

TEACHING GEOLOGY, AN OLD EARTH,  
AND ORGANIC EVOLUTION IN THE CONTEXT  
OF THE GOSPEL

*Edmund J. Williams—Department of Geology*

Teaching in the Department of Geology at Ricks College and now BYU–Idaho for the past 41 years has been the opportunity of a lifetime. Last fall I began a part-time service mission on campus (you guessed it—teaching geology). It is a win-win situation. I have the opportunity to teach and enjoy the blessings of service, and the university receives my labors for free. This institution has been good to my family and me for 40 years, and now I am privileged to show my gratitude.

I have been asked to write this article. I consider it a privilege and appreciate the trust of my colleagues in making this request. My first responsibility at this institution is to strengthen testimonies, and my second is to teach geology and the other associated sciences. Some think this is impossible because they believe certain theories of science conflict with the principles of the gospel. Must we choose between science and religion? Why?

I thank my colleagues and family who have coached me in this endeavor. I do not claim to know all the answers concerning the relationship between geology and the gospel of Jesus Christ. The concepts presented in this paper have themselves evolved over the last 50 years and will continue to evolve as science makes new discoveries and more revelations are given.

I have taught a historical geology class (Life of the Past) since I first came to teach at Ricks in 1964. There are two fundamental concepts in the class. One is that the earth is billions of years old and has had a very long and eventful history. The second concept is shown by the fossil record and illustrates there was an orderly development of life through time. This progression of life is called *The Principle of Faunal Succession* and states that plants and animals appear in the fossil record in an orderly and predictable sequence. This systematic development of life through time is not a theory but a reality of the earth. By understanding this concept, geologists can find fossil fuels and other natural resources that are essential today.

Faunal Succession is the documentary evidence of the *Theory of Organic Evolution*, the improvement, change, and adaptation of life as the earth and environment have changed through its long history. Early in the class, I tell my students: “Until you know the basics of evolution, be careful about mentioning the ‘E-word’ to your roommates and friends because there are so many misconceptions and incorrect ideas about the theory.”

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## ADVENTUROUS ENCOUNTERS

My first encounter with resistance to the concepts of geology was when my wife Arlene and I were seniors at Utah State University. We traveled home for the Christmas Holidays where our home bishop called us into his office. He turned to me and said, “I understand you are studying geology.” I replied that I was. He asked, “Do you believe the teachings of geology?” I answered “yes.” He shook his head and took a book off the shelf written by one of the church leaders of that time. The bishop then read several passages that in summary stated that there was no room in the Celestial Kingdom for one who believes the concepts of geology. Then he said, “My advice to you is to change your major to a field where your salvation is more assured.”

Arlene and I left his office really confused because we wanted to follow the advice of our bishop, and yet we both understood and believed the concepts of geology and could see no conflict between geology and the gospel of Jesus Christ. The first thing I did when I returned to Utah State was to look up my advisor, Dr. Donald R. Olsen, a geology instructor, whom I knew was in a bishopric in Logan. When I told him the experience with my home bishop, Dr. Olsen just laughed and said that there was a lot of confusion about the relationship between the concepts of geology and the Church. I was relieved, to say the least. We had several good discussions on the subject. His advice was to learn all I could about the relationship between the concepts of science and the doctrines of the Church.

## TEACHING THE ORIGIN OF LIFE IN THE CONTEXT OF RELIGION

There are two places where the creation of the earth and its life are recorded. One record is in the scriptures; the other is in the earth itself. Many theories exist in both disciplines, and that is where the conflict arises in many people’s minds. The challenge is to strive to interpret both sources correctly, because the truths of each will never conflict. It is important to remember that the scriptures outline the same general order of events in the creation of the earth and its life as geologists have discovered by studying earth history.

When teaching about evolution and an old earth, I outline several fundamentals I call “Williams’ Principles.” They are interwoven with the concepts of geology throughout my Life of the Past class:

1. The first day of class, I tell the students that we will be studying about an earth that is billions of years old and will learn about the history and evolution of life during that time. If any of them feel uncomfortable with these concepts, I advise them to drop the class.

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I then challenge them to learn the principles of geology so that they can make informed decisions about which concepts may be true and which ones may be false. I also tell them to listen carefully to people who have an opposing view. I tell them that we will be using the Scriptures to gain a religious perspective in the class.

