

Beginning, various definitions, LeGrand Baker

This discussion of “the beginning” is divided into the following sub-headings

- 1 - LIGHT
- 2 - INTELLIGENCES
- 3 - THE COUNCIL IN HEAVEN
- 4 - THE GARDEN
- 5 - DON'T KNOW

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\*\*\* 1- LIGHT \*\*\*

When the Lord was about to show him the whole of creation and said, “Enoch, beloved, all that you see, all things that are standing finished I tell to you even before the very beginning.”

That phrase, “even before the very beginning,” though not scriptural, has intrigued me for a long time, so recently I decided to try to find out how the scriptures identify “the beginning.” What I have learned is that, depending on where one reads, “the beginning” is a name of a time, perhaps even a time and place, and that there are “beginnings” even before the very beginning.

The separate times that seem to be called “the beginning” in the scriptures are: 1) when the Saviour is identified as being with his Father, but there is no mention of a Council in Heaven also being present. 2) The time when were intelligences is called “the first place” in Alma 13, and “the beginning” elsewhere. 3) The time when the Council in Heaven met in Kolob, and made its decisions and assignments, and then created the heavens and the earth are also called “in the beginning.” 4) The time when Adam and Eve lived in the Garden is also called “the beginning.”

To me it was interesting sorting out those different times, so here are some scriptures arranged in roughly the order I have described above. If the order is correct, these scriptures also chronicle the pre-earth life history of the Saviour and of our Father’s children.

Frequently the Saviour introduces himself in terms that are too big to comprehend, as in Section 61, where he personifies himself as both the beginning and the end.

Behold, and hearken unto the voice of him who has all power, who is from everlasting to everlasting, even Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. (D&C 61:1)

In another place he elaborated further.

For verily I say unto you that I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the light and the life of the world—a light that shineth in darkness and the darkness comprehendeth it not. (D&C 45:1-10)

His reference is to John's testimony, and that he quotes John's words, seems significant to me.

- 1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
- 2 The same was in the beginning with God.
- 3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.
- 4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men.
- 5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. (John 1:1-5)

Here "comprehend" does not mean understand, it means to encircle, with the connotation of smothering. It says the light was greater than the darkness. If this is not simply a metaphorical of the war in heaven, then it is a description of a real event. I don't believe it is intended to be metaphorical.

The Prophet Joseph wrote,

12 By the power of the Spirit our eyes were opened and our understandings were enlightened, so as to see and understand the things of God -

13 Even those things which were from the beginning before the world was, which were ordained of the Father, through his Only Begotten Son, who was in the bosom of the Father, even from the beginning; (D&C 76:11-14)

As I understand that, the clause, "who was in the bosom of the Father, even from the beginning," denotes an earlier "beginning" than the Council in Heaven, and the phrase "who was in the bosom of the Father" denotes a relationship with his Father that was absolutely unique.

That understanding comes partly from the way the Saviour introduced himself to the Nephites:

Behold, I am Jesus Christ the Son of God. I created the heavens and the earth, and all things that in them are. I was with the Father from the beginning. I am in the Father, and the Father in me; and in me hath the Father glorified his name. (3 Nephi 9:15)

and

10 Behold, I am Jesus Christ, whom the prophets testified shall come into the world.

11 And behold, I am the light and the life of the world; and I have drunk out of that bitter cup which the Father hath given me, and have glorified the Father in taking upon me the sins of the world, in the which I have suffered the will of the Father in all things from the beginning.(3 Nephi 11:7-12)

King Benjamin's testimony is:

And he shall be called Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Father of heaven and earth, the

Creator of all things from the beginning ... (Mosiah 3:8)

There are several reasons I believe that last statement refers to a time-span that predates the Council. The Saviour says he is the one who appointing Michael. That appointment took place at or before the Council. But then Christ tells his own authority was not confined to the time of that appointment.

