



In the beginning, there was Chaos, the one primordial being. Out of Chaos, sprang many gods and goddesses, most notably Gaia, the primordial earth goddess. Gaia created the sky—Ouranos—and had many children with him. From Gaia and Ouranos came the Cyclops and the Hundred-handed ones, and the 12 elder Titans, Okeanos, Koios, Kreios, Hyperion, Iapetos, Thea, Rhea, Themis, Mnemosyne, Phoebe, Tethys, and Kronos. Ouranos hated his sons from the moment they were born because they were very powerful beings, so he locked all his children away in a cave—in the earth, in Gaia. Gaia and her children devised a plan to lure Ouranos down from the sky and dethrone him. Only Kronos was brave enough to volunteer to cut his father, and so they carried out their plan. Ouranos left Kronos with a warning that he would suffer the same fate at the hands of his own children. The blood of Ouranos created the nymphs, the giants, and the goddess Aphrodite. Their father dethroned, Kronos was crowned king, and married Rhea. Their first child was Hestia, goddess of the hearth. But Kronos—remembering his father's words—swallowed Hestia whole. The pattern continued with his next 4 children, Hera, Demeter, Hades, and Poseidon. Rhea enlisted the help of Gaia when it came time to present their 6th child, Zeus, and tricked Kronos by feeding him a swaddled rock. Zeus was kept in a cave and raised by nymphs until he was powerful enough to return to Kronos' house. There, he worked as the royal cupbearer. One night, he made an emetic to give to Kronos out of spoiled wine and mustard. This

caused Kronos to throw up all of Zeus's siblings. The prophecy then came true, and Kronos suffered the same fate as his father, and was cut up and thrown into Tartarus.

The ancient Greek creation story is influenced by its environment because of the Hellenic volcanic arc. Chaos is sometimes represented as a watery abyss, from which earth springs. Volcanic activity created many Greek islands, like Methana and Santorini. The Hesiodic creation story is the one I know best, and was likely written before the Methana volcano went dormant. The volcano lies on a coast around 30 miles from Athens, the hub of the ancient Greek world. Seeing what would most likely be an expanding mass of land would easily be rationalized by assuming the primordial Earth goddess was simply rising from the waters of Chaos.

There are not very many similarities between LDS accounts of the creation and the ancient Greek creation story, mostly there's a lot of murder in the Greek story. One similarity I noticed was in the beginning. In the Hesiodic creation story, it begins with Chaos, who is frequently associated with water. In Genesis 1:2, it says "And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness *was* upon the face of the deep." In the beginning of both creation stories, the earth wasn't formed, it was dark, it was not orderly. The Greek creation story doesn't really offer any sort of creator, there just was Chaos, and then Gaia emerged, along with the other primordial gods and goddesses. But I think it's important to recognize that there is a creator. The first sentence of the Bible says "in the beginning God created..." This means that He is our creator, and He has a plan for us.