2. Students in this class are not required to believe in organic evolution to pass the class, but they do need to know evolution's basic concepts to answer questions on the test.
3. Organic evolution and an old earth seem to be good theories with supporting evidence. Theories change as we discover new concepts through scientific investigation. Theories are scaffolds science uses during construction (or discovery) of truth. The finished structure may only slightly resemble the scaffold that is stripped away when the project is completed.
4. No concept in evolution states that there is or is not a God. Many think evolution and atheism are synonymous. Not true. Even Charles Darwin in his book *The Origin of Species* refers to the creator and the plan of creation many times. Some atheists have embraced evolution because they are looking for a creation method using the laws of nature alone.
5. As far as is known, there is no official church doctrine regarding the method or time required for the creation of the earth and its life. If there were official doctrine against evolution and an old earth, then these theories should not be taught at Church-owned institutions. I also believe it is best for students to learn about these concepts of science in the context of the Gospel.
6. I believe that Jesus Christ under the direction of God the Father created the earth and its life.
7. I believe that the Creator is a scientist and not a magician.
8. I believe the Creator had an understanding of and used natural law to create this earth and its life.
9. A belief in evolution and an old earth are not detrimental to one's salvation unless one makes the mistake of basing his or her philosophy of life on them. LDS scientists can believe in the concepts of geology, including organic evolution, and be members of the Church in good standing.
10. So far, organic evolution is the best explanation for the diversity of life on the earth. Those opposed to evolution should have an alternate explanation for the development of life that takes into consideration the truths seen in the earth (like the Principle of Faunal Succession already mentioned and earth structure that will be discussed later).

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11. I will not tell the Creator how he did or did not create this earth and its life or how long it took. The responsibility of an LDS scientist is to search for possible ways the creation was accomplished.
12. Anyone who believes in these concepts should be able to accept change easily and quickly if and when there is new revelation from the Church or findings of science. Since we do not have all the answers, we must be willing to add new truths as they are discovered or revealed. The Theory of Organic Evolution has changed considerably since Charles Darwin. It will change more as we learn more. What we know about evolution fills many books. What we will learn about evolution in the future, be the theory right or wrong, will fill many more.
13. I have had the opportunity to explain my approach to evolution to several presidents and administrators of Ricks College. During those times, I have sought guidance and counsel from them. They have all given me cautions, suggestions, and encouragement that I appreciate. I have incorporated their counsel and advice in my teaching of evolution and an ancient earth.

#### OTHER IDEAS

The earth was created from matter that already existed: “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” (Abraham, 3:24). Many people think “these materials” were once parts of other worlds and included evidence of life that may have lived on these other worlds. There are two scientific reasons why this hypothesis is not valid. Remember that Faunal Succession is not a theory but a reality of the fossil record. The great scientist Henry Eyring, father of Elder Henry B. Eyring, visited my Life of the Past class several times when his son was President of Ricks College. During one visit, Brother Eyring told us that if fossils were from other planets, “it would take a very fancy shovel to put the earth together in such a organized fashion so that the fossils and ages of rocks are arranged in such an orderly manner with the oldest on the bottom and the youngest on top.”

The second clue also comes from modern studies of the earth. Science likewise teaches that the earth was made of material that already existed, but there is great evidence that the earth was molten in its early stages of development. The heavy elements like iron, nickel, and others, sank to form the liquid outer core and the solid inner core of the earth. Their dynamic movement and relationship is what gives the earth its magnetic field. The magnetic field is essential for life to exist since it extends far out into space and protects the earth from intense lethal solar and other cosmic radiation. Our “shields are up.”

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If the earth were molten in its early history, it would have destroyed any fossils that may have existed in the primordial material and it would also have rewound all the atomic clocks used to date rocks. The fossils and rocks found in the earth seem to represent the history of this earth and its life.

Another problem arises in some people's minds that if there was evolution there would be no need for a Christ. They argue that Adam brought death of everything into the world, and nothing died before Adam's fall. This is even stated in the Bible Dictionary under Death: "Latter-day revelation teaches that there was no death on this earth for any forms of life before the fall of Adam. Indeed death entered the world as a direct result of the Fall." Is the Bible Dictionary doctrine? In Line 6 of the Preface to the Bible Dictionary it says: "It is not intended as an official or revealed endorsement by the Church..."

