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# The Redemption of Eve

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I am Eve, the wife of noble Adam; it was I who violated Jesus in the past; it was I who robbed my children of heaven; it is I by right who should have been crucified.

I had heaven at my command; evil the bad choice that shamed me; evil the punishment for my crime that has aged me; alas, my hand is not pure.

It was I who plucked the apple; it went past the narrow of my gullet; as long as they live in daylight women will not cease from folly on account of that.

There would be no ice in any place; there would be no bright windy winter; there would be no hell, there would be no grief, there would be no terror but for me.

Anonymous, Old Irish1(2)

For over two thousand years, since the first commentary on Genesis was presented, Eve has been blamed for woes ranging from the origin of sin to the presumed inferiority of the female sex. Because of Eve, women have been cursed, their subordination to man has been justified, and their feminine weaknesses have been stereotyped. Much of this tradition has been so engrained in our Judeo-Christian culture that we are often unaware of its presence or its origin. Yet if it were possible to eradicate all our culturally induced prejudices about Eve and examine the original Hebrew text of the whole Eden account, we would find a story that actually says very little of what it has throughout the centuries been credited with saying. Let us first see how a few commentators have interpreted the Genesis 1-3 account in various time periods.<sup>2(3)</sup> Then we will look at the Hebrew text of the Adam and Eve story. Finally we will compare this new perspective with other sources of particular relevance to Latter-day Saints.

Whatever meaning the Adam and Eve story had to Old Testament Israelites is unknown, for after Genesis 5 it is not referred to again throughout the rest of the Old Testament canon.<sup>3(4)</sup> There is no indication, at least until post-exilic times, that the story had any major impact on Israelite customs or worship comparable to the exodus from Egypt, for instance, or God's covenant with Abraham. Unfortunately, no other contemporaneous records survive to illuminate the intent of the author at the time Genesis 1-3 was written. The earliest documents available after the Genesis account itself were early Jewish writings dating from about 400 B.C. to the latter part of the first Christian century.<sup>4(5)</sup> The Midrash and Talmud (some of these early writings) established in Jewish culture the use of the Adam and Eve account of Genesis to justify the roles of men and women. At the time these were written, the Jews believed that Eve, because she was formed from Adam's rib, was a secondary creation, thus subject to and inferior to Adam.

Although in Judaism a woman was honored in her role as mother, she had little or no role in public worship. In the synagogues, men and women worshipped in separate chambers to prevent the women from "distracting" the men, a tradition referring back to the image of Eve as temptress. As woman was the cause of Adam's fall, so also a woman's voice in a religious meeting would tempt a man away from higher worship.<sup>5(6)</sup> It was the woman's duty to listen but not respond or be seen.

Even some of the religious rituals a woman conducted in the home became her responsibility because of Eve's actions in the Garden of Eden. The woman, for example, was to light the

candles to begin the Sabbath observance because it was woman who originally "extinguished the light of man's soul."6(7) When she kneaded dough, it was her responsibility to separate out a "heave" offering (the best portions of the sacrificial animal which historically were set aside for Yahweh and the priests before the sacrifice was made) to make amends for Eve's defiling Adam, who was "the heave offering of the world."7(8)

A woman "acquired merit" by encouraging her husband and sons to study the Torah, but "whoever teaches his daughter Torah is as though he taught her obscenity," and "let the words of the Torah rather be destroyed by fire than imparted to women," because "a woman has no learning except in the use of the spindle."8(9)

The men were encouraged to leave their wives at home and "go into the marketplace and learn intelligence from other men," because women, by nature of their creation, were intellectually and physically inferior to men.9(10) The Midrash records that God deliberated long in deciding which part of the body he would use to make the wife of Adam, but "in spite of the great caution used, woman has all the faults God tried to obviate"—including haughtiness, eavesdropping, wantonness, and jealousy. These characteristics were seen as evident not only in Eve but also in Sarah, "an eavesdropper in her own tent"; Miriam, "a talebearer" who accused Moses; Rachel, who was "envious" of Leah; and Dinah, who was "a gadabout."10(11) At their first meeting Adam perceived these pernicious qualities in Eve and knew she would "seek to carry her point with man either by entreaties and tears, or flattery and caresses."11(12)

The Midrash also derives other qualities of women from that primeval rib. For example, women need to use perfumes and men do not because "dust of the ground remains the same no matter how long it is kept; flesh, however, requires salt to keep it in good condition." Women's voices are high and "shrill" and men's are not because "when soft viands are cooked, no sound is heard, but let a bone be put in a pot, and at once it crackles." Women are rigid and not easily placated like men because "a few drops of water suffice to soften a clod of earth" but "a bone stays hard" and will not soften in water. It is the man who proposes marriage and not the woman because man lost his rib and must find a woman to retrieve it. And finally, "women precede men in a funeral cortege, because it was woman who brought death into the world."12(13)

Jews prayed for sons and celebrated when they were born. No corresponding celebration marked the birth of a daughter. "The world cannot exist without males and females," a Rabbinical dictum states, "but happy is he whose children are sons and woe to him whose children are daughters."13(14) "The Lord bless thee with sons and keep thee from daughters" were the words of the Priestly Benediction.14(15)

According to Israelite law, after childbirth a woman must not touch any sacred relic or enter any sacred place until she was "purified." If her child was male, this period was forty days; for a daughter, purification required twice as long, eighty days. The pseudepigraphal book of Jubilees explained the discrepancy by maintaining that the creation of Adam and Eve took place in the first week, but Adam did not see Eve for two weeks. Adam entered Eden after forty days; Eve did not enter Eden for eighty days.15(16)

And, finally, to be born male was itself reason to give thanks daily: "A man is obliged to offer three benedictions daily; that He has made me an Israelite, that He has not made me a woman, that He has not made me a boor."16(17)

This bias against women reflected the theology that Eve was solely responsible for the transgression in Eden and that, because of her role in the Fall, all women were subjugated to

men, who were held blameless as Adam. In the apocryphal book of Sirach, probably written sometime between 300 and 275 B.C., we read the following scathing treatise on the nature of a wicked woman:

Any wound, only not a heart-wound!  
Any wickedness, only not the wickedness of a woman!...  
There is no poison above the poison of a serpent,  
And there is no wrath above the wrath of a woman...  
I would rather dwell with a lion and a dragon,  
Than keep house with a wicked woman...  
(There is but) little malice like the malice of a woman,  
May the lot of the wicked fall upon her!...  
From a woman did sin originate,  
And because of her we all must die.17(18)

The author thus blames Eve as the ultimate source for a woman's wickedness but sees Adam far differently: "above every living thing was the beautiful glory of Adam."18(19) The view is not atypical. The book of Jubilees refers to Adam as a great patriarch linked with Enoch and Noah. So does 1 Enoch. The "Apocalypsis Mosis" and "Vita Adae et Evae" in "The Books of Adam and Eve" and 2 Enoch all suggest that in Eden Eve transgressed sexually with the serpent then seduced Adam, the innocent victim of Eve's deception.19(20)

Thus, in the Jewish writings which emerged between the end of the Old Testament period and the first centuries after Christ, the Genesis Adam and Eve account was used by many commentators to justify cultural practices, explain, or even create, sexual characteristics, and define roles of men and women.

The Midrash, Talmud, and apocryphal and pseudepigraphal literature were all in use by the Jews at the time of Christ and shaped the society into which he was born. His mother took him to the temple after her days of purification. He studied the Torah along with other boys. The four Gospel accounts of his ministry depict him as having a thorough knowledge of the scriptures and the law of Moses as found in such Jewish works as the Talmud and Midrash. Yet in none of the Gospels is Jesus seen using the Adam and Eve story as an explanation for either the origin of sin or the respective roles of men and women. On the contrary, he taught that people were not punished for the previous sins of parents or any ancestors20(21) and demonstrated in his actions his respect for women. Many women were numbered among his closest associates, including Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Susanna, and others.21(22) His gospel was one in which women could fully participate. Martha reprimands her sister Mary for listening to Jesus rather than helping with the serving, but Jesus answers that Mary had "chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her," thus expanding dramatically the structured role of a righteous Jewish woman by enabling her to study the scriptures as a man would do.22(23)

Jesus seems to have deliberately paired men-women examples in his teachings, as if to make sure that women also saw his teachings as relevant. For example, it is a male shepherd who leaves the ninety and nine to find a lost sheep and a woman who loses a coin and searches her home until she finds it. Both rejoice in the finding.23(24) The point of both stories is the same: that the worth of every individual, male or female, is great. Yet they are told sequentially in the text. Christ heals the centurion's male servant and immediately afterward raises the widow's son. He likens the kingdom of heaven first to a grain of mustard seed which a man plants in his garden

and second to some leaven which a woman puts in her dough.<sup>24(25)</sup> Other examples of pairing are found throughout the four Gospels; Luke, more than the other evangelists, groups them together.<sup>25(26)</sup> Christ includes women as well as men in his gospel, his conversations, and his healings. Christian doctrine which made women full participants in worship must have caused problems for the early converts of the young church Christ left behind at his death, for all the first converts to Christianity were Jewish, presumably burdened with the traditional attitudes about women. With the conversion of non-Jews to Christianity came the necessity of determining which of the traditions of the past were compatible with the new faith and which were not.<sup>26(27)</sup>

The apostle Paul was particularly sympathetic to the problems involved in separating Jewish culture from Christian doctrine. He had been a devout defender of Judaism against Christianity. Raised as a Pharisee, he had been trained under the renowned Jewish scholar Gamaliel and was, by his own description, a "perfect" observer of the Jewish law. After having observed the stoning of the Christian disciple Stephen, Paul was prevented by a miraculous conversion from further persecuting the Christians. By the time he wrote those epistles now preserved in the New Testament, he knew both Judaism and Christianity thoroughly.<sup>27(28)</sup>

It is in the epistles of Paul or in letters attributed to him that the status and conduct of women is most discussed and that the Adam and Eve account is once again used out of its context to illustrate a point. These communications with different units of the church contained advice, doctrine, and answers to any questions which had caused conflicts within individual units. Paul's advice on issues involving women was usually a mixture of Christian principles boldly sprinkled with Jewish customs. For example, he tells the Corinthians that he approves of women praying and prophesying in the church (Christian principle), as long as they cover their heads (Jewish tradition).<sup>28(29)</sup> The veil or head covering served as a sign upon all women of the shame of Eve for bringing sin into the world and also protected women, with their weaker wills, from the influence of evil angels.<sup>29(30)</sup> To justify his reasoning, Paul states that man "is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of man. For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man. Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man" and, for this reason, "ought the woman to have power on her head because of the angels." In many Bible translations, including the Revised Standard Version, *power* is translated *veil*. Thus Paul presents the classic Jewish interpretation of the rib creation story in Genesis 2 and uses it to support his claim that women should cover their heads, not men, as in Jewish tradition.

