

## A Curse for the Serpent and Blessings for Adam and Eve

Jeffrey M. Bradshaw



Jewish pseudepigraphal texts tell of how, after Adam and Eve’s transgression, God’s “chariot throne [descends and] rests at the Tree of Life and all the flowers come into bloom.”<sup>1</sup> Of this painting, Conisbee writes:

*The Rebuke of Adam and Eve* perfectly illustrates Domenichino’s classical style at the peak of his career... The group of God and the angels is derived directly from Michelangelo’s *Creation of Adam*... and should be read as an homage by the seventeenth-century painter to his great predecessor... Following Italian tradition, Domenichino shows the Tree of Knowledge as a fig tree, rather than the apple tree which was more usual in northern European art. In a clear narrative sequence, God the Father, borne by cherubim and angels, descends to rebuke Adam, who blames Eve, who in turn points to the serpent as the cause of their fall from grace. Animals still roam freely in their earthly paradise, but the lion at the right is already metamorphosing from a friendly feline to an aggressive beast.<sup>2</sup>

The change in God’s initial question from the KJV “Where *art* thou?” to the JST “Where *goest* thou?” emphasizes the fact that the Lord is not assessing Adam’s location but rather requesting him to reflect openly on his intentions—in view of the fact that his feet are now pointed toward the exit of the Garden.<sup>3</sup> Dennis Rasmussen observes: “From man God does not need information. Man’s response must be man’s own self.”<sup>4</sup> Umberto Cassuto<sup>5</sup> further explains:

The commentators who consider the question to be aimed at discovering where the man was hiding have overlooked the words “[and said unto] him”... The query... resembles the question the Lord God asks Cain,<sup>6</sup> “Where is Abel your brother?” when Abel’s body is lying on the ground beneath the open sky, and no attempt is made to conceal it... We may compare the case to that of a man who comes to chide his little son who misbehaved himself and then hid himself behind the door in order to avoid looking at his father’s angry face; the father who is well aware of the child’s hiding-place, calls out to him, “Where are you?” meaning: Why are you there? Is that where you should be? Come out and face me! [Adam’s] answer is in keeping with this interpretation; he does not reply, “I am in such-and-such a place,” but he explains why he is concealing himself.<sup>7</sup>

God’s call, of course, is not issued as an angry threat, but rather as an invitation for Adam to account for his stewardship of the Garden.<sup>8</sup> To accomplish His objective, God seeks to “draw rather than drive him out of hiding.”<sup>9</sup> Elder David A. Bednar observed that God did not merely lecture Adam, but instead made every effort to help him learn and wisely exercise his agency.<sup>10</sup> According to Chrysostom, God here “demonstrate[s] his own loving kindness, and... invites [Adam and Eve] to make admission of their faults.”<sup>11</sup>

The reason Satan is not interrogated is because, in contrast to mankind, he “was not and never will be afforded any chance at repentance.”<sup>12</sup> While he is the only one to be directly cursed,<sup>13</sup> there is a similarity in the nature of the consequences suffered by each of the three parties: “In each case, the judgment is of a twofold nature: it affects what is of central concern in the life of each entity, and it regulates a basic relationship.”<sup>14</sup> As for the serpent, it is henceforth restricted to a humiliating diet and form of locomotion, and will be crushed under the heel of the seed of the woman; the woman will suffer in childbearing and in the challenges of a marriage relationship undertaken in the conditions of a fallen world; and the man is consigned to hard labor and to strict obedience to the commandments of the Lord.

In the case of the man and the woman, Cassuto argues that what may seem solely as punishments should be regarded instead as “measures taken for the good of the human species in its new situation.”<sup>15</sup> Exposed in nakedness, God will clothe them;<sup>16</sup> subject to temporal and spiritual death, God will bless them with posterity and the eventual possibility of eternal life;<sup>17</sup> and bereft of the food of the Garden, God will provide Adam and Eve with the seeds of life-sustaining grains.<sup>18</sup>

This article will outline some of the important themes in the curse of the serpent and the consequences of the Fall spelled out to Eve. In a later article, I will have more to say the words of God to Adam.

### **The Curse of the Serpent**

The cursing of the serpent is described in Moses 4:20-21:

And I, the Lord God, said unto the serpent: Because thou hast done this thou shalt be cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life;

And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, between thy seed and her seed;  
and he shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

The *Qur'an* records a passionate exchange of words following Lucifer's expulsion from heaven that could just as easily fit the scene described here. In the account, Satan unleashes a tirade of threats, followed by a summary dismissal by God: "Because... [Thou hast adjudged me to be erring], [the Devil] declared, 'I will waylay Your servants as they walk on Your straight path, then spring upon them from the front and the rear, from their right and from their left....' 'Begone!' [God] said."<sup>19</sup> Hugh Nibley<sup>20</sup> elaborates:

[Satan,] nettled by this rebuke and the curse, ... flares up in his pride and announces what his program for the economic and political order of the new world is going to be. He will take the resources of the earth, and with precious metals as a medium of exchange he will buy up military and naval might,<sup>21</sup> or rather those who control it, and so will govern the earth—for he is the prince of this world. He does rule: he is king. Here at the outset is the clearest possible statement of a military-industrial complex ruling the earth with violence and ruin. But as we are told, this cannot lead to anything but war, because it has been programmed to do that. It was conceived in the mind of Satan in his determination "to destroy the world."<sup>22</sup> The whole purpose of the program is to produce blood and horror on this earth.