16 Who hath appointed Michael your prince, and established his feet, and set him upon high, and given unto him the keys of salvation under the counsel and direction of the Holy One, who is without beginning of days or end of life.

In that context of the limitless expanse of existence, he adds,

17 Verily, verily, I say unto you, ye are little children, and ye have not as yet understood how great blessings the Father hath in his own hands and prepared for you; (D&C 78:16-18)

A more convincing reason that the Saviour was talking about a time long before the Council is the way he describes his relationships with intelligences who are not yet born as spirit children of our Father in Heaven.

\*\*\*\* 2 - INTELLIGENCES \*\*\*\*

The other is what the Lord told Abraham:

I dwell in the midst of them all; I now, therefore, have come down unto thee to declare unto thee the works which my hands have made, wherein my wisdom excelleth them all, for I rule in the heavens above, and in the earth beneath, in all wisdom and prudence, over all the intelligences thine eyes have seen from the beginning; I came down in the beginning in the midst of all the intelligences thou hast seen. (Abraham 3:21)

He explained to the Prophet Joseph,

29 Man was also in the beginning with God. Intelligence, or the light of truth, was not created or made, neither indeed can be.

30 All truth is independent in that sphere in which God has placed it, to act for itself, as all intelligence also; otherwise there is no existence. (D&C 93: 29-30)

I understand that an intelligence is a cognizant individual who has no tangible body - either spiritual or physical. (I envision an intelligence as a spot of light or a "star.") It is the eternal part of us - our personalities - our capacity to love, to think, and to learn - the root of our innate sense that tells us the difference of good from evil. It is the essence of one's Self - the luminary that was given a spirit body by our heavenly parents, when we were introduced into the spirit world.

I believe B. H. Roberts was correct when he wrote:

There is in that complex thing we call man, an intelligent entity, uncreated, self existent, indestructible, He - for that entity is a person; because, as we shall see, he is possessed of powers that go with personality only, hence that entity is "he," not "it," - he is eternal as God is; co-existent, in fact, with God; of the same kind of substance or essence with deity, though confessedly inferior In degree of intelligence and power to God. One must needs think that the name of this eternal entity - what God calls him - conveys to the mind some idea of his nature. He is called an "intelligence;" and this I believe is descriptive of him. That is, intelligence is the entity's chief characteristic. If this be a true deduction, then the entity must be self- conscious, and "others-conscious," that is, lie must have the power to distinguish himself from other things-the "me" from the "not me." He must have the power of deliberation, by which he sets over one thing against another; with power also to form a judgment that this or that is a better thing or state than this or that. Also there goes with this idea of intelligence a power of choosing one thing Instead of an- other, one state rather than another. These powers are inseparably connected with any idea that may be formed of an intelligence.

....

The difference, then, between "spirits" and "intelligencies," as here used, is this: Spirits are uncreated intelligencies inhabiting spiritual bodies; while "intelligencies," pure and simple, are intelligent entities, but unembodied in either spirit bodies or bodies of flesh and bone. They are uncreated, self-existent entities, possessed of "self-consciousness," and "other-consciousness "-they are conscious of the "me" and the "not me"; they possess powers of discrimination, (without which the term "Intelligence" would be a solecism) they discern between the evil and the good; between the "good" and "the better." They possess "will" or "freedom,"-within certain limits at least\* – the, power to determine upon a given course of conduct, as against any other course of conduct. This intelligence "can think his own thoughts, act wisely or foolishly, do right or wrong." To accredit an "intelligence" with fewer or less important powers than these, would be to discredit him as an "intelligence" altogether. (1908 B. H. Roberts, *The Seventy's Course in Theology, Second Year, Outline History of the Dispensations of the Gospel* [Salt Lake City, Skelton publishing co., 1908], pp. 8 & 11. This was the priesthood manual for the 70's quorums in 1908)

One of the most explicit scriptural discussions of the nature and capacities of intelligences is Alma 12-13. Chapter 13 begins,

Alma 13 begins with a different facet of the same story that is told in Abraham 3: 22-26. Alma 12 and 13 tell us more about intelligences – much more detail about who we were *before* we were spirits.