Paul then seemingly undoes his argument with an afterthought: "Nevertheless neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord. For as the woman is of the man, even so is the man also by the woman; but all things of God" (Christian principle). He then stopped giving his opinion and threw the question back to his audience to answer for themselves. "Judge in yourselves: is it comely that a woman pray unto God uncovered? Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him? But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for her hair is given her for a covering."<sup>30(31)</sup> But without additional information to help them avoid interpreting the question from within their culture, the questions would, more than likely, simply be heard as rhetorical.

In 2 Corinthians Paul uses the example of Eve once again to make a point. In chastising the members in Corinth for following after every false prophet who entered into their midst with a new and persuasive doctrine, he compares them with Eve, who, being gullible, was easily "beguiled" by the serpent. Here a problem of contemporary Christians was illuminated for the Jewish converts by referring to their traditional view of Eve.<sup>31(32)</sup>

In 1 Timothy Eve is again used, this time to encourage women to "adorn themselves in modest

apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety" and to "learn in silence with all subjection." Paul explains: "I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression. Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety."<sup>32(33)</sup> These verses are laden with Jewish tradition. "Shamefacedness and sobriety" were considered appropriate facial demeanor because of the disgrace of Eve's actions in the Garden of Eden. This shame could be overcome by bearing and raising children in the Jewish faith. Likewise, because Adam was superior by virtue of being formed first and because Eve caused the fall of innocent Adam, women should not attempt to teach men or exercise authority over men but be silent. Some New Testament scholars believe that this passage was written by someone else in Paul's name.<sup>33(34)</sup> Possible support for this interpretation is that Paul in Romans attributes the Fall to Adam, not Eve: "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."<sup>34(35)</sup>

The line separating Judaism from Christianity in its early years was often fine. The epistles make numerous references to the Mosaic law and many passages seem to echo the Midrash and Talmud. Following the persecution by the Romans and the deaths of the apostles, we see that early church fathers and Catholic theologians use the Adam and Eve story to define emerging Catholic doctrines. These statements are numerous and stretch all the way from the second Christian century to the nineteenth century. Only a few relevant examples will be dealt with here.

One obvious doctrinal connection with Eve was the origin of sin and evil in the world. Catholic explorations echoed much of the apocryphal and pseudepigraphal literature already in existence. Irenaeus (died c. A.D. 200) wrote that evil and death entered the world through Eve, who then led the innocent Adam into sin, hardly an original observation.<sup>35(36)</sup> Clement (c. 150-215) denounced women's jewelry by referring to Eve's role in the fall: "Yet, these women do not blush when they wear such conspicuous symbols of wickedness. Just as the serpent deceived Eve, so, too, the enticing golden ornament in the shape of a serpent enkindles a mad frenzy in the hearts of the rest of womankind, leading them to have images made of lampreys and snakes as decorations."<sup>36(37)</sup> This view of Eve, and thus of all women, as inherently seductive and weak-willed was important in ascribing to Eve sole responsibility for sin in the world.

When Origen (185-253) made one of the first references to the practice of infant baptism and the doctrine of original sin, he perceived the fall as a sexual sin, the serpent's seduction of Eve.<sup>37(38)</sup> Thus, because lust and the sexual act brought about sin, the woman became unclean and anything born of her consequently in need of baptism.

Tertullian (A.D. 155-220), like Origen, proposed that since Adam was blameless Cain must actually have been the son of Satan, who, as the serpent, had intercourse with Eve in the Garden of Eden. He even attributed the blame for Christ's death to Eve and all women: "And do you not know that you are (each) an Eve? The sentence of God on this sex of yours lives in this age: the guilt must of necessity live too. You are the devil's gateway; you are the unsealer of that (forbidden) tree: you are the first deserter of the divine law: you are she who persuaded him whom the devil was not valiant enough to attack. You destroyed so easily God's image, man. On account of your desert—that is death—even the Son of God had to die."<sup>38(39)</sup>

During the medieval period, theologians provided women with another alternative than hapless identification with an evil Eve. Virginity, celebrated as the highest ideal of Christian life, would preserve women from the sin of lust as well as from the inherent evil of the sexual act. Some orders of nuns not only preserved virginity but remained silent to atone for Eve's guilty

conversation in the Garden of Eden.<sup>39(40)</sup> Eve's example was used repeatedly as the reason for mistrusting women in the marriage relationship. She was, after all, the originator of sin and the seducer of Adam in the garden.<sup>40(41)</sup> However, Thomas Aquinas (1225-74) ascribes guilt in the fall to Adam as well as to Eve; but because Adam's mental abilities and intelligence were far superior to Eve's, he must accept more responsibility though Eve's sin was more serious.<sup>41(42)</sup>

With the Protestant Reformation, marriage was no longer seen as a poor second choice, and thus the views of Adam and Eve changed. Martin Luther wrote that the married state was not sinful but rather to be desired and that women were not to be despised for the sexual sin of Eve, for sin was common to both sexes. Even though women were weaker than men and possessed "several vices" of mind and body, they were redeemed by "the womb and birth," because Eve's role in life was to give birth.<sup>42(43)</sup>

The Protestant Reformation also created a hitherto unknown diversity of beliefs within Christianity which has increased and intensified throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.<sup>43(44)</sup> For example, the beginnings of the woman suffrage movement in the nineteenth century brought a feminist perspective to the Adam and Eve account. In this quotation from the *Woman's Bible* by Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Eve is depicted as heroic and Adam as an inferior dupe:

Note the significant fact that we always hear of the "fall of man," not the fall of woman, showing that the consensus of human thought has been more unerring than masculine interpretation. Reading this narrative carefully, it is amazing that any set of men ever claimed that the dogma of the inferiority of woman is here set forth. The conduct of Eve from the beginning to the end is so superior to that of Adam...Then the woman fearless of death if she can gain wisdom takes of the fruit; and all this time Adam standing beside her interposes no word of objection. "Her husband with her" are the words of V.6. Had he been the representative of the divinely appointed head in married life, he assuredly would have taken upon himself the burden of the discussion with the serpent, but no, he is silent in this crisis of their fate. Having had the command from God himself he interposes no word of warning or remonstrance, but takes the fruit from the hand of his wife without a protest. It takes six verses to describe the "fall" of woman, the fall of man is contemptuously dismissed in a line and a half.

The subsequent conduct of Adam was to the last degree dastardly. When the awful time of reckoning comes, and the Jehovah God appears to demand why his command has been disobeyed, Adam endeavors to shield himself behind the gentle being he has declared to be so dear. "The woman thou gavest to be with me, she gave me and I did eat," he whines—trying to shield himself at his wife's expense! Again we are amazed that upon such a story men have built up a theory of their superiority!<sup>44(45)</sup>

In summary, then, the history of the Adam and Eve story is a record of its interpretation both as shaped by cultures and as shaping them. Sadly enough, those cultural messages have often supported a negative view of women, seeing Eve as weak, sinful, seductive, and unrestrained.

Nineteenth- and twentieth-century Mormon theologians were not immune to the effects of culture. They, too, used the Adam and Eve story to support issues relevant to the times in which they lived. In the nineteenth century, one of the major issues in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was polygamy. George Q. Cannon, a member of the First Presidency, stated in

1869 that its "correct practice" would "redeem woman from the effects of [Eve's] curse," which he specified as "thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee." He postulated that many more women than men would be admitted to the celestial kingdom because women "are not held accountable to the same extent as men are." They are cursed with "yearning after the other sex," while men are "strong" and will be held "responsible for the use of the influence [they] exercise...over [women]." He felt that polygamy would help relieve women of their "jealousy" and thus make them able to overcome Eve's curse.<sup>45(46)</sup> Brigham Young was less explicit in defining the curse of Eve but linked the Garden of Eden closely to plural marriage in teaching that Eve was "one of [Adam's] wives" in the premortal existence.<sup>46(47)</sup> During the polygamy era, General Authorities frequently cited 1 Timothy, which states that Eve, not Adam, was "deceived," to support a woman's subjection to her husband.<sup>47(48)</sup> My sense is that the use of this scripture in general conference addresses declined considerably after the polygamy era.

Nineteenth-century Mormon women evidently also believed that they were cursed because of Eve, but they were confident that through obedience they could become equals with men. Some felt this equality, fostered by the woman suffrage movement, could be attained in the near future. The *Utah Woman Suffrage Songbook* declares:

Woman, 'rise, thy penance o'er,  
Sit thou in the dust no more;  
Seize the sceptre, hold the van,  
Equal with thy brother, man.<sup>48(49)</sup>

An essay in the 1895 *Woman's Exponent* showed similar sentiment: "Ever since Eve partook of the forbidden fruit, which certainly showed her pluck, women have been blamed for all the ills that flesh is heir to; there has been a woman at the bottom of everything that savored of ill repute, but in the future there will be a woman at the bottom of everything good, not excluding good governments. Men have not been slow to lay their burdens upon us, but they have been so afraid we should find it out."<sup>49(50)</sup>

Other Mormon women felt that equality for women would occur during the millennium or in the after-life. Eliza R. Snow, regarded by Mormon women as "prophetess" and "presidentess," wrote:

What we experience here, is but a school  
Wherein the ruled will be prepared to rule.  
Clothed with the beauties purity reflects  
Th' acknowledged glory of the other sex,  
From life's crude dross and rubbish, will come forth,  
By weight of character—by strength of worth;  
And thro' obedience, Woman will obtain  
The *power of reigning, and the right to reign.*<sup>50(51)</sup>

Another essay in the *Woman's Exponent*, dated 1 February 1889, described the curse as a blessing in disguise which would be removed at the millennium:

Since the days of Eve her daughters have lived under the curse of social inferiority to her brother man. In this generation the irksomeness of this condition has been displayed by the woman's movement for equal rights, This movement has met with slurs and opposition at every step, just as every truth has always been opposed by its adversary;...God, who made us all, and who is no respecter of persons, intended that woman should in every way be equal to man in dignity; but He also knew the station in which she would be placed while on earth, that her

child-bearing and child-rearing sphere would curtail other aspirations, which man would have the opportunity to follow. Of the two He knew that the former would be of the greater importance to the world, and therefore in the guise of a curse, bestowed upon her the *blessing* to be subject to man, that she might the better fulfill her mission,...To me it seems like one of the latter day signs, that women are becoming restless beneath their oppressed situation. The world's record will soon be finished...and when the millennium shall set in, and the curse be removed...I write with confidence, for I firmly believe that our Heavenly Father loves His daughters just as well as he loves His sons, and that He does not desire the glorification of one at the sacrifice of the happiness of the other.<sup>51(52)</sup>

That God's judgment on Eve after the fall was a curse and that this curse was visited upon all women seems to have been commonly accepted by both men and women in the early Mormon church.