Historically, Christians have called the prophecy concerning the "seed" of the woman in Moses 4:21 the *protoevangelium*, being the first explicit Biblical allusion to the good

news of the Gospel.<sup>23</sup> The depiction of the “Harrowing of Hell” from the *Barberini Codex* shows the Devil being literally trampled underfoot by the advancing Christ as he reaches out to save the dead who have long awaited the appearance of their Redeemer. The imagery is meant to teach that the Redeemer has crushed the head of the serpent by means of the heel that was bruised in the pains of the Atonement.<sup>24</sup>

Just as Jesus Christ will put all enemies beneath his feet,<sup>25</sup> so the Prophet Joseph Smith taught that each person who would be saved must also, with His help, gain the power needed to “triumph over all [their] enemies and put them under [their] feet,”<sup>26</sup> possessing the “glory, authority, majesty, power and dominion which Jehovah possesses.”<sup>27</sup>

Of relevance to the requirement that each Christian follow the same path taken by Jesus Christ is Theodore of Antioch’s account of the “drama of baptism,” enacted as part of the liturgy of the fourth-century church. Note the rich symbolism that links the banishment of Satan to the covenant of baptism. Anderson summarizes:

When Satan hears of the pending enrollment of the *catechumen*,<sup>28</sup> he shows the same hostility he had formerly shown towards the exaltation of Adam and the resurrection of Christ... [Theodore writes that Satan] “...tries and endeavors to bring us to the judgment hall as if we had no right to be outside his ownership. He pleads that from ancient times and from the creation of the head of our race we belong to him by right...” Having pledged to resist Satan, the candidates were urged to “stand with outstretched arms in the posture of one who prays, and look downwards and remain in that state in order to move the judge to mercy.”<sup>29</sup>

As part of this process, candidates sometimes “stood [barefoot] on animal skins while they prayed, symbolizing the taking off of the garments of skin they had inherited from Adam”<sup>30</sup> as well as figuratively enacting the putting off the serpent, the representative of death and sin, under one’s heel.<sup>31</sup> Thus the serpent, his head crushed by the heel of the penitent relying on the mercies of Christ’s atonement, is by a single act renounced, defeated, and banished.<sup>32</sup>

## The Challenges and Blessings of Celestial Marriage



Moses 4:22 records God's words to Eve:

I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception. In sorrow thou shalt bring forth children, and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.

In the poignant sculpture by Delaplanche pictured above, the vacant, tearless eyes and agonized posture of the solitary slumped figure bespeak the depth of Eve's utter hopelessness immediately after her transgression. While scripture describes the results of transgression differently for Adam than for Eve, the ultimate effect of these consequences is essentially the same: a mortal life replete with the opposing experiences of good and evil, pleasure and pain.<sup>33</sup>

Adam and Eve's common lot is reflected in the carefully chosen Hebrew words used to represent their suffering. As Cassuto observes:

Apparently we have here a play upon words with reference to *es* [= tree]: it was with respect to *es* that the man and woman sinned, and it was with *esebb* [= pain] and *issabbon* [= toil, suffering] that they were punished... The very fact that Scripture does not employ here the usual phrases found in connection with the suffering of childbirth... proves that it was some specific intention... that these words were selected."<sup>34</sup>

The same Hebrew term used to describe Adam and Eve's sorrow recurs when Noah is "pained that the Lord had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at the heart."<sup>35</sup>

Without the Fall, Adam and Eve would have not borne children.<sup>36</sup> Now Eve is told that as part of the repeated blessings of motherhood she must also undergo the recurrent pain incident to each childbirth. However, using the words of the apostle Paul, Sailhamer reminds us that these birth pangs:

... are not merely a reminder of the... Fall; they are as well a sign of impending joy: "We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. For in this hope we were saved."<sup>37</sup>

By this we understand that not only the crushing of the serpent's head, but also the blessings of spiritual rebirth for all mankind will come through the "seed of the woman," namely Jesus Christ.

The phrase "thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee"<sup>38</sup> has been the subject of much misunderstanding. The problem begins when the references to the woman's "desire" and the man's "rule" are read *prescriptively* as a biblical marriage model to be followed, rather than *descriptively* as a tragic condition to be reversed. Though pride and selfishness will threaten the desired state of oneness between husband and wife, the commandment for them to "cleave" to one another is never abrogated.