And again, my brethren, I would cite your minds forward [In the *Oxford English Dictionary* The first meaning of the word “forward” reads: “The front part of (any thing material); the first or earliest part of (a period of time. etc.).” Alma 13 it does not read the phrase “in the beginning,” but rather it uses a word that is even more precise - the earliest part of time.] to the time when the Lord God [Heavenly Father] gave these commandments unto his children [His spirit children, the noble and great ones]; and I

would that ye should remember that the Lord God ordained priests [the Father himself ordained them], after his holy order, which was after the order of his Son [Jehovah], to teach these things unto the people.

Of those children who were ordained, Alma says, “

3b ... in the first place being left to choose good or evil; therefore they having chosen good, and exercising exceedingly great faith, are called with a holy calling, yea, with that holy calling which was prepared with, and according to, a preparatory redemption for such.

4 And thus they have been called to this holy calling on account of their faith, while others would reject the Spirit of God on account of the hardness of their hearts and blindness of their minds, while, if it had not been for this they might have had as great privilege as their brethren

5 Or in fine, in the first place they were on the same standing with their brethren; thus this holy calling being prepared from the foundation of the world for such as would not harden their hearts, being in and through the atonement of the Only Begotten Son, who was prepared –

That is an extremely important scripture. The Lord told Abraham,

18 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.

19 And the Lord said unto me: These two facts do exist, that there are two spirits, one being more intelligent than the other; there shall be another more intelligent than they; I am the Lord thy God, I am more intelligent than they all.

Alma explained that these differences in the intelligence of spirits, has its origin before they were spirits - and the differences are self determined: “Or in fine, in the first place they were on the same standing with their brethren...” Those who became the noble and great ones “have been called to this holy calling on account of their faith, while others would reject the Spirit of God on account of the hardness of their hearts and blindness of their minds, while, if it had not been for this they might have had as great privilege as their brethren.”

The first verses are a classic example of the cosmic myth. (The Hymn of the Pearl is another example.) He leaves home (“land of the Chaldeans” is symbolic of that first home); and then moves through a series of experiences that qualifies him to return triumphant. The interesting thing here is that the conclusion of the odyssey is: “...the beginning, or before the foundation of the earth.”

1 In the land of the Chaldeans, at the residence of my fathers, I, Abraham, saw that it was needful for me to obtain another place of residence;

2 And, finding there was greater happiness and peace and rest for me, I sought for the blessings of the fathers, and the right whereunto I should be ordained to administer the same; having been myself a follower of righteousness, desiring also to be one who possessed great knowledge, and to be a greater follower of righteousness, and to possess a greater knowledge, and to be a father of many nations, a prince of peace, and desiring to receive instructions, and to keep the commandments of God, I became a rightful heir, a High Priest, holding the right belonging to the fathers.

3 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.

4 I sought for mine appointment unto the Priesthood according to the appointment of God unto the fathers concerning the seed. (Abraham 1:1-4)

Those scriptures, if I read them correctly, teach that as intelligences we knew good from evil, and acted according to our desires. If that is true, it is also true that intelligences could sin. If we could - and did - sin, then we could not have entered our Heavenly Father's presence to become his spirit children unless there were an atonement that empowered our repentance. Only the Saviour never sinned, therefore only he could be the First Born. Then, by virtue of the atonement he performed in this world, he enabled us to become innocent, so that we could enter our Father's presence, just as after our spirit-world experience, he enabled us to become innocent again so we could be born as little babies in this world. I believe that is what is meant by:

Every spirit of man was innocent in the beginning; and God having redeemed man from the fall, men became again, in their infant state, innocent before God. (D&C 93: 38)