In the early twentieth century after polygamy ceased to be a major issue, the Adam and Eve story was used to support more current emphases. Apostle James E. Talmage in 1913 maintained that premortal Adam knew "all the essentials of the Word of Wisdom" and that the fall was the result of "the eating of things unfit."<sup>52(53)</sup> Rudger Clawson in 1918 and Orson F. Whitney in 1925, both apostles, gave conference addresses against evolution in which they cited the Adam and Eve story.<sup>53(54)</sup>

Recent Mormon commentators, in an age of increased interest in women's rights and sexual equality, have chosen to ignore the more controversial aspects of the Adam and Eve story. Marion G. Romney, a member of the First Presidency, in a presentation before the Relief Society Conference in 1967 gave an entire address about Eve without once referring to either the rib story or the curse upon Eve in Genesis 2. Rather, he emphasized her role as a "noble woman" and her essential unity with Adam.<sup>54(55)</sup> Spencer W. Kimball, president of the church during the 1970s, described the relationship between Adam and Eve as a "partnership" and praised her understanding of her "responsibility of bearing and nurturing children." In a context that included the Adam and Eve story, he encouraged Mormon women to become "contributing and full partners," rather than "silent" or "limited" partners, in their marriages. He admonished women to become "scholars of the scriptures as well as our men" and urged women to "set your goals...to make you reach and strain." He emphasized that the story of the rib is figurative, defined God's fiat "let us make man" to mean "a complete man, which is husband and wife," stressed the joyful aspects of the fall and reiterated a simultaneous creation (mankind = male *and* female).<sup>55(56)</sup> Furthermore, he repeated the same message to Mormon men in a general priesthood meeting: "The sisters in this dispensation include many of the most noble daughters of our Heavenly Father...Our sisters do not wish to be indulged or to be treated condescendingly; they desire to be respected and revered as our sisters and our equals. I mention all these things, my brethren, not because the doctrines or the teachings of the church regarding women are in any doubt, but because in some situations our behavior is of doubtful quality."<sup>56(57)</sup>

This survey of views of the Adam and Eve story is admittedly sketchy and selective rather than comprehensive. Still, it demonstrates how some commentators in different epochs have used the story almost at will to justify a particular cultural role for women and a theological explanation for the origin of sin. The original story seems protean, plastic, infinitely malleable. But if we put aside the commentaries, it becomes most instructive to examine the text itself, analyzing its structure and language for meaning and perspective.

Internal textual evidence shows that the Genesis account of the creation, temptation, and fall of



Adam and Eve is most appropriately viewed as a piece of Hebrew poetry rather than as a literal historical account. During periods when literal biblical interpretation was the norm, the creation-and-fall account inevitably posed problems that diminish when its poetic nature is understood. In addition, consideration of the poetic aspects of such writings reveals dimensions of truth and meaning unavailable when only principles of prose are considered. Classical Hebrew poetry generally does not use rhyme but rather relies on sound, rhythm, and repetition of ideas through parallel thoughts to convey its meaning. It uses a great deal of imagery, symbolism, and multi-levelled meaning. As is characteristic of this literary form, the Genesis Eden account is a tightly woven, symmetrical unit in which the meaning of the story is conveyed through imagery and parallelism.<sup>57(58)</sup> It is interesting that the author of Genesis chose to present this story in poetical language whereas other sections of Genesis use different literary styles. We may conjecture that the author was emphasizing a poetic reality that transcended the historical facts.

Jewish historian Flavius Josephus (A.D. 37-100) commented in the first century after Christ that Moses, while writing Genesis, used three different literary modes to express his thoughts: direct or plain words, philosophical or allegorical words, and enigmatical expressions. The translator notes that Josephus has Moses describe the creation (Gen. 1-2:4) in direct language, then shift to the philosophical (or allegorical) mode to relate the formation of man, a section which includes the rib story in Genesis 2:4-22.<sup>58(59)</sup> Modern commentators have concurred with Josephus' view. One twentieth-century biblical scholar, G. E. Mendenhall, classified that section with the classical Hebrew poetry books of Psalms, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes.<sup>59(60)</sup>

Since the account is related in poetic language, we must interpret it figuratively rather than historically; and each half of a parallel unit, whether two lines or whole sections, must be interpreted in light of the other half. Because each parallel unit consists of a single idea repeated, or two ideas contrasted, each is dependent on the other for full meaning. By the same token, we cannot view one half of a symmetrical story without the other. Many commentators who have used only portions of the Adam and Eve story have thus, inevitably, quoted out of context without considering how that portion fits with the whole.

Let us then read the Adam and Eve story as a symmetrical unit, emphasizing the parallel elements to be sure that the interpretation of one section of the story is consistent with interpretations of other sections and of the story as a whole. We will also note such poetic elements as imagery, symmetry, and other aspects of Hebrew poetry. We will deal with the Genesis account in three sections: the creation (Gen. 1:26-2:25), the temptation and fall (Gen. 3:1-7), and the trial and judgment (Gen. 3:8-24).

### **The Creation (1:26-2:25)**

We begin with Genesis 1:26-28 because the entire Adam and Eve account, including the Cain and Abel story, is bracketed between two almost identical scriptural passages: Genesis 1:26-27 and Genesis 5:1-2. Our view of the text sees it as poetically and purposefully constructed.<sup>60(61)</sup> Why has the author repeated these verses? Genesis 1:26-28 suggests the purpose of mortality in a few short verses: man and woman were created in the image of God to replenish the earth. All things on the earth were given them for life, and they were given dominion or stewardship over the earth together, unified as man and woman. So also the concluding statement in Genesis 5:1-2 summarizes the whole of mortality. Man and woman were created in the image of God. Blessed as a good creation, they replenished the earth. Genesis 5 continues by telling how this was done. We could say that the author of Genesis used 1:26-28 as an introduction and 5:1-2 as a final summary; between the two, all other parts of the story of Adam and Eve are contained. This view becomes even more likely when we consider that the story is not mentioned or referred to again

anywhere else in the Old Testament. (See note 2.)

It is interesting that the word translated as *man* is the Hebrew *'adam*, meaning "humankind," or man in a collective sense. It is used throughout most of the story rather than the more specific Hebrew noun *'is*, meaning "one man," or husband. In English, *'adam* could have several different meanings, an ambiguity leading to inconsistency in English translations of Genesis. If *'adam* appears alone without the Hebrew definitive article *ha-* preceding it, it could mean either "man" as a collective (humankind, humanity) or "Adam" as a proper name. There are only two places in the text where it definitely occurs this way, and in both places the context dictates translation as a collective humankind.<sup>61(62)</sup> *Ha-'adam* means "the human," or collective man. This form is used almost exclusively.<sup>62(63)</sup> Its use of *them* indicates the plural sense of *ha-'adam* in "Let us make *man* in our image...and let *them* have dominion...So God created *man*...male and female created he *them*."<sup>63(64)</sup>

After the introduction in 1:26-28, the author describes the creation in figurative language. The mystical formation of the human being is described symbolically. The author clearly says that a human is formed by a union between elements from the earth (physical body) and an element from God (spiritual body); together, body and spirit constitute the soul. This verse parallels Genesis 3:19, in which the Lord points out that because of the fall man is subject to death and would "return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." The dust of Genesis 2:7, however, is a ground that yields easily to man and provides trees that are pleasant to the sight and have everything good for food. The dust of 3:19 is a fallen world that has been "cursed." It produces thistles and thorns spontaneously, and man must work it by the sweat of his brow.

The symmetry is important. In the beginning, the human and the earth are united and mutually dependent one upon the other. In 2:5 it is seen as negative that there is no human to till or serve the ground. In 2:7, when the human is formed from the ground, he is given dominion over the ground but will also serve it. In Hebrew, this dependency and unity is stated in the form of an epigram—almost a pun, as the words for earth and man are almost identical: mankind (*ha-'adam*) takes its existence from the earth (*ha-'adamah*).<sup>64(65)</sup>

In 2:8 the garden is prepared; in 2:15 man is placed within to "dress it and to keep it." Food and water are supplied by God. The harmony with the earth is continued. The human and the plant kingdoms are characterized by mutual dependency and unity. Man's dependency on and unity with the animal kingdom follows in Genesis 2:19-20, where all living creatures are formed (also from the ground) and brought to the human to be named. In verses 16 and 17 God has issued in poetical imagery a warning to the human that if he partakes of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, which was planted in the garden, he will die. Knowledge of good and evil, and death are the results of the mortal condition. The fruit and the tree symbolize whatever of his actions will cause the human and his world to become mortal.

God then states, "It is not good that the man [collective] should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him."<sup>65(66)</sup> In other words, neither the plant kingdom nor the animal kingdom contains a creation fit for mankind. This phrase "help meet" (Hebrew *`ezer kanegdo*) is an interesting one. *`Ezer*, which in this context is translated as "help" (meaning "helper"), has the unfortunate English connotation of an assistant of lesser status, a subordinate or inferior—for instance, a willing but not very competent child.<sup>66(67)</sup> In Hebrew, however, the word describes an equal, if not a superior. The other usages of *`ezer* in the Old Testament show that in most cases God is an *`ezer* to human beings,<sup>67(68)</sup> a fact which makes us question whether "helper" is an accurate translation in *any* of the instances it is used. A more accurate translation in this context would be

"strength" or "power." Evidence indicates that the word *`ezer* originally had two roots, both beginning with different guttural sounds.<sup>68(69)</sup> Over time, the two gutturals were merged into one word, but the two meanings, "to save" and "to be strong," remained. Later, the meanings also merged into one word, "to help." Therefore, if we use the more archaic meanings of *`ezer* and translate *`ezer* as either "savior" or "strength," it clarifies not only the context we are discussing but also the other passages in the Old Testament where *`ezer* is used, especially where *`ezer* refers to God in his relationship with humankind.

*`Ezer* translated as "strength" or "power" also fits in nicely with the second word in the phrase, *kanegdo*, which has traditionally been translated as "meet for" or "fit for." Because *kanegdo* only appears this one time in the Old Testament, earlier translators had little upon which to base translations. An important clue to the meaning of this word is found in its usage in Mishnaic Hebrew, where the root means "equal." *Kanegdo* then, means "equal to" and the entire phrase *`ezer kanegdo* means "power or strength equal to." Thus, when God makes *ha-'adam* into two beings, he creates woman, a power or strength equal to man.

The King James translation of *kanegdo* as "meet for" is based on the actual seventeenth-century meaning of *meet*, "worthy of," which is no longer used in English. This archaic translation has allowed confused readers to hyphenate the noun and adjective as *help-meet*, detach the sense of "meet for," and then develop the neologism *help-mate*, a term that never existed either in the original Hebrew or in the King James version. The phrase has, however, become so much a part of the Christian vernacular that references are commonly heard to wives as help-meets and help-mates.

The Lord then removes a "rib" from which he forms man's companion.<sup>69(70)</sup> The Hebrew *sela`* is used more than forty times in the Old Testament, but only here has it been translated as "rib." Only two other usages refer to a human being: Job 18:12, where it is translated as "side" ("destruction shall be ready at his side"), and Jeremiah 20:10, which has uncertain meaning ("all my familiars [friends] watched for *my halting*," [KJV], "for *my fall*" [RSV], or, "at my *side*"). The word refers to the side of a hill in 2 Samuel 16:13, but every other usage gives construction details for the tabernacle or temple (i.e., *side* of the tabernacle, *side* of the altar, etc.).<sup>70(71)</sup>

*Sela`* in Genesis 1:21-22 thus should be similarly read as construction information, though the object being constructed is a life form. The Lord, as master builder, takes the "side" (*sela`*) of the human and uses it to "build" (*banah*) another person. Reading *sela`* as "side" rather than "rib" also better dramatizes the unity of the man and the woman, enhances the phrase "power equal to him," and makes the man's later characterization of woman as "bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh" even more meaningful. Thus, when God causes the human to sleep, he takes one of his sides and creates two beings out of one.

