

GOD'S FOREKNOWLEDGE NOT PRE-EXISTENCE

The Mormon Church teaches that all people were first born in the spirit world through heavenly parents, prior to being born on this earth. The following are a couple of L.D.S. sources that show this belief.

Encyclopedia of Mormonism, Vol.3

“PRE-EXISTENCE

[The term ‘pre-existence,’ or more accurately, ‘premortal existence,’ refers to a period of individual conscious and accountable life before birth into mortality on this earth. It is Latter-day Saint doctrine that living things existed as individual spirit beings and possessed varying degrees of intelligence in an active, conscious spirit state before mortal birth and that the spirit continues to live and function in the mortal body. The revelations teach that premortal spirit bodies have general resemblance to their physical counterparts.”

Joseph Fielding Smith, Answers to Gospel Questions, Vol. 1, pg. 7

“In an article published in ‘The Improvement Era’ President Joseph F. Smith and his counselors John B. Winer and Anthon H. Lund said the following in relation to Adam: ‘Adam; our progenitor, the first man, was like Christ, a pre-existent spirit, and like Christ he took upon him an appropriate body, the body of a man, a “living soul”. The doctrine of the pre-existence — revealed so plainly, particularly in latter days — pours a wonderful flood of light upon the otherwise mysterious problem of man’s origin. It shows that a man, as a spirit, was begotten and born of heavenly parents, and reared to maturity in the eternal mansions of the Father, prior to coming upon the earth in a temporal body to undergo experience in mortality. It teaches that all men existed in the spirit before any man existed in the flesh, and that all who have inhabited the earth since Adam have taken bodies and become souls in like manner.’”

The Bible tells us that God has always existed. In the Bible, we can find that angels are created, yet pre-date mankind. We also find that God has knowledge of events before they take place. Furthermore, God knows details about people before they are even born. We can show from the Bible that God has perfect detailed knowledge of the future. Nowhere does the Bible teach that mortal man has existed in any other state prior to being conceived by our mortal parents here on this earth. In fact, the Bible indicates that our spirits were formed within our bodies while we were in our mother's wombs; before this we did not exist. Consider the following passages from the Bible.

Romans 4:17

“... (as it is written, ‘A father of many nations have I made you’) in the sight of Him whom he believed, even God, who gives life to the dead and calls into being that which does not exist.”

Psalms 139:16

"Thine eyes have seen my unformed substance; and in Thy book they were all written, the days that were ordained for me when as yet there was not one of them.

Isaiah 44:24

"Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer, and the one who formed you from the womb, 'I, the LORD, am the maker of all things, stretching out the heavens by myself, and spreading out the earth all alone...'"

Zechariah 12:1

"The burden of the word of the LORD concerning Israel. Thus declares the LORD who stretches out the heavens, lays the foundation of the earth, and forms the spirit of man within him..."

We can glean the following from the previously quoted passages in the Bible.

That which does not exist as we see in Romans 4:17 is a pretty strong statement and the context is people. It does not even give room for the belief of existing in some other form.

It seems the spirit is created in the womb (Isaiah 44:24 and Zechariah 12:1). The body of man would have to exist before the spirit, if God "forms the spirit of man within him".

In Psalm 139:16 we see that man did not have a body beforehand. (I say that because a body is not an "unformed substance".) In this same Psalm we see he did not yet have any days.

We are formed in the womb (Isaiah 44:24) and our spirit is formed within the body (Zechariah 12:1). Before that we did not exist (Romans 4:17).

God has always been able to see the past, the present, and the future. We can sometimes see in Scripture that God has knowledge of people's future. For example, we are told in Isaiah 44:28- 45:1 about Cyrus. This is a prophecy that came true, although Cyrus was not yet born; the prophecy was fulfilled about 160 years later. Because God knew Cyrus by name does not mean he had a pre-existence. It simply means God knows the future.