### \*\*\* 3 - THE COUNCIL IN HEAVEN \*\*\*

Notwithstanding what I have written above, it appears that the most frequent use of "the beginning" in the scriptures refers to the events during the Council in Heaven. The best summation of those events - in fact the only place where one can actually find them in their chronological order is in Abraham. The sequence is: 1) The intelligences "were organized before the world was"; 2) God saw that they were good, and made them his rulers. 3) They agreed to make a world. 4) "And the Lord said: Whom shall I send?" Two volunteered. The one that was not chosen rebelled. He and his followers were expelled from the Council. 5) "And then the Lord [Jehovah] said: Let us go down. And they went down at the beginning, and they, that is the Gods [the noble and great ones who were members of the Council], organized and formed the heavens and the earth." Elsewhere, other details are found about those events, each designating the time as "the beginning."

1) 22 Now the Lord [Jehovah] had shown unto me, Abraham, the intelligences that were organized before the world was; and among all these there were many of the noble and great ones;

2) 23 And God [Elohim] 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.

*The Lord's directions to the First Presidency and the Twelve, may be understood in that light.*

*30 For unto you, the Twelve, and those, the First Presidency, who are appointed with you to be your counselors and your leaders, is the power of this priesthood given, for the last days and for the last time, in the which is the dispensation of the fulness of times.*

*31 Which power you hold, in connection with all those who have received a dispensation at any time from the beginning of the creation;*

*32 For verily I say unto you, the keys of the dispensation, which ye have received, have come down from the fathers, and last of all, being sent down from heaven unto you.  
(D&C 112:30-32)*

*As may this statement by Paul.*

*13 But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth:*

*14 Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. (2 Thessalonians 2:13-14)*

3) 24 And there stood one among them that was like unto God [Jehovah], 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;

25 And we will prove them herewith, to see if they will do all things whatsoever the Lord their God shall command them;

26 And they who keep their first estate shall be added upon; and they who keep not their first estate shall not have glory in the same kingdom with those who keep their first estate; and they who keep their second estate shall have glory added upon their heads for ever and ever.

27 And the Lord said: Whom shall I send? And one answered like unto the Son of Man: Here am I, send me. And another answered and said: Here am I, send me. And the Lord said: I will send the first.

28 And the second was angry, and kept not his first estate; and, at that day, many followed after him. (Abraham 3:22 - 28)

The Lord gives more detail about the rebellion.

36 And it came to pass that Adam, being tempted of the devil—for, behold, the devil was before Adam, for he rebelled against me, saying, Give me thine honor, which is my power; and also a third part of the hosts of heaven turned he away from me because of their agency;

37 And they were thrust down, and thus came the devil and his angels;

38 And, behold, there is a place prepared for them from the beginning, which place is hell. (D&C 29:36-38)

After the rebellion:

And then the Lord [Jehovah] 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 3:22 - 4:1.)

The best documented activity of the Council was the creation of the heavens and the earth, which is described in Genesis, Moses, and Abraham.

1 In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

...

26 And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have 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 creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. (Genesis 1:1-28.)

The Lord explained to Moses,

1 And it came to pass that the Lord spake unto Moses, saying: Behold, I reveal unto you concerning this heaven, and this earth; write the words which I speak. I am the Beginning and the End, the Almighty God; by mine Only Begotten I created these things; yea, in the beginning I created the heaven, and the earth upon which thou standest. (Moses 2:1)



and

4 And now, behold, I say unto you, that these are the generations of the heaven and of the earth, when they were created, in the day that I, the Lord God, made the heaven and the earth,

5 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 3:4-5.)

From this it appears that the account of the creation in Moses is an account of the spiritual creation. And from the fact that the decision to make the earth - both first and second estate - are described in Abraham 3:24-26, it is also apparent that the creation account that follows that is also of the spiritual creation.