This section of the text is so symbolic that some early writings, the Nag Hammadi documents and early legends of the Jews among them, have maintained that the author was describing an androgynous creation that was later split into male and female parts.<sup>71(72)</sup> However, since we are treating the story as symbolic, it is more realistically seen as a symbolic representation of the unity of the first couple.

The creation of man as two individuals appears to be presented symbolically as simultaneous, rather than sequential.<sup>72(73)</sup> "No specific purpose is stated as it was with the animals, who were brought to the human to be named." The two are presented to one another as companions, and the man seems to react with surprise and delight:<sup>73(74)</sup> "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man." Up to this point, the

human has been *ha-'aḏam*. Now the words *man ('is)* and *woman ('issâh)* are used for the first time. These are definite nouns which signify man and woman as separate individuals with definite gender. In addition, the man uses the feminine *zō't* ("this is now bone of my bones") for the first time.<sup>74(75)</sup> However, the man at this point is not naming the woman. *'Issâh* is not a name; it is a common noun which designates gender. It also appears in the previous verse before the man uses it. The man is actually making a pun on the origin of woman. As the human (*ha-'aḏam*) received his existence from the earth (*ha-'aḏamah*), now the man (*'is*) has been used to form the woman (*'issâh*).<sup>75(76)</sup> We see this difference even more clearly when we look more closely at the episode where *ha-'aḏam* names the animals. He uses a Hebrew naming formula: the verb *to call (gara')* followed by the word *name (sem)* or "calling the name." Cain "builded a city, and *called the name* of the city, after the name of his son"; and "Adam knew his wife again, and she bare a son, and *called his name* Seth."<sup>76(77)</sup> It is interesting that the man does not employ this formula for the woman until after the Fall when he "calls her name Eve," but even in this instance he is calling her by a title.

It is significant that the man calls the woman "bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh," a statement he could not have made about the animals. In Hebrew, these phrases indicate a closeness, a blood relationship between the two parties, and in this case a unified companionship between the man and the woman. But the phrases are also used in other places in the Old Testament to describe two parties who are not necessarily blood relatives but who have made a covenant with each other, such as when the northern tribes of Israel made a covenant with David, their new king, and confirmed: "Behold, we are thy bone and thy flesh." David makes a similar covenant with the elders of Judah: "Ye are my brethren, ye are my bones and my flesh." Some of the participants may have been related, but the phrase refers to a mutual covenant the two parties have made with each other.<sup>77(78)</sup>

*Bone* in Hebrew symbolizes power, and *flesh* weakness. "Bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh" thus becomes a ritual pledge to be bound in the best of circumstances (power) as well as the worst (weakness). The man's use of this phrase here implies a covenant similar to a marriage agreement and is, in fact, reminiscent of the phrase "for better or for worse" used in marriage vows. Thus it would be a mistake to read this verse as an expression of Eve's "subordination" (totally "derived" from Adam) or as an expression of Adam's possessiveness (she is "his" because she is part of him). Instead it acknowledges a total union of two creatures who have both strength and weakness.

Genesis 2:24 summarizes the covenant and the whole episode: "Therefore Shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh." The man and the woman have just been created and have no physical father or mother in the story. But they are symbolic representations of all men and women, and thus the covenant episode symbolically represents the relationship between all men and women. Male and female were created from one flesh to become separate individuals who are companions to one another and who strive to again become as one in their relationship. As one scholar put it, "From one comes two; from wholeness comes differentiation. Now, at the conclusion of the episode this differentiation returns to wholeness" as two become one flesh.<sup>78(79)</sup> It is interesting that man is commanded to leave his parents and cleave unto his woman. In view of the patriarchal society in which this was written, one would instead expect to see the woman leave her parents and cleave unto her husband. It seems as though the author of this summary statement is trying to make three points: the woman is an independent and equal creation; marriage does not make her the possession of the man; and achieving oneness should be the common goal of both.

The last verse in Genesis 2 indicates that the man and the woman are "naked and not ashamed." The lack of shame is a metaphor for innocence—not necessarily a negative condition except as it is coupled with nakedness, which in Hebrew is often used to mean defenselessness.<sup>79(80)</sup> Living in a state of perfection and oneness and having no knowledge of opposition or evil, they have no appreciation of good. The author thus sets the stage for the episode that follows:

### **The Temptation and Fall (3:1-7)**

This episode and the final one are symmetrically juxtaposed with the beginning episode. Whereas the three levels of creation are unified and dependent on one another in the first scene, now they are all participants in their own fall: the animal kingdom provides the temptation (serpent), the plant kingdom the mode for the fall (fruit and tree), and the humans the agents of the deed. In the first part, God tells the couple they will die if they eat the fruit; in the second, the serpent says they will not die. In the first, they are naked and not ashamed; in the second their eyes are opened and they know they are naked and make aprons.

Until the woman and the man actually partake of the fruit, however, the language of the text indicates a union in their actions. Furthermore, the text does not say that the two are separated at the time of the temptation but actually suggests the opposite. The serpent addresses the woman with the plural Hebrew *you* form and she replies with the plural *we* and *us*: "And he [the serpent] said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, *Ye* [plural Hebrew] shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, *We* may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, *Ye* [Hebrew plural] shall not eat of it, neither shall *ye* touch it, lest *ye* [Hebrew plural] die. And the serpent said unto the woman, *Ye* [Hebrew plural] shall not surely die." When she partook of the fruit she then gave some to "her man" (King James Version *husband*) who was "with her."<sup>80(81)</sup>

If we take the view that they were separated at the time of the temptation, implied in 1 Timothy 2:13-14, then we can say that the woman was presented with a set of deceptive and incomplete facts and concluded through her own perception what the results of her actions would be. Thus, she made a more difficult choice. She then presented the situation to the man in a clear and rational manner which enabled him to perceive his alternatives accurately and, hence, the course he should take. The text does not say that the serpent first tempted the man alone and, after he refused, went to the woman; it says only that he tempted the woman, who then gave the fruit to "her man and he did eat." There is no tempting or coercing on the part of the woman and apparently no hesitation on the part of the man. They became mutually responsible for the transgression.

Because the story is symbolic, however, it does not matter whether they were separate or apart, or in what order they were tempted. At this point the author uses the plural pronouns *you*, *we*, and *us* and the phrases "her man" and, "[who was] with her," thus implying that they are still united in thought and action. We can infer, consequently, that whatever action one would take, the other would take also.

### **The Trial and Judgment (3:8-24)**

In this section of the story, the unity of the man and woman becomes sudden separateness. They use the first person singular for the first time in the narrative as the Lord confronts them: "I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because *I* was naked; and I hid *myself*," explains Adam, speaking only for himself. The man's comments are even more interesting when we realize that *both* the man and the woman heard God's voice, *both* were afraid, and *both* of them hid. Though

performing the same actions, their unity is ruptured. The woman also uses the first person singular to answer the Lord's question: "The serpent beguiled *me*, and *I* did eat."<sup>81</sup>(82)

Not only is their unity gone, but their self-possession and sense of responsibility has also eroded. The man first blames the Lord ("The woman whom thou gavest to be with me") and then blames the woman ("she gave me of the tree") before admitting that he had in fact partaken of the fruit. Even though he blames her, he does not say that she tempted or cajoled him, only that she gave it to him and he ate. Similarly, the woman blames the serpent (he "beguiled me") before admitting her part.<sup>82</sup>(83)

God then pronounces what have traditionally been called the curse of Adam and the curse of Eve. The serpent, however, is the only agent who is directly cursed and then, apparently, for usurping the role of deity and reversing the words of the deity. In the first episode, God tells man not to eat of the tree because he will die. In the second episode, the serpent tells man to eat of the tree and he will not die. His dishonesty is planned, deliberate, and deadly, for the actions of Adam and Eve bring death, as God has promised. The serpent is cursed for his part in blasphemy and disobedience by being relegated to the bottom of animal creation, his loathsome lowliness symbolized by the dust he is condemned to "eat all the days of thy life." He is also prevented from gaining any power over mortals through future deceit by the hatred set between the serpent and humankind. The serpent shall have the power to "bruise" the heel of the seed of the woman, but that seed shall ultimately triumph and shall bruise the serpent's head.

This judgment is obviously expressed in figurative language. The author uses a serpent as a symbol to represent the source of evil which tempted the first couple. the language is opaque, apparently deliberately obscure, and certainly seems to have more than one level of meaning.

The judgments God pronounces upon the man and the woman seem to be different from the curse upon the serpent. In fact, when we view the text of that section as a structural element of the story, these judgments are shown to be statements of cause and effect which describe the result of the mortal condition. God's descriptions of mortality parallel the earlier warning in 2:17 that mortality will result in a knowledge of good and evil (thus a loss of innocence), and death. Here he instructs them more about their new state: the man must now labor by the sweat of his brow to survive. This is so because not only the man but all orders of creation fell to a mortal existence. The earth is now cursed (fallen) and will no longer automatically supply the man with all his needs. The plant kingdom will provide not fruitful trees but thistles and thorns. Subject to death, he is told "unto dust shalt thou return."<sup>83</sup>(84) Likewise, the woman has become mortal and must suffer the hardship and pain of bearing children. The phrase "thy desire shall be to thy husband" may indicate three things: (1) the results of her sexual desire will produce children, which will cause her sorrow and pain; (2) because of her childbearing, she will also desire her husband's protection against the real dangers of a fallen world; (3) and perhaps some of her desire refers to the second part of her judgment—that her husband "will rule over" her. Perhaps she desires her husband to return her to her former state of equality rather than to rule over her.<sup>84</sup>(85)

It is not clear in this context whether rule connotes unrighteous or righteous dominion on the part of the male. It appears most often in the Old Testament to indicate unrighteous dominion, Such as Pharaoh's unrighteous rule over the Israelites, but it also appears benignly: the sun is created to "rule the day, and the [moon is] to rule the night."<sup>85</sup>(86) But whether the man's rule is righteous or unrighteous in mortality, the fact that it is mentioned at all presupposes that man did not rule over woman before the fall. No elements of the judgments are in existence in the prefallen state. Fallen man must work an unyielding earth by the sweat of his brow; before the fall he was not subject to death. Fallen woman must bear children in pain; before the fall she could not

understand pain nor have children. Fallen man rules over fallen woman; before the fall, they were equal companions.

