

## 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:

### 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 translated 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 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.

**The Holy Sacrament.**—"Is it, or is it not, proper for an elder passing the sacrament, to refuse to give it to one he knows to be unworthy of partaking of it?"

It is the duty of the bishop solely to sit in judgment in such a case. By the authority vested in the bishop, as a high priest, the sacrament is administered. It is in his charge; and if there are members in the congregation who are unworthy of the sacrament, it is the duty of the bishop, and no one else, to sit in judgment in such a case. Therefore it is not proper for an elder to refuse any person the sacrament, unless he has previously been instructed to do so by the bishop of the ward. But, if the elders who administer the sacrament know of persons in the con-

gregation who are unworthy to partake of it, it is their duty to so report to the bishop, and await the bishop's instruction (read III Nephi 18:28-30).

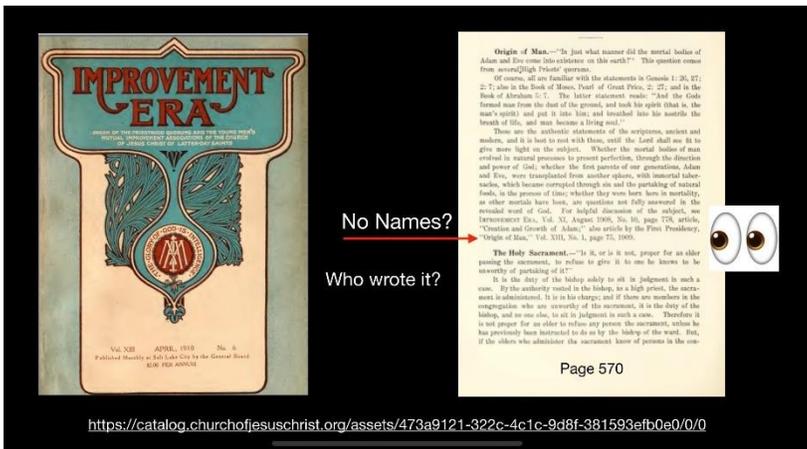
**Active High Priests.**—President Nathaniel V. Jones, of the High Priests' Quorum of the Granite Stake of Zion, has carefully compiled a report received from the high priests in charge of the nineteen wards of that stake, from which it appears that there are 335 high priests in the Granite Stake of Zion, 30 of whom are stake officers and 57 bishops and counselors; there are 111 engaged in Sunday school, Mutual Improvement and other Church work, outside of the bishoprics; 88 who are 70 years of age and upwards, and there are 9 patriarchs in the stake. Of infants, and such as are unable to do much work, there are 19; and 57 out of the total number are not at all employed in priesthood or Church duties. It appears, also, from this report, that there are 131 high priests in the stake who attend the weekly priesthood meetings.

**To the Seventies' Quorums.**—The First Council is advised that the Deseret News Book Store is getting out a second edition of Elder N. L. Nelson's *Preaching and Public Speaking*; also that the book, after having been thoroughly revised by the author, has been read critically by a committee suggested by the First Presidency, and been duly accepted as worthy the study of all who expect to take part in the ministry of the Latter-day Saints.

Now, while the first requisite of a Latter-day Saint preacher is a testimony of the gospel, and the second, a wide range of facts and truths to sustain that testimony, these prime qualifications become effective only to the extent that he can envoke and hold the attention of his audience. In other words, his effectiveness will depend, to a very large extent, upon his method of presentation. In this respect, Elder Nelson's book will be found helpful. We, therefore, cordially recommend it to the seventies generally, and especially to those preparing for missions.

**Sunny Natures.**—To be a successful governor, and an attractive teacher of young men, one must have not only firmness, a keen sense of right, and love for the members of the class, but also a sunny disposition. Who can estimate the value of a nature so sunny that it attracts everybody? Everybody wants to get near sunny people; everybody likes to know them. They open, without effort, doors which others cannot open. Teachers of deacons (quorums should be sought who have these qualifications. To find them is a great work for the bishops. When found they will solve to a great extent the grave question of order, or disorder, now so uppermost in many of the quorums.

(<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.**

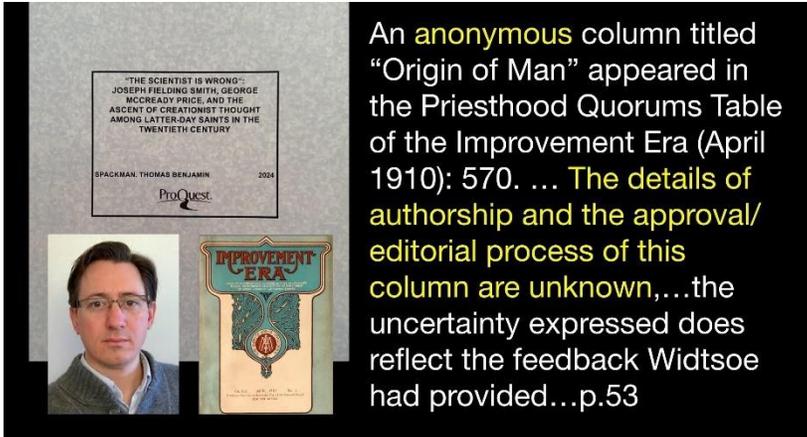
Origin of Man.—“In just what manner did the mortal bodies of Adam and Eve come into existence on this earth?” This question comes from several High Priests' quorums.

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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 20<sup>th</sup> 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 1<sup>st</sup> 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.