To better understand the concepts being expressed in this verse, it is important to recognize that the Hebrew term translated as "desire" does not denote physical attraction, but rather a wish to "overcome or defeat another."<sup>39</sup> This sense is captured in a Christian phrasing of Adam's punishment: "your family will be forever contending against you."<sup>40</sup> Hamilton sees here a desire of sin "to break the relationship of equality and turn it into a relationship of servitude and domination... Far from being a reign of co-equals over the remainder of God's creation, the relationship now becomes a fierce dispute, with each party trying to rule the other. The two who once reigned as one attempt to rule each other."<sup>41</sup> Summarizing the unfortunate new state of affairs described in this verse, McKinlay observed that "the Fall of man and the continual source of degeneration in this world have resulted in the estrangement of parents from God, from each other, and from their children." On the other hand, "the healing of this broken harmony is the essence of eternal life."<sup>42</sup>

Martin Luther aptly describes God's design of marriage as a "school of love."<sup>43</sup> As couples and families learn to live together in intimacy, affection, and oneness, they experience the finest kind of preparation for eternal life that mortality can provide.<sup>44</sup> President Spencer W. Kimball emphasized that in celestial marriage the "man and the wife are equals" and that the designation of "authority" to man "does not mean that he is superior."<sup>45</sup> He explained that the role of the husband is to "preside" rather than to "rule"<sup>46</sup> and stressed the need for women to be "contributing and full" partners in marriage.<sup>47</sup> Elder Dallin H. Oaks further explained that there is a difference between

presiding in Church organizations and in the home. As summarized by Elder Bruce C. Hafen.<sup>48</sup>

[Elder Oaks] quoted the “equal partners” principle from the Family Proclamation and then said this concept does *not* apply to a ward organization. The Relief Society president and her ward bishop, for example, are not equal partners in administering the affairs of the ward; however, that same Relief Society president *is* an equal partner with her husband in administering the affairs of their home...

Elder Oaks also compared Adam and Eve’s relationship to each other with their relationship to the Lord. He said that “the word ‘obey’ is used in describing our covenants with the Lord and [the word] ‘counsel’ is used in expressing [a married couple’s] relationship with one another”....

The point is a simple one: Marriage is a partnership of equals whose most essential roles both revolve around their families.

Hugh Nibley<sup>49</sup> points out:

There is no patriarchy or matriarchy in the Garden; the two supervise each other. Adam is given no arbitrary power; Eve is to heed him only insofar as he obeys their Father—and who decides that? She must keep check on him as much as he does on her. It is, if you will, a system of checks and balances in which each party is as distinct and independent in its sphere as are the departments of government under the Constitution—and just as dependent on each other.

In fact, Catherine Thomas observes, a primary objective of mortality seems to have been precisely “to foster the conditions in which the man and the woman may achieve interdependence,” thus affording us an opportunity to rise to “the challenge of not only perfecting ourselves individually but also perfecting ourselves in relationships.... Relationships were given to us to develop us in love.”<sup>50</sup>

The notion of the “interdependence” of husband and wife is perhaps best expressed through the scriptural concept of “cleaving”: “Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they shall be one flesh.”<sup>51</sup> The underlying meaning of the idea of two distinct entities becoming attached to one another while preserving their separate identities becomes clear, “if it is noted that the verb *d-v-k* [cleave, cling] is often used to describe human yearning for and devotion to God.”<sup>52</sup> Likewise “forsake” is often used in a biblical context to describe Israel’s departure from her covenant with the Lord.<sup>53</sup> Noting that Adam and Eve “symbolically represent all men and women,” Jolene Edmunds Rockwood observes:<sup>54</sup>

Male and female were created from one flesh; as separate individuals who are now companions to one another, they strive to again become as one in their relationship. Note that it is the man who leaves his parents and cleaves unto his wife.<sup>55</sup> In view of the patriarchal society in which this passage was written, one would instead expect to hear the reverse: a woman leaves her parents and cleaves unto her husband. Three important insights are, then, encapsulated in this summary statement: 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.