As before Adam made a covenant with her, now he gives her a title of great honor: "Life, the mother of all living." This is not a mere naming. It signifies that a great event has taken place, and a title commensurate with the event is bestowed upon the woman. It is also similar to the Near Eastern formula for titles given to goddesses.<sup>86(87)</sup>

The author does not accuse or blame the couple for their transgression. In fact, he seems to imply that the choice they made is good, for the paralleling sequence now is reminiscent of the Genesis 1:26-28 statement of the purpose of the creation: to "multiply and replenish the earth." In the pre-fallen state, the man and the woman were innocent and sterile. Now they have knowledge and are fertile.

The Lord then provides clothing for the couple and sends them out of the garden. With this act, the symmetry of the story becomes complete. In the first episode, unity and perfection characterize all of the orders of creation. In the second episode, all orders of creation participate in their own fall, which brings separateness and conflict in episode three. Yet the author introduces the story with a statement that celebrates the fall from immortality to mortality and ends it in the same way. The symmetry of the story is, in fact, one of contrasts. In episode one there is unity and perfection but there is no joy, for they know neither good nor evil. They have no knowledge. Their very innocence leaves them defenseless. In episode two, they gain knowledge, realize they are naked, and attempt to conceal their guilt from God. Their very guilt, however, means that they have gained knowledge, the knowledge of good and evil. With knowledge they can cover their "nakedness," thus acquiring a defense against evil. The experience is compounded of both bitter and sweet. Episode three presents a final contrast. Because they are mortal, they will now experience pain and hardship. They will be separated from deity. Yet, paradoxically, they will only now be able to know joy. They are sent away from the garden, but it is for their own good, for they are imperfect and could no longer live in the presence of perfection. Nor could they gain experience in an environment where their needs are automatically supplied. The Lord provides them with clothing (shields of knowledge) to cover their nakedness (defenselessness). They can now defend themselves against evil. His final response is thus an act of compassion, not punishment. Reading the entire account as a poetical unit thus resolves many of the individual elements; they are symbols, symmetrically paired to reveal the layers of contrast in the story as a whole.

After this close reading of the Hebrew text, it is instructive to sample the impressive amount of Latter-day Saint commentary on the creation and fall. This survey is by no means comprehensive, but it makes an effort to be representative of those sources which support the overall interpretation of the Hebrew text discussed above.

For example, from the early days of the Mormon church to the present, Latter-day Saints have quite consistently taught that the text is figurative rather than literal. The location of a real Garden of Eden, the existence of deity, the actual existence of the first parents, and the fall to mortality have all been seen as historical events. But the exact creation of the man and the woman—especially the rib story—and the mode of the fall (the serpent and the fruit) have been interpreted as symbols of a much more complex historical actuality. Spencer W. Kimball, as president of the church, stated that the rib story "of course is figurative."<sup>87(88)</sup> Brigham Young went so far as to call it a "baby" story.<sup>88(89)</sup> He also maintained, as did Joseph Smith, Joseph Fielding Smith, and others, that Adam and Eve's bodies were engendered and born by natural sexual functioning and that they were placed in Eden as adult beings.<sup>89(90)</sup>

As a second important resemblance, church leaders have generally affirmed that the Genesis account describes the first couple as united in their actions in Eden. Most have recognized '*adam*' as a plural word representing both the man and the woman. For example, Erastus Snow, a member of the Quorum of the Twelve, said in 1878: "Male and female created he them and called their name Adam, which in the original, in which these Scriptures were written by Moses, signifies 'the first man.' There was no effort at distinguishing between the one half and the other, and calling one man and the other woman. This was an after distinction, but the explanation of it is—one man, one being, and he called their name Adam."<sup>90(91)</sup> Spencer W. Kimball made a similar scriptural gloss in 1976:

"And I, God, blessed them [Man here is always in the plural. It was plural from the beginning] (Moses 2:28).

"And I, God said unto mine Only Begotten, which was with me from the beginning: Let us make man [not a separate man, but a complete man, which is husband and wife] in our image. (Moses 2:26).

"Male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam" [Mr. and Mrs. Adam, I suppose, or Brother and Sister Adam] (Gen. 5:12).<sup>91(92)</sup>

Joseph Smith, Mormonism's founder, included Eve in the mystical description of the formation of humankind from the dust of the earth in Genesis 2:7: "The 7th verse of 2nd chapter of Genesis ought to read—God breathed into Adam his spirit [i.e., Adam's spirit] or breath of life; but when the word 'rauch' applies to Eve, it should be translated lives?"<sup>92(93)</sup>

Throughout Latter-day Saint scriptures, the word man can also mean humankind. In 2 Nephi 9:6 in the Book of Mormon, man is used as a plural for the first couple, just as in the Hebrew version of Genesis: "And because man became fallen, they were cut off from the presence of the Lord."

Latter-day Saint theologians have also persistently taught that Adam and Eve were sealed by an eternal marriage covenant, paralleling the Hebrew sense of the phrase "bone of my bones." Orson Pratt, an apostle, in 1875 preached that God himself officiated in a "marriage for eternity" linking Adam and Eve.<sup>93(94)</sup> Spencer W. Kimball reiterated the concept in 1975: "What a beautiful partnership! Adam and Eve were married for eternity by the Lord. Such a marriage extends beyond the grave." In the same discourse he amplifies on the quality of that relationship: "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh,' (Gen. 2:24). Do you note that? She, the woman, occupies the first place. She is preeminent, even above the parents who are so dear to all of us. Even the children must take their proper but significant place."<sup>94(95)</sup>

Because Latter-day Saint doctrine sees the fall to mortality as an essential part of the promortal plan and finds the first parents "sacrificing" their immortality that mankind might be, both the man and the woman have been treated as equally responsible for the transgression. Brigham Young and others taught that Adam had a knowledge of the plan of salvation dating to his premortal existence as a spirit without a body and was foreordained to partake of the fruit as the "design of the Lord."<sup>95(96)</sup> Eve must have also been foreordained; as we have seen, they acted in unison. Orson Pratt, among others, attributes transgression evenly to "one man and woman."<sup>96(97)</sup> Throughout the Book of Mormon, the transgression is almost always referred to as Adam's, suggesting that '*adam*' was probably used in the Hebrew sense to designate the first couple as a unit.<sup>97(98)</sup> In 2 Nephi 2:18-26, Eve is singled out, but as the object of temptation by



Satan, to whom the guilt is assigned.

The vehicle of temptation (the serpent) and the mode (the fruit) have been viewed as symbols, just as the creation of Adam and Eve was seen as figurative. Orson Pratt suggested that the pair were tempted on numerous occasions, not only by the serpent, but by other "beings" who had been "angels of light and truth" in the premortal existence but had then become followers of Satan.<sup>98(99)</sup> The book of Revelation identifies the serpent as Satan or Lucifer, who "was cast into the earth" for rebellion against God, a scripture Mormons interpret as referring to the premortal existence.<sup>99(100)</sup>

Mormon theologians also taught that Adam and Eve became mortal by eating a substance which was poisonous to their immortal systems. One apostle, Erastus Snow, for example, said in 1878:

Death passed upon our first parents, Adam and Eve, through their partaking of the fruits of the earth, their systems become [*sic*] infected by it, and the blood formed in their veins, and composed of the elements of the earth, which they partook, and these contain the seeds of dissolution and decay. And this blood, circulating in their veins, which was made up of the fruits of the earth—those things of which they partook—that formed their flesh, and made the deposits that constituted their muscle, and their bones, arteries and nerves, and every part of the body, became mortal and this circulating fluid in their systems produced friction which ultimately wore out the machinery of their organism, and brought it to decay, that it became no longer tenable for their spirits to inhabit, and death ensued.<sup>100(101)</sup>

The tree and the fruit, then, have been seen in Mormon thought as symbols which represent the process by which the fall came about.

There is no evidence in Mormon scriptures to suggest that Adam and Eve were apart at the time of the fall or that Adam was tempted first and refused. The book of Moses uses the same wording as the King James version and the Hebrew text: She "also gave unto her husband [who was] *with her*."<sup>101(102)</sup> The Doctrine and Covenants, a collection of Joseph Smith's revelations, even states that "*Adam* [was] tempted of the devil" and "partook of the forbidden fruit,"<sup>102(103)</sup> which may be either another indication that the name is being used as a collective word for Adam and Eve as a unit or that Adam and Eve *were* together at the time of the temptation.

As for the judgments placed upon the man and the woman in the third episode, we have already seen that nineteenth-century Mormons seemed to believe that Eve's judgment was a curse on all women. But the curse of Eve on all women is seldom mentioned any more in general conference addresses or articles written about women. Even the land, which, along with the serpent, was the only thing actually cursed in the Hebrew text, seems to have been redeemed as part of the restoration of the gospel by Joseph Smith, according to a revelation he recorded in 1831: "And, as I, the Lord, in the beginning cursed the land, even so in the last days have I blessed it, in its time, for the use of my saints, that they may partake of the fatness thereof" (Doctrine and Covenants 61:17).

Mormon specialist in ancient scriptures Hugh Nibley recently called the judgments "curses" but maintained that the man and the woman received identical curses:

Now a curse was placed on Eve, and it looked as if she would have to pay a high price for taking the initiative in the search for knowledge. To our surprise the *identical* curse was placed on Adam also. For Eve, God "will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception. In sorrow shalt thou bring forth children." The key is

the word for sorrow, *tsavadh*, meaning to labor, to toil, to sweat, to do something very hard. To *multiply* does not mean to add or increase but to repeat over and over again; the word in the Septuagint is *plethynomai*, as in the multiplying of words in the repetitious prayers of the ancients. Both the conception and the labor of Eve will be multiple; she will have many children. Then the Lord says to Adam, "In sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life" (i.e., the bread which his labor must bring forth from the earth). The identical word is used in both cases, the root meaning is to work hard at cutting or digging; both the man and the woman must sorrow and both must labor. (The septuagint word is *lype*, meaning bodily or mental strain, discomfort, or affliction.) It means not to be sorry, but to have a hard time. If Eve must labor to bring forth, so too must Adam labor (Genesis 3:17; Moses 4:23) to quicken the earth so it shall bring forth. Both of them bring forth life with sweat and tears, and Adam is not the favored party. If his labor is not as severe as hers, it is more protracted. For Eve's life will be spared long after her childbearing—"nevertheless thy life will be spared"—while Adam's toil must go on to the end of his days: "In sorrow shalt thou eat of it *all* the days of thy life!" Even retirement is no escape from that sorrow. The thing to notice is that Adam is not let off lightly as a privileged character; he is as bound to Mother Earth as she [Eve] is to the law of her husband. And why not? If he was willing to follow her, he was also willing to suffer with her, for this affliction was imposed on Adam expressly "because thou hast hearkened unto thy wife and hast partaken of the fruit."103(104)

The "curse" for both the man and the woman, then, simply amounts to feeling the results of mortality, which made them imperfect, "carnal," and subject to temptation and sin. Many scriptures from the Book of Mormon state this same philosophy: that with mortality came sin. Such statements usually continue with a way to overcome the effects of sin. In Mosiah 3:19 we read: "For the natural man is an enemy to God, and has been from the fall of Adam, and will be, forever and ever, unless he yields to the enticings of the Holy Spirit, and putteth off the natural man and becometh a saint through the atonement of Christ the Lord." That verse continues, enumerating the characteristics of the redeemed person: he or she "becometh as a child, submissive, meek, humble, patient, full of love, willing to submit to all things which the Lord seeth fit to inflict upon him [or her], even as a child doth submit to his [or her] father." The "natural" or fallen person does not spontaneously have these traits, for with mortality comes inequality in our relationships, pride, a tendency toward selfishness, arrogance, suspicion, and self-seeking rather than love.