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Probably the best example in the scriptures of “the beginning” used in the context of the pre-mortal spirit world is Isaiah 48. In the Bible that chapter is the conclusion of the Cyrus prophecy which Josephus reports was mysteriously discovered in Babylon when the Jews were trying to convince Cyrus to send them and their temple treasures back to Jerusalem. (Flavious Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, Book XI, Chapter 1.) However, the version on the Brass plates which pre-dates the Babylonian captivity and is reproduced in 1 Nephi 20, is critically different from the Bible version. As far as I can tell the one in the Book of Mormon is about the struggle between good and evil in the pre-earth spirit world, and concludes with the description of a speech given by the Prophet Joseph in a conference at that time. The next chapter (Isaiah 49 and 1 Nephi 21) is Isaiah’s prophecy about how the Prophet’s promises will be fulfilled with the restoration of the temple and the gathering of Israel.

### \*\*\* 4 - THE GARDEN \*\*\*

The experience in the Garden of Eden is also sometimes called “the beginning.”

26 And I, God, said unto mine Only Begotten, which was with me from the beginning: Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and it was so. And I, God, said: Let them have dominion over the fishes of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

27 And I, God, created man in mine own image, in the image of mine Only Begotten created I him; male and female created I them. (Moses 2:26-27)

and

4 And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female,

5 And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? (Matthew 19:4-5, see also Mark 10:6-7)

As have human experiences immediately after they left the Garden.

And these plates of brass, which contain these engravings, which have the records of the holy scriptures upon them, which have the genealogy of our forefathers, even from the beginning - (Alma 37:3)

Isaiah's reflections:

For since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him. (Isaiah 64:1-4)

And Nephi's testimony:

4 Behold, my soul delighteth in proving unto my people the truth of the coming of Christ; for, for this end hath the law of Moses been given; and all things which have been given of God from the beginning of the world, unto man, are the typifying of him.

5 And also my soul delighteth in the covenants of the Lord which he hath made to our fathers; yea, my soul delighteth in his grace, and in his justice, and power, and mercy in the great and eternal plan of deliverance from death.

6 And my soul delighteth in proving unto my people that save Christ should come all men must perish. (2 Nephi 11:4-6)

\*\*\* - DON'T KNOW \*\*\*

Now that I have, or hope I have, established that the scriptural references to "the beginning" are a bit ambiguous. Here is the fun part. If the following scriptures are read very carefully, they each suggest an interesting, sometimes unexpected, time frame for "the beginning."

1 Thus saith the Lord your God, even Jesus Christ, the Great I AM, Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the same which looked upon the wide expanse of eternity, and all the seraphic hosts of heaven, before the world was made;

2 The same which knoweth all things, for all things are present before mine eyes;

3 I am the same which spake, and the world was made, and all things came by me. (D&C

38:1-3)

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64b For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him.

65 And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father. (John 6: 64b - 65)

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When Paul wrote of the pre-mortal temple blessings we received from our Father in Heaven, he emphasized that those blessings were predicated upon one's charity.

3 Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:

4 According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: (Ephesians 1:2-4)

The letters of John the Beloved carry that same message:

7 Brethren, I write no new commandment unto you, but an old commandment which ye had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which ye have heard from the beginning.

8 Again, a new commandment I write unto you, which thing is true in him and in you: because the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth.

9 He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now.

10 He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him.

11 But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes.

12 I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake.

13 I write unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one. I write unto you, little children, because ye have known the Father.

14 I have written unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one.

15 Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

....

24 Let that therefore abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father.

25 And this is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life. (1 John 2:1-29)

....

11 For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. (1 John 3: 11)

and

5 And now I beseech thee, lady, not as though I wrote a new commandment unto thee, but that which we had from the beginning, that we love one another.

6 And this is love, that we walk after his commandments. This is the commandment, That, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it. (2 John 1: 5-6)

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Lehi also spoke of those things renewed from the beginning, but his was a warning that they must not be rejected.

