, O Lord, in the name of thine Only Begotten, even Jesus Christ, that thou wilt have mercy upon Noah and his seed, that the earth might never more be covered by the floods. And the Lord could not withhold; and he covenanted with Enoch, and sware unto him with an oath, that he would stay the floods; that he would call upon the children of Noah; And he sent forth an unalterable decree, that a remnant of his seed should always be found among all nations, while the earth should stand” (Moses 7:50-52).

“And Enoch beheld the Son of Man ascend up unto the Father; and he called unto the Lord, saying: Wilt thou not come again upon the earth? Forasmuch as thou art God, and I know thee, and thou hast sworn unto me, and commanded me that I should ask in the name of thine Only Begotten; thou hast made me, and given unto me a right to thy throne, and not of myself, but through thine own grace; wherefore, I ask thee if thou wilt not come again on the earth. And the Lord said unto Enoch: As I live, even so will I come in the last days, in the days of wickedness and vengeance, to fulfil the oath which I have made unto you concerning the children of Noah” (Moses 7:59-60).

The Lord in this passage is identified as Heavenly Father. That covenant with Enoch includes an additional element: that a remnant of Noah’s seed would be found among all nations. However, this aspect of the covenant is inherently self-fulfilling, since all nations are populated by descendants of those who survived the global flood. As a result, Noah’s lineage would necessarily be present among every people group.

Genesis 9:11 teaches us that God made the covenant with Noah, not Enoch. “Neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth”.

The rainbow is not how God fulfills his covenant. It's a sign to us that he remembers and testifies of it. No sign of confirmation is given to Enoch, even in the Pearl of Great Price.

Biblically speaking, God has already fulfilled this simply by not doing what he swore he would never do again. So, Heavenly Father does not need to come to Earth in the last days to fulfil either the biblical one or the extra element found in Moses 7.

## **Conclusion**

In closing, I pray you will trust the Bible as the word of God.

It's clear that the Mormon Pearl of Great Price is not a real pearl.