Needless to say, all of these traits tend to create differences where there were none, to magnify small differences into great differences, and to reinforce the tendency toward hierarchy, division, and the rule of the "superior" over the perceived inferior. Any relationship in which one member "rules" over the other seems to be associated more with the fallen state than with the redeemed state.

Spencer W. Kimball, in discussing Genesis 3:16, redefined it: "I have a question about the word *rule*. It gives the wrong impression. I would prefer to use the word *preside* because that's what he does. A righteous husband presides over his wife and family."104(105) Unfortunately he did not take the next step and define *preside*. A man using business organization models, or even some church organizations that he might have observed, might well be puzzled by a distinction between *rule* and *preside*.

Some light is shed on this question by Doctrine and Covenants 121, an oft-quoted charter for the use of priesthood. Even though the context of this revelation, received by Joseph Smith in 1839, does not specify marriage or family setting, contemporary usage gives it a broad application to any situation in which a priesthood holder might be presumed to have some authority, whether ecclesiastically, marital, paternally, or socially. This section begins with a warning: "We have learned by sad experience that it is the nature and disposition of almost all men, as soon as they get a little authority, as they suppose, they will immediately begin to exercise unrighteous dominion." The contrasting "righteous dominion" is described a few verses later:

No power or influence can or ought to be maintained by virtue of the priesthood, only by persuasion, by long-suffering, by gentleness and meekness, and by love unfeigned;

By kindness, and pure knowledge, which shall greatly enlarge the soul without hypocrisy, and without guile...

Let thy bowels also be full of charity towards all men, and to the household of faith, and let virtue garnish thy thoughts unceasingly; then shall thy confidence wax strong in the presence of God; and the doctrine of the priesthood shall distill upon thy soul as the dews from heaven.

The Holy Ghost shall be thy constant companion, and thy scepter an unchanging scepter of righteousness and truth; and thy dominion shall be an everlasting dominion, and without compulsory means it shall flow unto thee forever and ever.<sup>105(106)</sup>

Dominion based on "righteousness and truth...*without compulsory means*" does not describe a relationship of subordination. The goal of mortality is to overcome such "carnal" tendencies as unrighteous dominion and to strive for oneness in relationships with others and with God. This sense of oneness has permeated Latter-day Saint doctrine since the beginning: from the oneness of the celestialized Father and Mother in Heaven, to the oneness of the Godhead, to the oneness that must exist among the Saints before Zion can be established prior to the second coming of Christ: "And the Lord called his people ZION because they were of one heart and one mind, and dwelt in righteousness."<sup>106(107)</sup>

Ida Smith, then director of Brigham Young University's Women's Research Institute, speaking at BYU's Women's Conference in 1980, said that a relationship in which inequality exists cannot be a celestial relationship: "A just God would not require the yoking of two unequal beings for eternity...It is important for a woman to learn in this life her eternal role so that when she is sealed [a temple ceremony of marriage] she will be prepared and ready—with all her heart—to function in and glorify that role. That means being ready and prepared to function as a full partner in a celestial team—without having to look *up* because of any feeling of inferiority, or look *down* because of any feeling of superiority, but look *across* into the eyes of an equally prepared, equally magnificent eternal mate." She maintained that the gospel of Christ should free men and women from the sexual stereotypes we sometimes attach to one another in mortality and pointed out that Christ openly displayed traits which have often been thought of as "feminine": he embraced children, he openly wept, he was gentle and compassionate. And likewise, we have many examples of intelligence, wisdom, and initiative in the great women of the church.<sup>107(108)</sup> Carolyn J. Rasmus, administrative assistant to the president of BYU, in another address given at the same conference, corroborated: "The differences between men and women are designed to be complementary and unifying, not divisive and separating. The ultimate plan is for achievement of

a perfect balance, with neither sex to be unduly emphasized."108(109)

In discussing the creation episode of the Hebrew text, we suggested that Genesis 2:24 ("Therefore shall a man leave his father and mother") summarized the meaning of the figurative rib story which preceded it: that man and woman were symbolically created from one being, split into two, and married so that they could strive in their relationship to again become symbolically one. The book of Moses, another creation account recorded by Joseph Smith in June 1830, gives more details about Adam and Eve's life after they were sent from the Garden of Eden. Regarded as scripture by Mormons, this account shows that Adam and Eve apparently understood that the goal of their relationship was to reestablish this oneness which they had before the fall. In Moses 5:1 we see Eve working alongside Adam in the fields; likewise in 5:12 we see Adam participating in the child rearing. The text further states that they prayed together, had children together, rejoiced for revelations, and grieved for their disobedient children together. Neither is silent; both speak freely. Neither blames the other for the transgression, but both share a view of the fall as a great blessing: "Blessed be the name of *God*," rejoices Adam, "for because of my [not Eve's] transgression my eyes are opened, and in this life I shall have joy, and again in the flesh I shall see God. And Eve, his wife, heard all these things and was glad, saying: Were it not for our transgression we never should have had seed, and never should have known good and evil, and the joy of our redemption, and the eternal life which God giveth unto all the obedient."109(110)

This variant text helps explain why Adam, in Genesis 3:20, followed God's judgments by naming Eve positively as "the mother of all living." Adam and Eve did not feel cursed; they recognized that the greatest blessing of mortality, the ability to produce children, was theirs. Adam's joyous honoring of Eve as Life itself shows a forward-looking expectation to fulfilling the commandment to "replenish" that was also the reason for their creation. *Eve* (Life) is an honorific and descriptive title; in Latter-day Saint doctrine, so is *Adam*. This same book of Moses includes an appearance of God to Moses during which he states: "And worlds without number have I created...And the first man of all men have I called Adam, which is *many*." Later, in a summary of the creation story, the account records: "Adam called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living; for thus have I, the Lord God, called the first of all women, which are *many*."110(111) *Adam* and *Eve* appear to be general titles which have been used numerous times by the Creator to signify the first parents of a world. Adam, then, did not name Eve. He was calling her by her title, previously conferred by God. In the book of Moses, Moses calls the woman Eve even before Adam does.111(112)

In conclusion, then, the Adam and Eve account in Genesis 1-3 must be viewed as a symbolic representation rather than as a historical account. Before the fall the man and woman are united in equal status before their creator. The rib (or side) story is symbolic of the completeness and perfection of their union. This context allows no sense of subjugation or inequality, only parity and oneness. The serpent symbolizes the source of the temptation. Whether this agent was Satan in person, a fallen angel, or an actual serpent endowed with speech is irrelevant to the story, for this episode is again symbolic. The details of how the couple was tempted, partook of the fruit, and fell to mortality have been left to the imagination of commentators over the ages. The fruit symbolizes the process by which man and woman became mortal. Whether it was some kind of fruit, the concept of willful disobedience itself, or some kind of poisonous substance which caused the fluid within the pre-fall bodies to become mortal blood again is irrelevant to the story.

The judgments pronounced by the Lord were not curses but statements which symbolized the essential characteristics of mortality for all humanity. To say that because of Eve all women are

cursed is not only a misunderstanding of the intent of the Genesis story but also a misunderstanding of the eternal doctrine of free agency and personal responsibility. As a literal tenet of Latter-day Saint faith, Mormons "believe that men [and women] will be punished for their own sins, and not for Adam's [and Eve's] transgression."<sup>112(113)</sup> Women and men feel the results of that transgression in that they are mortal and subject to imperfections of the flesh—sin, illness, fatigue, pain, etc. If we conclude that the judgments enumerated in Genesis 3:4-20 are results of the mortal condition, the implications are that we, like Adam and Eve, can strive to overcome these judgments while still in mortality by an understanding of Christ's atonement and by obedience to his commandments. The promise is that we will eventually be able to return to a state of unity and oneness with God, with others, and with ourselves like that possessed by Adam and Eve before the fall.

It is fitting, then, that we finally redeem Eve from the misconceptions about the curse that have clouded our understanding of her role these many years. For only when we understand the real purpose and significance of the events in Eden can we truly appreciate the magnitude of the opportunity and challenge Jesus Christ gave to the sons and daughters of Adam and Eve when he commanded: "I say unto you, be one; and if ye are not one ye are not mine."<sup>113(114)</sup>

## Endnotes

### 1 (Popup)

From the time of her B.A. at the University of Utah, where she was elected Associated Women Students president and Outstanding Woman, to the present, Jolene Edmunds Rockwood has been involved in community affairs as well as being active in her church responsibilities. Most recently, in her adopted city of Batesville, Indiana, she has won grants which have supported art and gifted education programs for the elementary schools, as well as teaching and coordinating challenge programs there. Her master's degree from Harvard's Divinity School in Old Testament was followed by her marriage to Fred Rockwood, now a corporate president. They have five children, the oldest just barely a teenager.

### 2 (Popup)

1 As quoted in Marina Warner, *Alone of All Her Sex: The Myth and the Cult of the Virgin Mary* (New York: Vintage Books, 1983), p. 50.

### 3 (Popup)

2 An exhaustive examination of all uses of the Adam and Eve story from antiquity to the present would be impossible in a work of this length. Rather, I have chosen a few examples of how the account was used out of context to reinforce cultural standards of certain time periods. My choice of commentators, also, does not indicate that all others in the same age or time period were in agreement with the view quoted. Diversity in belief can be found in all ages.

### 4 (Popup)

3 There are possible allusions in Ezek. 28:13-19, Job 31:33, and Isa. 43:27. The

first does not refer to either Adam or Eve by name; the latter two refer only to Adam as transgressor but say nothing about Eve.

### 5 (Popup)

4 These include the Midrash, Mishna, and Talmud, which were commentaries on the Old Testament canon and interpretations on specific parts of the Torah (the Mosaic law), written by scribes and rabbis. These commentaries were supplemented by the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, most of which were probably written from 200 B.C. to A.D. 200. Some were ascribed to famous figures like Enoch or Ezra; others were anonymous. But the Council of Jamnia (ca. A.D. 90) judged that all were written too late to be included in the Old Testament canon. Recent discoveries of documents such as the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Nag Hammadi Libraries would also be included in this category.

### 6 (Popup)

5 Bet 24a and Meg 23a, Talmud, as cited in Constance F. Parvey, "The Theology and Leadership of Women," in *Religion and Sexism: Images of Women in the Jewish and Christian Traditions*, ed. Rosemary Radford Ruether (New York: Simon and Schuster, Touchstone, 1974), p. 129.

### 7 (Popup)

6 Louis Ginzberg, *The Legends of the Jews*, 12th ed., 7 vols. (1909; Philadelphia:

Jewish Publication Society of America, 1937) 1:67.