Like the blessing of childbirth, the experience of married love holds out a promise of happiness, yet its practice, in a fallen world, will be frequently mixed with sorrow “till God make men of some other mettle than earth.”<sup>56</sup> Unfortunately, “[t]here has been no change in the constitution of man since he fell.”<sup>57</sup> “Sad experience” has shown “that it is the nature and disposition of almost all men, as soon as they get a little authority, as they suppose, [to] immediately exercise unrighteous dominion,”<sup>58</sup> a tendency which modern prophets have repeatedly condemned.<sup>59</sup> Of the great blessings that await all generations of women who have thus suffered, Elder James E. Talmage has written:

When the frailties and imperfections of mortality are left behind, in the glorified state of the blessed hereafter, husband and wife will administer in their respective stations, seeing and understanding alike, and cooperating to the full in the government of their family kingdom. Then shall woman be recompensed in rich measure for all the injustice that womanhood has endured in mortality. Then shall woman reign by Divine right, a queen in the resplendent realm of her glorified state, even as exalted man shall stand, priest and king unto the Most High God.<sup>60</sup>

## **Conclusions**

Through partaking of the forbidden fruit, Adam and Eve have begun to know good and evil—in that respect becoming “as gods.”<sup>61</sup> While the serpent had painted a picture of a jealous God, the Lord’s actions after the Fall bear out His intent to further bless the couple. Now that the couple has made their free choice of mortality as the way forward, God will enable them to gain further experience by sending them out of the Garden under conditions that He had expressly designed to meet that purpose.<sup>62</sup> He will provide a Savior for them, and will make the Gospel with its covenants and ordinances available so that, through their faithfulness, they might be sanctified and return to His presence.<sup>63</sup> The healing of the broken harmony between man and woman is an essential prerequisite for their eventual joint exaltation.

## References

- Anderson, Gary A., and Michael Stone, eds. *A Synopsis of the Books of Adam and Eve* 2nd ed. *Society of Biblical Literature: Early Judaism and its Literature*, ed. John C. Reeves. Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1999.
- Anderson, Gary A. "Ezekiel 28, the fall of Satan, and the Adam books." In *Literature on Adam and Eve: Collected Essays*, edited by Gary A. Anderson, Michael Stone and Johannes Tromp, 133-47. Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 2000.
- . *The Genesis of Perfection: Adam and Eve in Jewish and Christian Imagination*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001.
- Arnold, Bill T. *Genesis. New Cambridge Bible Commentary*, ed. Ben Witherington, III. New York City, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2009.
- Barker, Margaret. *Temple Theology*. London, England: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (SPCK), 2004.
- Bednar, David A. 2006. "Seek Learning by Faith." *Ensign* 37, September 2007, 60-68.
- Benson, RoseAnn. *The marriage of Adam and Eve: An ancient covenant (Master of Arts Thesis)*. Provo, UT: The David M. Kennedy Center, Brigham Young University, 2003.
- <http://contentdm.lib.byu.edu/cdm4/document.php?CISOROOT=/MTAF&CISOPTR=15552>. (accessed February 13, 2010).
- Bradshaw, Jeffrey M. *In God's Image and Likeness: Ancient and Modern Perspectives on the Book of Moses*. Salt Lake City, UT: Eborn Publishing, 2010.
- Cassuto, Umberto. 1944. *A Commentary on the Book of Genesis*. Vol. 1: From Adam to Noah. Translated by Israel Abrahams. 1st English ed. Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, The Hebrew University, 1998.
- Chrysostom, John. ca. 386-407. *Homilies on Genesis 1-17*. Translated by Robert Hill. Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1986.
- Conisbee, Philip. *Art for the Nation: Collecting for a Century*. Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art, 2000.
- Dahl, Larry E., and Charles D. Tate, Jr., eds. *The Lectures on Faith in Historical Perspective. Religious Studies Specialized Monograph Series 15*. Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 1990.
- Dawood, N. J. 1956. *The Koran*. London, England: Penguin Books, 1997.
- England, Eugene. *Why the Church is as True as the Gospel*. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1986.
- Etheridge, J. W., ed. *The Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan Ben Uzziel on the Pentateuch, with the Fragments of the Jerusalem Targum from the Chaldee*. 2 vols. London, England: Longman, Green, Longman, and Roberts, 1862, 1865. Reprint, Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2005.
- <http://www.targum.info/pj/psjon.htm>. (accessed August 10, 2007).
- Freedman, R. David. "Woman, a power equal to man." *Biblical Archaeology Review*, January-February 1983, 56-58.
- Hafen, Bruce C. *Covenant Hearts: Marriage and the Joy of Human Love*. Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book, 2005.
- Hafen, Bruce C., and Marie K. Hafen. "Crossing thresholds and becoming equal partners." *Ensign* 37, August 2007, 24-29.