So did Adam bring death of all forms of life into the world? If it were for all forms of life, what about fossils and succession of life that date before Adam's time? Many members of the Church believe that the death Adam brought into the world was the spiritual and physical death of man. An immortal Adam must be cast out of the Garden into the mortal world or there would be no change or progression of mankind. Yes, if Adam brought death of mankind into the world, then Adam and his posterity need a Christ and an Atonement for all to have eternal life.

#### CREATION OF THE EARTH

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In the Life of the Past class we look at the wondrous universe, with its billions of beautiful galaxies each with hundreds of billions of stars. With modern telescopes we can see hundreds of billions of galaxies, some almost 14 billion light years away. Traveling 186,000 miles a second it takes light 14 billion years to arrive here at the earth. According to scientists, that is more than three times as long as the earth has existed. It is not so difficult to believe the earth is only 4.6 billion years old because we see other events and features of the universe that are much older. We also learn in class that there are more stars in the known universe than grains of sand on the earth. We find confirmation in Moses 7:30: "And were it possible that man could number the particles of the earth, yea, millions of earths like this, it would not be a beginning to the number of thy creations..." In class, we study the theories of the origin of the universe and the origin of the earth. It is a thrill as we study astronomy, to consider the probability of billions of earths like ours. We find verification in Moses 1:33, which states: "And worlds without number have I created; and I also created them for mine own purpose; and by the Son I created them, which is mine Only Begotten."

Let's look at the creation of the earth as explained in the scriptures and compare that to the findings of geology. The creation of the earth and its life is explained in Genesis, Moses, and Abraham. I like the account of the creation as told by Abraham. In his account he explains how he learned about the creation: "Thus I, Abraham, talked with the Lord, face to face, as one man talketh with another; and he told me of the works which his hands had made; And he said unto me: My son, my son (and his hand was stretched out), behold I will show you all these. And he put his hand upon mine eyes, and I saw those things his hands had made, which were many; and they multiplied before mine eyes, and I could not see the end thereof" (Abraham 3: 11-12). It sounds like the Lord showed him the vastness of the universe as well as the creation of the earth, because he "could not see the end thereof."

Abraham then wrote of what he learned about the creation of the earth in Abraham 4. He next summarized and added more in Chapter 5. Some believe there is symbolism in the creation scriptures. Nevertheless, let me repeat, the events and order of the creation in the first part of Abraham 4 are very close to the order illustrated by the geologic history of the earth.

Abraham also tells us: "And the Gods said: Let us prepare the earth to bring forth... And the Gods organized the earth to bring forth..." (Abraham 4:11-12). The Scriptures mention the first through the sixth times in the creation. These times of creation may not have been days of 24 hours, but times during which different events in the creation of the earth and its life took place. In a similar way, we talk of "the day of the horse and buggy" as a period of time.

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#### CREATION OF LIFE

Continuing with Abraham: "And the Gods said: Let us prepare the waters to bring forth abundantly the moving creatures that have life; and the fowl, that they may fly above the earth in the open expanse of heaven. And the Gods prepared the waters that they might bring forth great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters were to bring forth abundantly after their kind; and every winged fowl after their kind. And the Gods saw that they would be obeyed, and that their plan was good" (Abraham 4: 20-21; see also Moses 2:20-21).

Evolution teaches that life started in the water and filled the oceans with all kinds of life. Fossils of the first forms of life are found in Precambrian marine sedimentary rocks more than 3.5 billion years old. Over time many forms of life appeared in a predictable order. Food chains are seen in the fossil record and a form of life did not appear in the fossil record until there was a preexisting food supply. Life gradually became more

abundant to fill the oceans and eventually moved onto the land and produced the great diversity of land life we see today.

Everything was also to “bring forth abundantly after their kind.” That is another one of the laws seen in nature today. Almost every living thing on the earth reproduces within its own species. If it crosses the species line, like the horse and donkey to produce a mule, the mule cannot reproduce. Reproducing after its own kind is a very good law that has been around throughout the creation; otherwise, we would have cogs and dats, gerelephants, and so on.

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“And the gods watched those things which they had ordered until they obeyed” (Abraham 4:18). This verse suggests the Creators had an understanding of the natural laws of creation. The Gods prepared and organized the earth and the waters to bring forth and then watched and waited until they obeyed. I do not think they were experimenting. The Gods knew exactly what the end product would be as they understood the laws of creation. There is a reason for everything that has ever lived on the earth including dinosaurs. Paleontologists tell us that birds are direct decedents of one group of dinosaurs. Could dinosaurs be one step in how they created “winged fowl”?