**8 (Popup)**

7 Ibid.

**9 (Popup)**

8 A. Cohen, *Everyman's Talmud* (New York: Schocken Books, 1975), pp. 160, 179.

**10 (Popup)**

9 Ibid., p. 161.

**11 (Popup)**

10 Ginzberg, *Legends* 1:66.

**12 (Popup)**

11 Ibid. 1:68.

**13 (Popup)**

12 Ibid. 1:67.

**14 (Popup)**

13 Cohen, *Everyman's Talmud*, p. 171.

**15 (Popup)**

14 Ibid., p. 172.

**16 (Popup)**

15 Jubilees 3:8-13, in R. H. Charles, ed., *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament*, 7th ed., 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973) 2:16.

**17 (Popup)**

16 Cohen, *Everyman's Talmud*, p. 159.

**18 (Popup)**

17 Sirach 25:13, 15, 16, 19, 24, in Charles, *The Apocrypha* 1:401-2.

**19 (Popup)**

18 Ibid. 49:16, in Charles, *The Apocrypha* 1:506.

**20 (Popup)**

19 Jubilees 19:24-27; 22:13, and 1 Enoch 37:1 in Charles, *Pseudepigrapha* 2:41, 42, 45, 46, 208. For other divergent views concerning Adam and Eve throughout the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha see 1 Enoch 32:6; 69:6, in Charles 2:207, 233; 2 Baruch 23; 54:15-19; 56:5-6, in Charles 2:495, 511-13; 4 Ezra 3:21; 4:30; 7:11, 116-118, in Charles 2:563, 566, 580, 591, among others. References to Eve's seduction appear in "Apocalypsis Mosis" 19:1-3 and "Vita Adae et Evae" 16:4 in "The Books of Adam and Eve" and in 2 Enoch 31:6 in Charles, *Pseudepigrapha* 2:146, 137, 451.

**21 (Popup)**

20 John 9:2-3.

**22 (Popup)**

21 Luke 8:1-3.

**23 (Popup)**

22 Luke 10:38-42.

**24 (Popup)**

23 Luke 15:3-10.

**25 (Popup)**

24 Luke 7:2-18; Matt. 13:31-33; Luke 13:18-21.

**26 (Popup)**

25 See Luke 10:29-37 and 38:42 (he teaches a man, then a woman); 13:10-16 and 14:2-6; (Jesus heals first a woman, then a man on the Sabbath); 17:35 and 36 (one man shall be taken from two who are in the field; one woman shall be

taken from two who are grinding); Mark 7:24-30 and 31-37 (he heals a Gentile's daughter, then a deaf man); Matt. 9:20-22, 23-26 and 27-34 (he heals a woman, raises a girl from the dead, and then heals two blind men). For a commentary, see

Parvey, "Theology and Leadership," pp. 138-42.

**27 (Popup)**

26 See Acts 10, 15.

**28 (Popup)**

27 See Acts 7:58; 8:1; 22:3-5.

**29 (Popup)**

28 See 1 Cor. 11:3-15. This statement by Paul would seem to be in direct opposition to his statement three chapters later in 1 Cor. 14:34-35: "Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church." L. R. Iannaccone in "Let the Women Be Silent," *Sunstone* 7 (May-June 1982): 39-45, presents convincing evidence that in 1 Cor. 14:34-35 Paul is quoting from the original letter he received from Corinth, rather than offering his own opinion.

**30 (Popup)**

29 Ginzberg, *Legends* 1:67; Parvey, "Theology and Leadership," p. 126.

**31 (Popup)**

30 1 Cor. 11:7-15.

**32 (Popup)**

31 2 Cor. 11:3.

**33 (Popup)**

32 1 Tim. 2:9-15.

**34 (Popup)**

33 See George Arthur Buttrick, ed., *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, 4 vols.



(Nashville, Tenn: Abingdon Press, 1962) 3:683 and 4:651.

**35 (Popup)**

34 Rom. 5:12. See also 1 Cor. 15:22.

**36 (Popup)**

35 Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses* 3, 22, 4; 3, 23, 5; 4, Preface, 4; 4, 38, 1-4; 4, 39, 2; 5, 19, 1; 5, 23, 1; as used in Bernard P. Prusak, "Woman: Seductive Siren and Source of Sin?" in Ruether, *Religion and Sexism*, pp. 100-101.

**37 (Popup)**

36 Clement, *Paedagogus* 2, 12, as cited in Prusak, "Woman," p. 101.

**38 (Popup)**

37 Origen, *Leviticum homiliae* 12:4; 8:3; *Lucam homiliae* 14; *Contra Celsum* 7, 50, as used in Prusak, "Woman," pp. 103-4.

**39 (Popup)**

38 Tertullian, *De Patientia* 5; *De Carne Christ* 17; *De Cultu Feminarium* 1, 1 as cited in Prusak, "Woman," pp. 104-5.

**40 (Popup)**

39 Eleanor Commo McLaughlin, "Equality of Souls, Inequality of Sexes: Women in Medieval Theology," in Ruether, *Religion and Sexism*, p. 244. Some male monastic orders also practiced the discipline of silence for different reasons.

**41 (Popup)**

40 Ibid., p. 253.

**42 (Popup)**

41 Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* II-II, 165, 2, ad 1; II-II 163, 4, concl.; I-II, 81, 5, ad 2 in McLaughlin, "Equality," pp. 218-19.

**43 (Popup)**

42 Martin Luther, *E narrationes in I Mose*, as used in Jane Dempsey Douglass, "Women and the Continental Reformation," in Ruether, *Religion and Sexism*, p. 297.

**44 (Popup)**

43 The reader may note here that I have left several hundred years of biblical commentary untouched. Covering the rich and varied views that emerged from about A.D. 200 to the present day would greatly overtax this one simple chapter, even though I know many significant contributions were made to the subject by Protestant writers like Calvin as well as by radical reformers like George Fox and Ann Lee. Rather, I have chosen to sample the early Jewish and Christian documents, including the Old and New Testaments, because they played such a critical role in establishing modern-day Judeo-Christian standards.

For an interesting and detailed tracing of the role and nature of Eve in Protestant

New England from 1650-1750, see Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, *Good Wives: Image and Reality in*

*the Lives of Women in Northern New England 1650-1750* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982).

**45 (Popup)**

44 Elizabeth Cady Stanton et al., *The Woman's Bible* (Seattle: Coalition Task Force on Women and Religion, 1974), pp. 26-27.

**46 (Popup)**

45 George Q. Cannon, 9 October 1869, *Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. (Liverpool: Franklin D. Richards, 1855-86) 13:207, hereafter cited as *JD*, with speaker and date.

**47 (Popup)**

46 Brigham Young, 9 April 1852, *JD* 1:50; see also 20 April 1856, *JD* 3:319.

**48 (Popup)**

47 1 Tim. 2:14. Among nineteenth-century citations in *JD* see Brigham Young, 27 December 1857, 6:145; Orson Pratt, 18 July 1880, 21:288-89; Wilford Woodruff, 14 May 1882, 23:125, George Q. Cannon, 28 September 1884, 26:188-89.

**49 (Popup)**

48 *The Utah Woman Suffrage Songbook* (Salt Lake City: Woman's Exponent, n.d.).

**50 (Popup)**

49 R.M.F., "Lecture on Suffrage," *Woman's Exponent* 24 (15 August 1895): 41.

**51 (Popup)**

50 Eliza R. Snow, "Woman," in *Poems Religious, Historical and Political*, 2 vols. (Salt Lake City: LDS Printing and Publishing Establishment, 1877) 2:178. Italics hers.

**52 (Popup)**

51 Ruby Lamont, "The Woman's Movement," *Woman's Exponent* 17 (1 February 1889): 129.

**53 (Popup)**

52 James E. Talmage, *Eighty-Fourth Semi-Annual Conference Report of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, October 1913, p. 118. Although the view that Adam and Eve's bodies were changed from divine to mortal through the eating of earthly fruits was taught by Brigham Young and others years previous to this, here in this context we see it used as a supportive example in a talk on the Word of Wisdom.

**54 (Popup)**

53 Orson F. Whitney in *Ninety-Sixth Annual Conference Report*, October 1925, pp. 100-102; Rudger Clawson, *Eighty-Sixth Annual Conference Report*, April 1918, pp. 32-33.

**55 (Popup)**

54 Marion G. Romney, "Mother Eve, A Worthy Exemplar," *Relief Society Magazine* 55 (February 1968): 84-89.

**56 (Popup)**

55 Spencer W. Kimball, "Privileges and Responsibilities of Sisters," *Women's Fireside*, 16 September 1978, *Ensign* 8 (November 1978): 102-6; also, Spencer W. Kimball, "The Blessings and Responsibilities of Womanhood," *Ensign* 6 (March 1976): 70-71.

**57 (Popup)**

56 Spencer W. Kimball, "Our Sisters in the Church," 6 October 1979, *Ensign* 9 (November 1979): 48-49, reprinted in *Blueprints for Living*, ed. Maren M. Mouritsen (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 1980), pp. 1-3; see also Spencer W. Kimball, "The Role of Righteous Women," *Ensign* 9 (November 1979): 102-4.

### **58 (Popup)**

57 A comprehensive examination of Gen. 1-3 as a poetical work is found in Phyllis Tribble, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1978), ch. 4, "A Love Story Gone Awry," pp. 72-143. Many of the ideas contained in this section of the paper were extracted from this work. See also Jerome T. Walsh, "Genesis 2:4b-3:24: A Synchronic Approach," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 96 (1977): 161-77; and Edwin M. Good, *Irony in the Old Testament* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1965), pp. 81-84.

### **59 (Popup)**

58 *Josephus: Complete Works*, trans. William Whiston (Grand Rapids, Mich: Kregal Publications, 1960), pp. 24, 25n.

### **60 (Popup)**

59 Mendenhall also felt the story was a parable. See George E. Mendenhall, "The

Shady Side of Wisdom: The Date and Purpose of Gen. 3," in *A Light Unto My Path: O.T. Studies in Honor of Jacob M. Myers*, ed. Howard N. Bream et al. (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1974), pp. 319-34.

### **61 (Popup)**

60 Many scholars have traditionally believed that Gen. 1:26-28 and Gen. 2:4-22 were two different accounts of the creation of man, written by two different authors, P (priestly writer), and J (Yahwist writer). Although this view has less support today than it once did, in this essay it is not relevant whether the accounts were authored by one or two persons. The editor or compiler of Genesis evidently thought both accounts were important enough to include in the final manuscript. See Good, *Irony in the Old Testament*, p. 82.

### **62 (Popup)**

61 One is in Gen. 1:27 where '*ad am*' is used with a plural pronoun "them," and the other is in Gen. 2:5: "there was not a man to till the ground." The presence of the negative before '*ad am*' would make translation of '*ad am*' as a proper name nonsensical: "there was no Adam to till the ground." Three other places in the text are uncertain because the word '*ad am*' is preceded by a preposition which in Hebrew would eliminate the *ha*: 2:20, 3:17, and 3:21. See John Ellington, "Man and Adam in Genesis 1-5," *The Bible Translator* 30 (April 1979): 201-5; Gerhard Von Rad, *Genesis*, 2nd ed. (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1974), p. 57; and Ernest Lussier, "'*Ad am*' in Gen. 1, 1-4, 24," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 18 (1956): 137-39.