- Hamilton, Victor P. *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 1-17*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1990.
- Herbert, Máire, and Martin McNamara, eds. *Irish Biblical Apocrypha: Selected Texts in Translation*. Edinburgh, Scotland: T & T Clark, 1989.
- Heschel, Abraham Joshua. 1962, 1965, 1995. *Heavenly Torah as Refracted Through the Generations*. 3 in 1 vols. Translated by Gordon Tucker. Edited by Gordon Tucker and Leonard Levin. New York City, NY: Continuum International, 2007.
- Hinckley, Gordon B., Thomas S. Monson, and James E. Faust. "The family: A proclamation to the world. Proclamation of the First Presidency and the Council of the Twelve presented at the General Relief Society Meeting, September 23, 1995." Salt Lake City, UT: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1995.
- Hinckley, Gordon B. "Women of the Church." *Ensign* 26, November 1996, 67-70.
- . *Teachings of Gordon B. Hinckley*. Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book Company, 1997.
- . 1998. "Sunday Morning Session, 4 October 1998." In *Discourses of President Gordon B. Hinckley*. 2 vols. Vol. 1: 1995-1999, 206-13. Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book, 2005.
- . 2002. "Priesthood Session, 6 April 2002." In *Discourses of President Gordon B. Hinckley*. 2 vols. Vol. 2: 2000-2004, 124-31. Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book, 2005.
- . 2004. "Sunday Morning Session, 3 October 2004." In *Discourses of President Gordon B. Hinckley*. 2 vols. Vol. 2: 2000-2004, 257-63. Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book, 2005.
- Holland, Jeffrey R. 1988. *Of Souls, Symbols, and Sacraments*. Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book, 2001.
- Hudson, Valerie M., and Alma Don Sorenson. "Response to Professor Thomas." In *Mormonism in Dialogue with Contemporary Christian Theologies*, edited by Donald W. Musser and David L. Paulsen, 323-38. Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2007.
- Kastler, Esthi. 2006. Commentaire du texte de Genèse 2.4b à 4.26. In *Études bibliques*, Fédération protestante de France. <http://www.protestants.org/etudes-bibliques/genese/etude.htm>. (accessed August 25, 2007).
- Kimball, Spencer W. "The blessings and responsibilities of womanhood." *Ensign* 6, March 1976, 70-73.
- . *The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*. Edited by Edward L. Kimball. Salt Lake City, UT: Bookcraft, 1982.
- Louth, Andrew, and Marco Conti, eds. *Genesis 1-11. Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture, Old Testament 1*, ed. Thomas C. Oden. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2001.
- Maher, Michael, ed. *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan, Genesis*. Vol. 1b. *Aramaic Bible*. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1992.
- Malan, Solomon Caesar, ed. *The Book of Adam and Eve: Also Called The Conflict of Adam and Eve with Satan: A Book of the Early Eastern Church. Translated from the Ethiopic, with Notes from the Kufale, Talmud, Midrashim, and Other Eastern Works*. London, England: Williams and Norgate, 1882. Reprint, San Diego, CA: The Book Tree, 2005.

- McConkie, Joseph Fielding, and Craig J. Ostler, eds. *Revelations of the Restoration: A Commentary on the Doctrine and Covenants and Other Modern Revelations*. Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book, 2000.
- McKinlay, Lynn A. "Patriarchal order of the Priesthood." In *The Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, edited by Daniel H. Ludlow. 4 vols. Vol. 3, 1067. New York City, NY: Macmillan, 1992. <http://www.lib.byu.edu/Macmillan/>. (accessed November 26, 2007).
- Nibley, Hugh W. 1975. *The Message of the Joseph Smith Papyri: An Egyptian Endowment*. 2nd ed. Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book, 2005.
- . 1979. "Gifts." In *Approaching Zion*, edited by D.E. Norton. The Collected Works of Hugh Nibley 9, 85-117. Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book, 1989.
- . 1980. "Patriarchy and matriarchy." In *Old Testament and Related Studies*, edited by John W. Welch, Gary P. Gillum and Don E. Norton. The Collected Works of Hugh Nibley 1, 87-113. Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book, 1986.
- Rashi. c. 1105. *The Torah with Rashi's Commentary Translated, Annotated, and Elucidated*. Vol. 1: Beresheis/Genesis. Translated by Rabbi Yisrael Isser Zvi Herczeg. *ArtScroll Series, Sapirstein Edition*. Brooklyn, NY: Mesorah Publications, 1995.
- Rasmussen, Dennis. *The Lord's Question*. Provo, UT: Keter Foundation, 1985.
- Rockwood, Jolene Edmunds. "Eve's role in the creation and the fall from mortality." In *Women and the Power Within*, edited by Dawn Hall Anderson and Marie Cornwall, 49-62. Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book, 1991.
- . "The redemption of Eve." In *Sisters in Spirit: Mormon Women in Historical and Cultural Perspective*, edited by Maureen Ursenbach Beecher and Lavina Fielding Anderson, 3-36. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1992.
- Sailhamer, John H. "Genesis." In *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, edited by Frank E. Gaebelein, 1-284. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1990.
- Sarna, Nahum M., ed. *Genesis. The JPS Torah Commentary*, ed. Nahum M. Sarna. Philadelphia, PA: The Jewish Publication Society, 1989.
- Seely, David Rolph. "What does it mean when the Lord said he wold create for Adam 'an help meet for him'?" *Ensign* 24, January 1994, 54-55.
- Shakespeare, William. ca. 1598. "Much Ado about Nothing." In *The Riverside Shakespeare*, edited by G. Blakemore Evans, 327-64. Boston, MA: Houghton-Mifflin Company, 1974.
- Smith, Joseph, Jr. 1938. *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*. Edited by Joseph Fielding Smith, Jr. Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book, 1969.
- Stordalen, Terje. *Echoes of Eden: Genesis 2-3 and the Symbolism of the Eden Garden in Biblical Hebrew Literature*. Leuven, Belgium: Peeters, 2000.
- Talmage, James E. "The eternity of sex." *Young Woman's Journal* 25, October 1914, 602-03.
- Thomas, M. Catherine. "Women, priesthood, and the at-one-ment." In *Spiritual Lightening: How the Power of the Gospel Can Enlighten Minds and Lighten Burdens*, edited by M. Catherine Thomas, 47-58. Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book, 1996.
- Timothy of Alexandria. ca. 385. "How Abbaton, the angel of death, became the king of all mankind." In *Egyptian Tales and Romances: Pagan, Christian and Muslim*,