The creation of this earth and its life was to be like it is today with an environment, food supply, and natural resources that would enable Adam and his posterity to live here. How was this done? “The Lord by wisdom hath founded the earth; by understanding hath he established the heavens” (Proverbs 3:19).

## EARLY MAN

Now we get to a very delicate part of the creation. All historical geology textbooks have a chapter on “Early Man” as seen in the fossil record. Before we go any further, what is early man? Science defines early man as the manlike creatures we find in the fossil record. There is little question that they existed on this earth. What was their purpose and what part did they play in the creation? Many people would like to “kick dirt” over early man and ignore him. This will not make him go away. What can we do with him?

Once again, without a study of early mankind and their fossil record, it is dangerous to make any judgments of who they were and their place in the history of life on the earth. Once again, I challenge the reader to learn about the anthropology of early man. Just make sure your study includes contemporary information. Many new discoveries are being made every year, but there are still many questions unanswered. Science operates and progresses by asking questions and then searching for answers. Many books, magazines, and television programs tell of the latest developments and discoveries regarding early man.

Even mentioning early man can stir up a hornet's nest. I tried skipping that chapter once. The students scolded me and I felt I had let them down as a teacher. I decided not to "copout" again. So here is how I deal with the delicate subject of "early man."

In class we learn in the text the science and step-by-step development of primates from very early to modern forms of early man. Then I ask: "Are there any questions?" Always, the question is asked: "How does Adam fit in? This answer is my favorite: "I do not know and I do not know anyone who does know, and you can quote me." I pause for a moment and there is always a restless silence. Then I say: "I do have some ideas and if you would like to hear them, I will share them with you, but you must understand that I do not know all the answers and we all must be willing to consider new ideas as they come along. Then before discussing how early man might fit in, I discuss with the students again the Williams' Principles 5–12 outlined above.

Before we go further, let's look at the 1909 statement on the Origin of Man, signed by the First Presidency of the Church. This statement was republished in the February 2002 issue of the Ensign. Here is a small part of that statement that applies to this discussion: "It is held by some that Adam was not the first man on 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..."

This part of the 1909 statement clarifies two important concepts. One, Adam was the "first man," so we must keep that in mind. Two, evolution is a "theory of man." We have already established that evolution is a theory. The next question I ask is: "What is man, and who are we?" With a little prompting, the students come up with the answer: "I am a child of God." "Yes, that is the origin of our spirits," I respond. "What is the origin of your physical body?" Students answer: "We get that from our earthly mother and father." Then I ask: "What was the possible origin of Adam's physical body?" The students come up with several possibilities including: "Transplanted from somewhere else?" "Yes, we should not rule that out." "Born of Heavenly parents?" "Could be."

I list all the answers on the chalkboard. After the students have suggested all they can think of, I add "etc." to the list. I tell them that is what we say when we cannot think of anything else. We must leave the door open for new discoveries and revelation. Then I ask these questions: "Could Adam have been born into this world of earthly parents? Could it be that Adam's parents were created on this earth by a God-directed evolution process? Could the fossils of early man be the record for the creation of the physical body of Adam?" Impossible? Maybe?

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Then we look at some scriptures for clues, once again in Abraham: “And the Gods took council among themselves and said: Let us go down and form man in our image, after our likeness; and we will give them dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every living thing that creepeth upon the earth. So the Gods went down to organize man in their own image, in the image of the Gods to form they him, male and female to form they them” (Abraham 4:26-27). “And the Gods formed man from the dust of the ground, and took his spirit (that is man’s spirit), and put it into him; and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul” (Abraham 5:7).

In Abraham 4 & 5 quoted above, we are told of the creation of man. We know who did it (the Gods), and that they “formed man from the dust of the ground,” then “put man’s spirit into him.” Those are the only clues we have. The method of forming, organizing, or creating the physical body of man “from the dust of the ground” is not explained. I believe the creating, organizing, or forming were accomplished by following natural law. Could evolution be that natural law? Again. Unthinkable? Maybe?