### **63 (Popup)**

62 The King James translation has inconsistently translated *ha-'adam* most often

as a proper name, Adam. See Lussier, "'*Ad am*' in Genesis 1, 1-4, 24": 137-39.

### **64 (Popup)**

63 Gen. 1:26-27, italics added.

### **65 (Popup)**

64 Tribble, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality*, pp. 79-80; also John L. McKenzie,

"The Literary Characteristics of Genesis 2-3," *Theological Studies* 15 (1954): 556.

**66 (Popup)**

65 Genesis 2:18.

**67 (Popup)**

66 Tribble, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality*, p. 90; also McKenzie, "The Literary Characteristics of Genesis 2-3": 559; Clarence J. Voz, *Woman in Old Testament Worship* (Amsterdam: N.V. Verenigde Drukkerijen Judels & Brinkman-Delft, n.d.), p. 16.

**68 (Popup)**

67 From Voz, *Woman in Old Testament Worship*, p. 16: "Besides Gen. 2:18, 20, this word ['ezer] appears in the Old Testament nineteen times. Of these it is used once in a question. (Ps. 121:1—the answer to the question is given in the following verse in which it is said that one's help comes from the Lord.) It is used three times of man as a help, (Is. 30:5; Ezk. 12:14; Dn. 11:34), but in each instance it is clear that man's help is not effectual. (Dn. 11:34 could refer to God); fifteen times it is used of God as the one who brings succor to the needy and desperate. Thus, if one excluded Gen. 2:18, 20 it could be said that only God gives effectual help ('ezer) to man... Viewing woman as created to be a subordinate assistant to man finds no basis in the word ('ezer)." See also Jean Higgins, "Anastasius Sinaita and the Superiority of the Woman," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 97, no. 2 (1978): 255: "Of forty-five occurrences of the word in the LXX, [Septuagint], forty-two unmistakably refer to help from a stronger one."

**69 (Popup)**

68 R. David Freedman, "Woman, A Power Equal to Man," *Biblical Archaeology*

*Review* 9 (January-February 1983): 56- 58.

**70 (Popup)**

69 Gen. 2:21-22.

**71 (Popup)**

70 A complete listing of usages is found in George V. Wigram, *The Englishman's Hebrew and Chaldee Concordance of the Old Testament*, 5th ed. (Grand Rapids, Mich:

Zondervan Publishing House, 1980), pp. 1073-74; see also Walter Brueggemann, "Of the Same Flesh and Bone (Gn. 2, 23a)" *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 32 (1970): 532-42.

**72 (Popup)**

71 Tribble, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality*, pp. 98- 99.

**73 (Popup)**

72 Ibid., p. 98.

**74 (Popup)**

73 James N. Robinson, ed., "The Apochryphan of John" and "The Gospel of Philip," in *The Nag Hammadi Library* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1977), pp. 110, 141; Ginzberg, *Legends of the Jews* 1:66.

**75 (Popup)**

74 Gen. 2:23; Tribble, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality*, p. 97; John A. Bailey, "Initiation and the Primal Woman in Gilgamesh and Genesis 2-3," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 89 (1970): 142-43.

**76 (Popup)**

75 Tribble, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality*, pp. 98, 100; McKenzie, "The Literary Characteristics of Genesis 2-3": 556-59.

**77 (Popup)**

76 Gen. 4:17, 25; Tribble, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality*, pp. 99-100, italics added.

**78 (Popup)**

77 2 Sam. 5:1; 19:12; Brueggemann, "Of the Same Flesh and Bone (Gen. 2, 23a)": 532-42.

**79 (Popup)**

78 Tribble, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality*, p. 104.

**80 (Popup)**

79 Good, *Irony in the Old Testament*, pp. 83-84; Tribble, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality*, p. 108.

**81 (Popup)**

80 Gen. 3:1-6; Tribble, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality*, pp. 112-13; Jean M. Higgins, "The Myth of Eve: The Temptress," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 44 (1976): 645-47.

**82 (Popup)**

81 Gen. 3:10, 13, italics added.

**83 (Popup)**

82 Gen. 3:12-13; Tribble, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality*, p. 118; A. Williams, "The Relationship of Gen. 3:20 to the Serpent," *Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 89 (1977): 357-74.

**84 (Popup)**

83 Gen. 3:19.

**85 (Popup)**

84 See Voz, *Woman in Old Testament Worship*, pp. 24-25; Tribble, *God and the*

*Rhetoric of Sexuality*, p. 128.

**86 (Popup)**

85 Gen. 1:16.

**87 (Popup)**

86 Isaac M. Kikawada, "Two Notes on Eve," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 91 (1972): 33-37.

**88 (Popup)**

87 Kimball, "Blessings and Responsibilities": 71.

**89 (Popup)**

88 Brigham Young, 23 October 1853, *JD* 2:6.

## 90 (Popup)

89 Idem, 9 April 1852, *JD* 1:50; 20 April 1856, *JD* 3:319; 9 October 1859, *JD* 7:285; Orson Pratt, 13 April 1856, *JD* 3:344; Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, comp. Bruce R. McConkie, 3 vols. (Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1954-56) 1:97. The reader may note here and in many following instances that teachings in the doctrine of the church and the accounts given in the books of Moses, Abraham, and Genesis differ from the depiction of the creation and fall in the temple ceremony. The intent of the temple ceremony seems to be much the same as the intent of the Genesis account: to present ideas through symbols and figurative language which have many layers of meaning. It is perhaps appropriate that the creation story in the temple is presented in a symbolic fashion, as the rest of the endowment is highly ritualistic and has numerous levels of meaning. To interpret the visual (film) depiction of the creation and fall as only history rather than also as a

figurative representation of underlying truths would deviate from the intent of the temple experience as a whole. One part cannot be interpreted as strictly symbolic and another as strictly historical. (See Boyd K. Packer, *The Holy Temple* [Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1980], pp. 38-41, on the symbolic nature of temple instruction.) Hyrum Andrus, in noting the difference between the temple portrayal and the books of Abraham and Moses said: "A study of the problem suggests that the temple ceremony gives merely a general *portrayal* and not an actual *account* of the creation. ...Letters written by Brigham Young concerning the nature and organization of the temple ceremony, on file in the St. George Temple, support the view that Joseph Smith did not dictate the temple ceremony as he did the revelations and translations which he committed to writing." Andrus felt that Joseph Smith obtained the basic endowment from the writings of Abraham, which he later gave to Brigham Young, who added such instructional portions as the creation account. See L. John Nuttal, *Diary*, 7 February 1877, as quoted in Hyrum Andrus, *God, Man and the Universe*, 2nd ed. 4 vols. (Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1970) 1:333-34, footnote. This footnote does not appear in later editions. Whether or not Brigham Young ever produced a written script is unknown, but in 1877 he requested Wilford Woodruff (assisted by George Q. Cannon) to write a standardized script for the endowment ceremony. Upon completion of this script Brigham Young said, "Now you have... an ensample to carry on the endowments in all the temples until the Coming of the Son of Man." Packer, *The Holy Temple*, pp. 191-94; see also John K. Edmunds, *Through Temple Doors*, 4th ed. (Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1979), pp. 73-74. Since that time, wording in the script and the dramatization of the script of the instructional part of the temple ceremony has been altered from time to time for clarification.

## 91 (Popup)

90 Erastus Snow, 3 March 1878, *JD* 19:269.

## 92 (Popup)

91 Kimball, "Blessings and Responsibilities," p. 71, bracketed interpolations his.

## 93 (Popup)

92 *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith (Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book Co., 1972), p. 301, bracketed interpolations his. Joseph Smith is probably referring to the Hebrew word *ruah*, which means "spirit" or "soul." This word, however, does not appear in Genesis 2:7. The phrase *nismat hayyim*, which means literally "breath of life," is used.

## 94 (Popup)

93 Orson Pratt, 11 July 1875, *JD* 18:48; see also Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*

1:115.

**95 (Popup)**

94 Kimball, "Blessings and Responsibilities": 72.

**96 (Popup)**

95 Brigham Young, 3 June 1855, *JD* 2:302; Edward W. Tullidge, *The Women of Mormondom* (New York: Tullidge and Crandall, 1877), pp. 197-99, stated that Mother Eve chose to be the first to partake of the fruit to symbolize the great maternal sacrifice.

**97 (Popup)**

96 Orson Pratt, 7 October 1867, *JD* 19:317; see also Erastus Snow, 3 March 1878, *JD* 19:269-72,274.

**98 (Popup)**

97 See, for example, Mosiah 3:11, 19; 4:7; Alma 12:21-23; 22:12-14; 42:2-4; Helaman 14:16-17; Mormon 9:12. In some of these references, Adam and Eve are

mentioned together as the first parents. See also I Nephi 5:11; Mosiah 16:3-4.

**99 (Popup)**

98 Orson Pratt, 22 November 1873, *JD* 16:318.

**100 (Popup)**

99 Rev. 12:7-9; see also Moses 4:3-4.

**101 (Popup)**

100 Erastus Snow, 3 March 1878, *JD* 19:271-72.

**102 (Popup)**

101 Moses 4:12, italics added.

**103 (Popup)**

102 Doctrine and Covenants 29:36, 40; italics added.

**104 (Popup)**

103 Hugh Nibley, "Patriarchy and Matriarchy," in Mouritsen, *Blueprints for Living*, pp. 45-46. *The Holy Scriptures According to the Masoretic Text*, 47th ed. (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1964), states a similar meaning in its translation of Gen. 3:16, 17: "Unto the woman He said: I will greatly multiply thy pain and thy travail; in pain thou shalt bring forth children...And unto Adam He

said...cursed is the ground for thy sake; in toil thou shalt eat of it."

**105 (Popup)**

104 Kimball, "Blessings and Responsibilities": 72.

**106 (Popup)**

105 Doctrine and Covenants 121:39, 41-42, 45-46.

**107 (Popup)**

106 Moses 7:18.

**108 (Popup)**

107 Ida Smith, "The Lord as a Role Model for Men and Women," BYU Women's Conference, 2 February 1980, *Ensign* 10 (August 1980): 66-67.

**109 (Popup)**

108 Carolyn J. Rasmus, "Mormon Women: A Convert's Perspective," BYU

Women's Conference, 1 February 1980, *Ensign* 10 (August 1980): 69.

**110 (Popup)**

109 Moses 5:2, 4, 10-11, 16, 27.

**111 (Popup)**

110 Ibid. 1:33-34; 4:26, italics added.

**112 (Popup)**

111 Ibid. 46.

**113 (Popup)**

112 "The Articles of Faith of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints," no. 2, in *The Pearl of Great Price*.

**114 (Popup)**

113 Doctrine and Covenants 38:27.