- edited by E. A. Wallis Budge, 195-203. London, England: Thornton Butterworth Limited, 1931. Reprint, Kila, MT: Kessinger Publishing, 2003.
- Weil, G., ed. 1846. *The Bible, the Koran, and the Talmud or, Biblical Legends of the Mussulmans, Compiled from Arabic Sources, and Compared with Jewish Traditions, Translated from the German*. New York City, NY: Harper and Brothers, 1863. Reprint, Kila, MT: Kessinger Publishing, 2006.  
[http://books.google.com/books?id=\\_jYMAAAAIAAJ](http://books.google.com/books?id=_jYMAAAAIAAJ). (accessed September 8, 2007).
- Wenham, Gordon J., ed. *Genesis 1-15. Word Biblical Commentary 1*: Nelson Reference and Electronic, 1987.
- Wintermute, O. S. ed. "Jubilees." In *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, edited by James H. Charlesworth. Vol. 2, 35-142. Garden City, NY: Doubleday and Company, 1983.
- Woodruff, Wilford. *Waiting for World's End: The Diaries of Wilford Woodruff*. Edited by Susan Staker. Salt Lake City, UT: Signature, 1993.

## Notes

---

- 1 M. Barker, Temple Theology, p. 89. See G. A. Anderson *et al.*, Synopsis, 44(22):3-4, p. 62E. An Islamic source likewise reports that God's voice of judgment came "from the tree" (G. Weil, Legends, p. 32).
- 2 P. Conisbee, Art.
- 3 J. M. Bradshaw, God's Image, pp. 259-260.
- 4 D. Rasmussen, Question, p. 7.
- 5 U. Cassuto, Adam to Noah, pp. 155-156.
- 6 Moses 5:34.
- 7 Rashi draws additional parallels to the Lord's dialogues with Hagar, Balaam, and Hezekiah (Rashi, Genesis Commentary, 1:34). See Genesis 16:8, Numbers 22:9, and Isaiah 39. Compare Ether 3:7: "Arise, why hast thou fallen?"
- 8 E. E. Kastler, Commentaire. Cassuto points out examples from elsewhere in the Bible where the verb "call" "is used in the sense of to summon a person to give an account of his actions" (U. Cassuto, Adam to Noah, p. 155 and, e.g., Genesis 12:18, 20:9, 26:9-10; Deuteronomy 25:8).
- 9 V. P. Hamilton, Genesis, p. 193.
- 10 D. A. Bednar, Seek, p. 63.
- 11 J. Chrysostom, Homilies on Genesis, 17:22, cited in A. Louth *et al.*, Genesis 1-11, p. 85.

---

12 G. A. Anderson, *Perfection*, p. 138. Cf. Jubilees: “the Lord cursed the serpent and he was angry with it forever” (O. S. Wintermute, *Jubilees*, 3:23, p. 60). The penalty placed upon the serpent symbolizes the curse placed upon those that followed Lucifer in the premortal life: “Throughout eternity [those who followed Lucifer in premortal life] will remain lower than the cattle or the beasts of the field, for even the beasts have bodies of flesh and bone and enjoy the privilege of resurrection, whereas the Devil and his angels remain unembodied spirits forever” (J. F. McConkie *et al.*, *Revelations*, p. 271). Even in the millennial day, when all the rest of Creation will enjoy peace and plenty, “dust [still] shall be the serpent’s meat” (Isaiah 65:25). In cultures where the serpent was worshipped, this curse also proclaimed the eventual humiliation of all false gods, and the firm requirement of submission to the Lord as the only object of worship (T. Stordalen, *Echoes*, p. 470).

