

Anonymous 1910 Statement Erroneously Hailed as Coming from the First Presidency

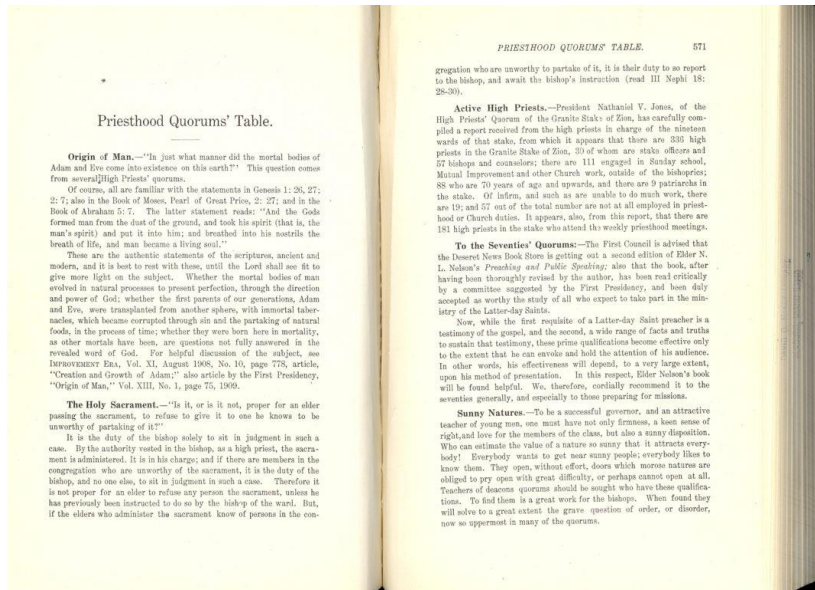
On page 62 the LTSR (Let's Talk about Science and Religion) authors quote the following, claiming it as a First Presidency statement headed by Joseph F. Smith, though it's actually just from a youth manual, has no signature, and could have been written by anyone: "Whether the mortal bodies of man **evolved in natural processes** to present perfection, through the direction and power of God; whether the first parents of our generations, Adam and Eve, were **transplanted from another sphere**, with immortal tabernacles, which became corrupted through sin...(or) whether they were **born here in mortality**, as other mortals have been, are questions **not fully answered** in the revealed word of God" (SUPPOSEDLY First Presidency of Joseph F. Smith, Improvement Era, April 1910, 13:570) (actually it's just from an anonymous Church manual as you'll see, and there's a big difference.)

The LDS Answers website (LDSAnswers.org), affiliated with the Joseph Smith Foundation (JosephSmithFoundation.org), has thoroughly treated this quote, and I'll draw up a few points they made. For their full article, visit <https://ldsanswers.org/a-response-to-the-erroneously-attributed-1910-first-presidency-message/>.

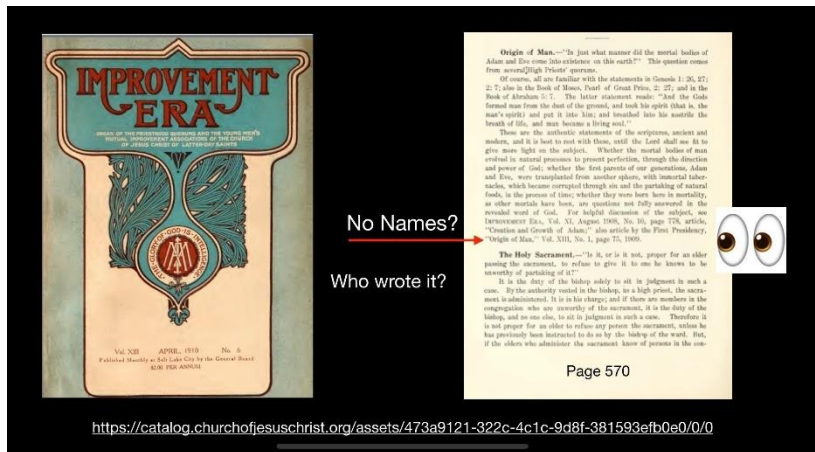
The statement appeared in the "Priesthood Quorums' Table" with no attribution and it has never been known who the author was. There was **no signature** on the article by the First Presidency, or by Joseph F. Smith. Despite it being heralded as a First Presidency statement in the book *Mormonism and Evolution: The Authoritative LDS Statements*, p. 42-44 by Evenson and Jeffery.

The LDS Answers page explains that Improvement Era articles were often anonymous. They say, "Realize that the Improvement Era **contained numerous anonymous comments and articles on various religious and secular topics**. The articles that were written by the First Presidency, by President Joseph F. Smith or by other leaders such as "The Origin of Man" published in 1909 and "The Father and The Son: A Doctrinal Exposition by The First Presidency and The Twelve" published in 1916 are **clearly distinguishable** as to who the author or authors are. Some believe that the article cited above was **written by someone on the General Priesthood Committee, but we will probably never know** in this life as articles were published by many who were not members of the General Committee. It could have been written by any member of the Church. The articles that President Smith or others wrote always bore their names, where this 1910 message was unidentified."