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#### ETERNAL PROGRESSION

In the Church, we are taught that through improvement, change, adaptation, and development through time we can become Gods. It seems that eternal progression includes personal and spiritual evolution through time. We can “evolve from man into Gods.” Are the steps from man to Godhood much different than the development of life from simple to complex forms in the history of life on the earth? With this in mind, the possibility of directed evolution with intelligent design of life on this earth through time is not so hard to believe.

To summarize Abraham, the Gods prepared the earth (and the waters) to bring forth abundantly living creatures, then they watched it until it obeyed. Could it be that when the time was right, Adam’s spirit entered a physical body prepared for him. Then, Adam was born into this world, just like everyone who has ever lived on this earth. Adam then was the first true man, “the first man of all men” in that he was the first spiritual offspring of God to receive a physical body. Yes, Adam, the first man, is special and was part of the plan of creation.

To some, these are radical ideas. Once again, let me repeat. I love and have great respect for the Creator. Much of that admiration is the result of studying his creations. I do not know all there is to know about science or my religion, but with what I do know about each, I can find only harmony and support between the two. Someday we will know for

certain the details of the creation and many of us—including me—may be surprised.

#### THE CHALLENGE OF LIFE

The final day of class I try to put the students' minds at ease. They still have many unanswered questions since we do not have all the answers. I challenge them to continue to learn all they can about both science and religion and the relationship between the two. I refer them to the Doctrine and Covenants 101:32-34: "Yea, verily I say unto you, in the day when the Lord shall come, he shall reveal all things—Things which have passed, and hidden things which no man knew, things of the earth, by which it was made, and the purpose and the end thereof—Things most precious, things that are above, and things that are beneath, things that are in the earth, and upon the earth, and in heaven."

Several years ago, while on the faculty of a BYU Education Week program in Dillon, Montana, I quoted the above scripture at the end of a discussion. I then told the class that we must live in such a way to be where the Lord is when he comes so that we may learn firsthand about the creation and have our questions answered. The class was dismissed and everyone left except one man who had attended every one of my classes over the previous three days. He was dressed in clean but faded plaid shirt and blue jeans and wore a shaggy black beard. He sat on the front row and had not spoken a word in class during the three days. After everyone else had left, he expressed how much he had enjoyed the programs, and said that he agreed with everything I said except one. I asked him what that was. He answered, "I do not think we need to wait until the Lord comes in person to learn the answers to our questions." I asked, "What do you mean?" He answered with a question: "We are in the last days aren't we?" I answered "yes." He then said, "I think these things are being revealed now by people like you," as he pointed his finger at me. I replied, "That is scary and I am not sure I want that responsibility." His answer was another question: "Nevertheless, who is more qualified than LDS scientists to discover answers to these questions? They have an understanding of the Creator, the Gospel, and science, and can better comprehend the significance of the entire plan." It took a shepherd from the outback of Montana to humble me and make me aware of the extreme responsibility that LDS scientists have.

I tell my students about that experience and then turn that finger around and point it at them and say: "Who is more qualified than you to learn, grow, and discover the answers to these questions? Since there are many questions unanswered, acquire all the knowledge you can from both religious and scientific fields so you can make decisions and recognize truth when it comes along." I also tell them to use the Holy Spirit to help

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them discern between true and false ideas: “And by the power of the Holy Ghost ye may know the truth of all things” (Moroni 10:5).

The last day of class I also read from the book of Moses: “And behold, all things have their likeness, and all things are created and made to bear record of me, both things which are temporal, and things which are spiritual; things which are in the heavens above, and things which are on the earth, and things which are in the earth, and things which are under the earth, both above and beneath: all things bear record of me” (Moses 6:63).

I caution my students, that if they are ever teaching a class, not to discuss these concepts and questions in a church setting because they are so controversial and they are not doctrine. Teach the Doctrine. I tell them of an experience in a high priest class where a teacher started asking me about evolution and an old earth. I told the class: “These are questions that I wrestle with in my classes on campus almost every day. This is not the time or place for this type of discussion, but if you would like to talk about these subjects in a fireside setting, I would be glad to do so.”

#### WHAT DO STUDENTS SAY?

How do the students feel at the end of the class? I keep checking on myself because of the fear that I may be undermining the students’ testimonies or leading them astray. I ask the following question on the final exam, with the understanding that they get full credit for a positive or negative answer. If they feel threatened by teachings in this class in any way, I want them to tell me. Only a few have given negative feedback because I have told them I do not know all the answers to all their questions. Only one in 40 years has told me I weakened his testimony. Much to my relief, in questioning him, someone else had coached him to say that.