Nibley elucidates the symbolic meaning of the figurative indignity imposed on the serpent by his loss of legs: “The loss of limbs and organs guarantees that the rebel will never rise anew in his full powers, which he will never possess again. He may never more progress, being... bound in one place” (H. W. Nibley, *Message* 2005, p. 317).

In an early Christian text, the Savior is portrayed as discussing the results of Lucifer’s intransigence at the time of his fall from heaven. The text echoes the theme of Satan’s loss of powers as the result of his rebellion:

And when My Father saw [Satan’s] pride and arrogance, and knew that his wickedness and evil-doing were as great as his pride, He commanded the hosts of heaven, saying: “Take away the writing from the hand of this arrogant one, strip off his armor, and cast him down to the earth, for his time has come. He is chief of the rebels and is like a king to them, and he commands them as a captain commands his troops; and the names of the rebels are written in the list which is in his hand.” And the angels gathered themselves together, but they hesitated to take the list from the rebel’s hand. Then My Father commanded them to bring a sharp reaping knife, and to thrust it into his sides and through his body, and to sever the bones of his back and shoulders; and he was unable to stand. Then My Father commanded a mighty angel to smite him and to cast him out of heaven, because of his pride; and the angel crushed in his ribs, and broke his wings, and he and those angels who were with him became devils. (Timothy of Alexandria, *Abbaton*, p. 199)

In unrepentant rebellion, Satan has committed the unpardonable sin and cannot be redeemed. In the text, he is portrayed as having been stabbed and cut from shoulder to shoulder with a knife in ritual fashion. Other traditions mention a specific angel or cherub whose wing becomes the weapon by which Satan is smitten and rendered helpless (G. A. Anderson, *Ezekiel*, pp. 142-143).

13 Jolene Edmunds Rockwood explains: “God... 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” (J. E. Rockwood, *Redemption of Eve*, p. 20).

---

14 N. M. Sarna, *Genesis*, p. 27.

15 U. Cassuto, *Adam to Noah*, p. 163.

16 *Moses* 4:27.

17 *Moses* 4:22.

18 *Moses* 4:25.

19 N. N. J. Dawood, *Koran*, 7:11-18, pp. 109-110; cf. 15:32-44; 17:61-63; 38:74-85. See also M. Herbert *et al.*, *Irish Apocrypha*, p. 11.

20 H. W. Nibley, *Gifts*, p. 92.

21 See S. C. Malan, *Adam and Eve*, 1:57, p. 65.

22 *Moses* 4:6.

23 A related theme also appears in the Egyptian *Book of the Dead*, where “the cat who split the *ished-tree* and released the god also beheads the god’s mortal enemy, the *Apophis* serpent, beneath the same *ished-tree*,” its paw resting heavily on the head of the serpent in accompanying illustrations (H. W. Nibley, *Message* 2005, pp. 311-312).

24 The *Targum Yerushalmi* preserves a unique reading when it has God saying: “For them [i.e., the posterity of Adam and Eve]... there will be a remedy, but for you [i.e., the serpent] there will be no remedy; and they are to make peace in the end, in the days of the King Messiah” (M. Maher, *Pseudo-Jonathan*, 3:15, pp. 27-28); cf. *Targum Yerushalmi* (J. W. Etheridge, Onkelos).

25 1 *Corinthians* 15:25-26.

26 J. Smith, Jr., *Teachings*, 14 May 1843, p. 297. See also 17 May 1843, p. 301; 21 May 1843, p. 305.

27 L. E. Dahl *et al.*, *Lectures*, 7:9, p. 98. See also 7:16, p. 101. Note that authorship of the *Lectures* is uncertain.

28 = candidate for baptism.

29 G. A. Anderson, *Perfection*, pp. 183-184.

30 *Ibid.*, p. 184.

31 *Ibid.*, p. 131.

32 For additional discussion, see V. P. Hamilton, *Genesis*, pp. 197-200. See also J. M. Bradshaw, *God's Image*, pp. 96, 661ff.

33 H. W. Nibley, *Patriarchy*, pp. 89-90.

---

34 U. Cassuto, *Adam to Noah*, p. 165.

35 Moses 8:25.

36 Moses 5:11; 2 Nephi 2:23.

37 J. H. Sailhamer, *Genesis*, p. 26. See Romans 8:22; cf. Matthew 24:8.

38 Moses 4:22.

39 J. H. Sailhamer, *Genesis*, p. 58; cf. B. T. Arnold, *Genesis 2009*, pp. 70-71. See J. M. Bradshaw, *God's Image*, pp. 266, 374.