You can view the 1910 April Improvement Era where the quote is from, and look at it here:



(<https://archiveviewer.org/collections/en/improvement-era#1910>)



Let's look directly at the book *Mormonism and Evolution: The Authoritative LDS Statements* pages 43-44 to pin them into a corner and prove that they have erroneously asserted that this statement is from the First Presidency:

(A)

Improvement Era
13 (April 1910): 570.**First Presidency****Priesthood Quorums' Table.**

Origin of Man.—"In just what manner did the mortal bodies of Adam and Eve come into existence on this earth?" This question comes from several High Priests' quorums.



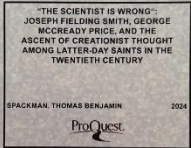
Of course, all are familiar with the statements in Genesis 1:26, 27; 2:7; also in the Book of Moses, Pearl of Great Price, 2:27; and in the Book of Abraham 5:7. The latter statement reads: "And the Gods formed man from the dust of the ground, and took his spirit (that is, the man's spirit) and put it into him; and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul."

These are the authentic statements of the scriptures, ancient and modern, and it is best to rest with these, until the Lord shall see fit to give more light on the subject. Whether the mortal bodies of man

evolved in natural processes to present perfection, through the direction and power of God; whether the first parents of our generations, Adam and Eve, were transplanted from another sphere, with immortal tabernacles, which became corrupted through sin and the partaking of natural foods, in the process of time; whether they were born here in mortality, as other mortals have been, are questions not fully answered in the revealed word of God. For helpful discussion of the subject, see *Improvement Era*, Vol. XI, August 1908, No. 10, page 778, article, "Creation and Growth of Adam;" also article by the First Presidency, "Origin of Man," Vol. XIII, No. 1, page 75, 1909.

Even secular evolutionist Ben Spackman acknowledges that this 1910 statement IS NOT a First Presidency statement in his paper against ‘Creationism’ in the 20th century among the Latter-day Saints.





An **anonymous** column titled “Origin of Man” appeared in the Priesthood Quorums Table of the Improvement Era (April 1910): 570. ... The **details of authorship and the approval/ editorial process of this column are unknown**,...the uncertainty expressed does reflect the feedback Widtsoe had provided...p.53

So why do LTSR and other pro-evolution publications claim this 1910 statement to be from the First Presidency? This is one of many clear examples of wanting your version of something to be true so much that you hype up shreds of evidence beyond what they are worth. Saying this is from the First Presidency would add lots of clout, but it's simply not true! Sadly, most of us don't have the time of day to hunt down inaccuracies like this, and we are led astray by our blind guides. Perhaps those familiar with the real First Presidency statement from a year prior, in 1909, were able to feel that something was off about this claim.

1910 Statement Doesn't Align with Joseph F. Smith's Consistent Teachings:

Joseph F. Smith's official statement is from 1909, one year before the supposed 1910 quote, which is an official 1st Presidency statement titled “The Origin of Man,” was clearly against evolution. It taught that man is “**direct lineal offspring of Deity.**” It says, “**It is held by some that Adam was not the first man upon this earth, and that the original human being was a development from lower orders of the animal creation. These, however, are the theories of men.**”

Many Church presidents consistently taught that Adam was the literal offspring of God, so the supposed 1910 quote doesn't match what was going on. The supposed 1910 quote is at odds with everything Smith ever taught on the subject. Consider his consistent quotations on the subject:

“**Our father Adam—that is our earthly father—the progenitor of the human race of man, stands at the head being ‘Michael the Archangel, the Ancient of Days,’ and...was not fashioned from earth like an adobe but begotten by his Father in Heaven.**” (President Joseph F. Smith, President Anthon H. Lund, and President Charles W. Penrose. The First Presidency, Letter to Samuel O. Bennion, February 26, 1912)

“We did not spring from spawn. Our spirits existed from the beginning, have existed always, and will continue forever. We did not pass through the ordeals of embodiment in the lesser animals in order to reach the perfection to which we have attained in manhood and womanhood, in the image and likeness of God. God was and is our Father, and his children were begotten in the flesh of his own image and likeness, male and female.” (Joseph F. Smith, Gospel Doctrine, p. 25)

Nowadays, no science professors who don't support evolution would be hired at BYU. This swap has taken place in one short generation, and many of the older generations are still unaware that evolution is being taught and advocated at BYU. Brigham wanted schools to counter the false philosophies of Darwin and Marx expressly, but we have now gone backward on these topics at BYU.