... after they have received so great blessings from the hand of the Lord—having a knowledge of the creation of the earth, and all men, knowing the great and marvelous works of the Lord from the creation of the world; having power given them to do all things by faith; having all the commandments from the beginning, and having been brought by his infinite goodness into this precious land of promise—behold, I say, if the day shall come that they will reject the Holy One of Israel, the true Messiah, their Redeemer and their God, behold, the judgments of him that is just shall rest upon them. (2 Nephi 1:10)

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D&C 93 is one of the most amazing statements in all the scriptures about “the beginning.” The fun thing is that the Saviour leaves it to us to know which “beginning” he is talking about.

6 And John saw and bore record of the fulness of my glory, and the fulness of John's record is hereafter to be revealed.

7 And he bore record, saying: I saw his glory, that he was in the beginning, before the world was;

8 Therefore, in the beginning the Word was, for he was the Word, even the messenger of salvation—

9 The light and the Redeemer of the world; the Spirit of truth, who came into the world, because the world was made by him, and in him was the life of men and the light of men.

10 The worlds were made by him; men were made by him; all things were made by him, and through him, and of him.

....

21 And now, verily I say unto you, I was in the beginning with the Father, and am the Firstborn;

22 And all those who are begotten through me are partakers of the glory of the same, and are the church of the Firstborn.

23 Ye were also in the beginning with the Father; that which is Spirit, even the Spirit of truth;

24 And truth is knowledge of things as they are, and as they were, and as they are to come;

25 And whatsoever is more or less than this is the spirit of that wicked one who was a liar from the beginning.

26 The Spirit of truth is of God. I am the Spirit of truth, and John bore record of me, saying: He received a fulness of truth, yea, even of all truth;

27 And no man receiveth a fulness unless he keepeth his commandments.

28 He that keepeth his commandments receiveth truth and light, until he is glorified in truth and knoweth all things.

29 Man was also in the beginning with God. Intelligence, or the light of truth, was not created or made, neither indeed can be.

30 All truth is independent in that sphere in which God has placed it, to act for itself, as all intelligence also; otherwise there is no existence.

31 Behold, here is the agency of man, and here is the condemnation of man; because that which was from the beginning is plainly manifest unto them, and they receive not the light.

32 And every man whose spirit receiveth not the light is under condemnation.

33 For man is spirit. The elements are eternal, and spirit and element, inseparably connected, receive a fulness of joy;

34 And when separated, man cannot receive a fulness of joy.

35 The elements are the tabernacle of God; yea, man is the tabernacle of God, even temples; and whatsoever temple is defiled, God shall destroy that temple.

36 The glory of God is intelligence, or, in other words, light and truth.

37 Light and truth forsake that evil one.

38 Every spirit of man was innocent in the beginning; and God having redeemed man from the fall, men became again, in their infant state, innocent before God.

39 And that wicked one cometh and taketh away light and truth, through disobedience, from the children of men, and because of the tradition of their fathers.

40 But I have commanded you to bring up your children in light and truth. (D&C 93: 1-40)

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That is not the only place where the Saviour's reference to the beginning is left unclear.

24 If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father.

25 But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause.

26 But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me:

27 And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning. (John 15: 24-27)

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Nephi also understood more than he said about the "beginning."

5 Wherefore, the Lord hath commanded me to make these plates for a wise purpose in him, which purpose I know not.

6 But the Lord knoweth all things from the beginning; wherefore, he prepareth a way to accomplish all his works among the children of men; for behold, he hath all power unto the fulfilling of all his words. And thus it is. Amen. (1 Nephi 9:5-6)

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So did the Prophet Joseph.

11 We, Joseph Smith, Jun., and Sidney Rigdon, being in the Spirit on the sixteenth day of February, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and thirty-two—

12 By the power of the Spirit our eyes were opened and our understandings were enlightened, so as to see and understand the things of God—

13 Even those things which were from the beginning before the world was, which were ordained of the Father, through his Only Begotten Son, who was in the bosom of the Father, even from the beginning;

14 Of whom we bear record; and the record which we bear is the fulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ, who is the Son, whom we saw and with whom we conversed in the heavenly vision. (D&C 76:11-14)