40 M. Herbert *et al.*, *Irish Apocrypha*, p. 6.

41 V. P. Hamilton, *Genesis*, p. 202; cf. H. W. Nibley, *Patriarchy*; G. J. Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, pp. 81-82. Contrast the implausible suggestion that “rule over” be translated “rule with” (R. Benson, *Marriage*, pp. 72-73; V. M. Hudson *et al.*, *Response*, p. 332 n. 62). After having seriously considered this suggestion, RoseAnn Benson eventually abandons the effort to make the Hebrew text agree with the idea of a happy partnership between husband and wife in the fallen world, in the realization that every other occurrence the term is translated “rule over,” the most frequent exemplar being the case of a king ruling over his subjects (R. Benson, *Marriage*, pp. 72-73). The key to understanding this verse is to see that the corresponding strengths of Adam and Eve—the latter having been endowed from the beginning with a “power equal to man” (R. D. Freedman, *Woman*; cf. J. E. Rockwood, *Redemption of Eve*, p. 16; D. R. Seely, *What Does It Mean*)—have now been turned away from their originally-intended, mutually-fortifying purpose. The tragic result is an equal match of opposing wills, each one contending for domination over the other.

The same Hebrew terms for “desire” and “rule” that describe the tendency for marriage relationships in a fallen world to deteriorate into a state of competition and rancor reappear in God’s warning to Cain: “Satan desireth to have thee. . . And thou shalt rule over him” (Moses 5:23). The meaning is clear: Unless Cain is willing to make his escape from the bands of wickedness, he will be eternally locked together with Satan in the utterly destructive embrace of unrighteous dominion (see D&C 121:39, 2 Nephi 4:18, and Alma 5:7, 10). Additionally, Cassuto notes that the Hebrew term used for the verb in “bruise his heel” (Moses 4:21) comes from a stem that is cognate with “desire” as it is used in the same verse (U. Cassuto, *Adam to Noah*, p. 161), thus evoking the mortal danger Cain will court if he capitulates to Satan’s craving to wound him, and also perhaps suggesting that he must act quickly to crush his opponent. This latter idea is consistent with Hamilton’s translation of the final clause of Moses 5:23: “you, you are to master it!” (V. P. Hamilton, *Genesis*, p. 228).

42 L. A. McKinlay, *Patriarchal Order*.

43 Cited in E. England, *Church*, p. 4.

---

44 J. R. Holland, *Souls*.

45 S. W. Kimball, *Teachings* 1982, 26 February 1977, p. 315.

46 S. W. Kimball, *Blessings*, p. 72.

47 S. W. Kimball, *Teachings* 1982, May 1976, p. 315. The qualifier “in love and righteousness” is added to the word “preside” in the *The Family: A Proclamation to the World* (G. B. Hinckley *et al.*, *The family: A proclamation to the world. Proclamation of the First Presidency and the Council of the Twelve presented at the General Relief Society Meeting, September 23, 1995*).

48 B. C. Hafen, *Covenant*, pp. 175-176, 177.

49 H. W. Nibley, *Patriarchy*, p. 93.

50 M. C. Thomas, *Women*, pp. 54, 55, 56. Elder Bruce C. Hafen also discusses the importance of husbands and wives becoming interdependent, equal partners in marriage, as contrasted with the ideas of independence or dependence. See B. C. Hafen, *Covenant*, p. 174; B. C. Hafen *et al.*, *Crossing*, p. 26.

51 Moses 2:24. See additional discussion in J. M. Bradshaw, *God's Image*, pp. 184-185.

52 N. M. Sarna, *Genesis*, p. 23. See also A. J. Heschel, *Heavenly Torah*, pp. 190-193.

53 E.g., *Jeremiah* 1:6. See V. P. Hamilton, *Genesis*, p. 181.

54 J. E. Rockwood, *Eve's Role*, pp. 59-60.

55 *Genesis* 2:24.

56 W. Shakespeare, *Much Ado*, 2:1:59, p. 338.

57 J. Smith, Jr., *Teachings*, 22 January 1834, p. 60. Brigham Young is reported to have said that although “there was no law in heaven or on earth that would compel a woman to stay with a man either in time or eternity,” “all those evil traditions and afflictions or passions that haunt the mind in this life will all be done away in the resurrection. You will find then that any man who gets a glory and exaltation will be so beautiful that any woman will be willing to have him, if it was right. . . [A]ll those evils will vanish to which we are subject in this life” (W. Woodruff, *Waiting*, 2 June 1857, p. 194, spelling and punctuation modernized).

58 D&C 121:39.

59 E.g., G. B. Hinckley, *Women*, pp. 100-101; G. B. Hinckley, *Teachings* 1997, November 1991 and 29 January 1984, pp. 1-2, 322-323, 326; G. B. Hinckley, 4 October 1998, pp. 211-212; G. B. Hinckley, 6 April 2002, pp. 127-131; G. B. Hinckley, 3 October 2004, pp. 260-263.

---

60 J. E. Talmage, *Eternity of Sex*.

61 See J. M. Bradshaw, *God's Image*, p. 253.

62 Moses 4:22-25; D&C 122:7.

63 E.g., Moses 4:27; 5:5-9; 6:64-65.