The question I ask on the test is: “How has this class helped you understand the relationship between science and religion?” The following are answers from my students:

Melanie: Life of the Past class increased my testimony of the truthfulness of the gospel. Seeing how the planets and galaxies tie in with the gospel has increased my understanding and knowledge of our creation, the creation of the universe, and God’s plan. Evolution is a very controversial issue that has been carefully approached in class. Hearing your theories and seeing the facts and fossils has helped me to accept evolution and its possibilities. I love how you taught us to keep our minds open because we don’t know everything, but our knowledge is built upon theories, trial and error, and the past. The truth

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is being revealed to us, but we must search and keep an open mind.

Jessie: The main thing that I have learned about the relationship between science and religion is that science keeps proving religion. I have learned more about our Creator because of this class. I now truly believe that our Creator works by and follows natural laws of the earth. The proof of this is found all around us. I now understand more about how our Creator brought about the creation. Thank you, Brother Williams, for teaching me these new ideas and showing me how they could and do fit into our religion.

Julie: This class has improved my understanding so much! I always got frustrated before trying to figure out which I was supposed to believe, science or religion. Now, thanks to your class I can see how the two can work together! It makes so much sense to think of the Creator as a master scientist who works under natural laws, which helps explain why we need to understand natural laws as well. Overall, this class has caused me to find out for myself what I actually believe and what makes sense instead of accepting others' theories and beliefs.

Chris: My understanding has improved greatly from zero to a pretty firm understanding. I now know that the two do not conflict, whereas I used to think otherwise. I didn't really understand that God obeys natural laws, and as long as evolution meets natural laws, it cannot be ruled out. The evidence, as I see it, is overwhelming and undeniable. It doesn't make you evil for believing in evolution. What is important is that you give credit to the Creator.

Mandy: Before I came to this class, I had always been taught that evolution was something you just didn't talk about or even bring up because everyone's views and theories were so different. But in my case, I didn't know anything about evolution. The whole idea scared me, really. I didn't want to know from what I had heard, and what I had heard went against everything the Gospel teaches. After attending this class, I not only became interested in all the dinosaurs and fossils but also the development of early man. I wish I could go back in time during that period and see what they really looked like and how they interacted with one another. I learned that you have to work with religion and science

together; they go hand in hand when you are trying to find the answers to all these mysteries of ancient times.

Cody: Well, just because I have taken this class doesn't mean that my questions have been answered, but what it has done is open my mind to other possibilities. When one begins thinking of different possibilities, a lot of things begin to make sense. What is funny to me is how some people are so set against religion and ignore its evidences and focus solely on science, but the reverse can be true. The truth is this—there are evidences of both, and neither could be ignored. God uses both to bring about his work.

#### MY TESTIMONY

**This world was made for God's spiritual offspring to receive physical bodies and prove themselves worthy to become as our Heavenly Parents.**

My lifelong study of the earth and the development of life thrill me and help me appreciate the Creator. This earth is put together in an organized, beautiful, unique, and elegant way that reflects the knowledge, skill, and love of the Creator. This world was made for God's spiritual offspring to receive physical bodies and prove themselves worthy to become as our Heavenly Parents. This planet comes complete with the proper environment, land for crops, and natural resources to bring about his work.

I add my testimony to that of Alma, who was debating with the antichrist Korihor who wanted a sign that there was a God. Alma replied: "Thou hast had signs enough; will ye tempt your God? Will ye say, Show unto me a sign, when ye have the testimony of all these thy brethren, and also the holy prophets? The scriptures are laid before thee, yea, and all things denote there is a God; yea, even the earth, and all things that are upon the face of it, yea, and its motion, yea, and also the planets which move in their regular form do witness that there is a Supreme Creator" (Alma 30:44).

I have had the opportunity to learn and share with others knowledge about the earth, which is only a tiny part of a vast endless universe. I look at the earth and into the night sky with love and reverence for the beauty there: "Behold, all these are kingdoms and any man who hath seen any or the least of these has seen God moving in his majesty and power" (Doctrine and Covenants 88: 47). I thank my Heavenly Father for the privilege of knowing and teaching his sons and daughters of the creations of his eldest Son, our brother Jesus Christ. ☺

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