

# ***Old Testament Commentary***

***John Kimball***  
***messages@messagesinabottle.org***

***Copyright © 2026 by John Kimball***

***This work is licensed under a Creative Commons  
Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0  
International License.***

***To view a copy of this license, visit:  
<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>***

# ***Table of Contents***

Introduction	1
Genesis 1	9
Genesis 2	59
Genesis 3	102
Genesis 4	155

*And thou hast made us that we could write but little, because of the awkwardness of our hands. Behold, thou hast not made us mighty in writing like unto the brother of Jared, for thou madest him that the things which he wrote were mighty even as thou art, unto the overpowering of man to read them. Ether 12:24*

Biblical and pictographic Hebrew are, I imagine, not overpowering in the way that the language of the brother of Jared is, but I think of this verse regarding my study of the Old Testament in Hebrew because of how powerful the language is compared with any translation. This study provides me with thoughts to struggle with, revelation, and the desire to receive more revelation to understand better the things of God.

I hope one day to have the opportunity to go beyond Hebrew, or rather before Hebrew in time, to the pure Adamic tongue and read the words of the brother of Jared and the words of others that are reserved for a future time when the House of Israel rejects the precepts of men and believes to a greater degree in Jesus Christ. Until that time I enjoy very much my study of the Old Testament in Hebrew.

*And these things have I written, which are a lesser part of the things which he taught the people; and I have written them to the intent that they may be brought again unto this people, from the Gentiles, according to the words which Jesus hath spoken.*

*And when they shall have received this, which is expedient that they should have first, to try their faith, and if it shall so be that they shall believe these things then shall the greater things be made manifest unto them.*

*And if it so be that they will not believe these things, then shall the greater things be withheld from them, unto their condemnation.*

3 Nephi 26:8-10

\*\*\*\*\*

*Come unto me, O ye Gentiles, and I will show unto you the greater*

*things, the knowledge which is hid up because of unbelief.*

*Come unto me, O ye house of Israel, and it shall be made manifest unto you how great things the Father hath laid up for you, from the foundation of the world; and it hath not come unto you, because of unbelief.*

*Behold, when ye shall rend that veil of unbelief which doth cause you to remain in your awful state of wickedness, and hardness of heart, and blindness of mind, then shall the great and marvelous things which have been hid up from the foundation of the world from you—yea, when ye shall call upon the Father in my name, with a broken heart and a contrite spirit, then shall ye know that the Father hath remembered the covenant which he made unto your fathers, O house of Israel.*

*And then shall my revelations which I have caused to be written by my servant John be unfolded in the eyes of all the people. Remember, when ye see these things, ye shall know that the time is at hand that they shall be made manifest in very deed. Ether 4:13-16*

\*\*\*\*\*

*Wherefore, because of the things which are sealed up, the things which are sealed shall not be delivered in the day of the wickedness and abominations of the people. Wherefore the book shall be kept from them.*

*And the day cometh that the words of the book which were sealed shall be read upon the house tops; and they shall be read by the power of Christ; and all things shall be revealed unto the children of men which ever have been among the children of men, and which ever will be even unto the end of the earth. 2 Nephi 27:8, 11*

Strictly with regard to language alone, biblical and, even more, pictographic Hebrew are as close as I have experienced in written language to what I envision a Urim and Thummim must offer. The

words Urim and Thummim are transliterations of two Hebrew words, which may be understood as *lights* and *completions*, which I think of as a process of receiving light and the opportunity to progress from grace to grace, or light to light and completion to completion, until the perfect or complete day. Hebrew can provide different light at different times and in different ways to a reader who is progressing on a path with changing needs and increasing understanding. Thus, different interpretations of and insights into the same word do not have to be contradictory but rather are often beautifully and profoundly complementary. For this reason, I prefer the phrase *may be understood as* or other similar phrases rather than *means* when writing about Hebrew words in the Bible, which I don't want to limit in meaning.

As far as English goes, I use the King James Version with the Joseph Smith Translation, mostly because I think the language is beautiful, and I am not in favor of scripture that is modernized without revelation. I recognize that the same criticism can be made of the King James Version. As Origen, a Christian scholar and theologian, wrote in the third century AD about scriptural manuscripts far earlier than the King James Version:

*Today the fact is evident, that there are many differences in the manuscripts, either through the negligence of certain copyists, or the perverse audacity of some in correcting the text.* Daniel-Rops, L'Eglise des Apotres et des Martyrs, p 313n.

All translations are problematic and should be read with the spirit of revelation and prophecy, and I use the JST King James Version for English reference, based on its prophetic review and translation by Joseph Smith.

I do not write this commentary as a scholar or as any kind of authority, but instead as an exercise in trying to understand eternal truths for myself in as profound a way as I am able to receive them from God. I do not aim to be comprehensive or impose expectations or structure

onto myself, but rather I hope to enjoy the freedom of focusing on whatever inspires me each time I study and write, including what may be considered tangential, but which I feel is relevant enough to include.

Mostly, I hope to write something that will connect me to my descendants in a meaningful way. My thoughts on the purpose of life and on family have evolved through my life, and more and more I believe in the eternal nature and importance of families in a very literal, and practical way. As Lorenzo Snow states, as recorded in *Collected Discourses*, comp. Brian H. Stuy, 5 vols, [1987-92], 3:364:

*If you succeed in passing through these trials and afflictions and receive a resurrection, you will, by the power of the Priesthood, work and labor, as the son of God has, until you get all your sons and daughters in the path of exaltation and glory. This is just as sure as that the sun rose this morning over yonder mountains. Therefore, mourn not because all your sons and daughters do not follow in the path that you have marked out to them, or give heed to your counsels. Inasmuch as we succeed in securing eternal glory, and stand as saviors, and as kings and priests to our God, we will save our posterity.*

Finally, I hope to prepare myself to believe in and sustain whatever God requires and does in the future. I believe that the seemingly insurmountable challenges that now face the world and the church will be met and overcome in large part through more of the word of God.

*For in that day, for my sake shall the Father work a work, which shall be a great and a marvelous work among them; and there shall be among them those who will not believe it, although a man shall declare it unto them.*

*But behold, the life of my servant shall be in my hand; therefore they shall not hurt him, although he shall be marred because of them. Yet I will heal him, for I will show unto them that my wisdom is greater than the cunning of the devil.*

*Therefore it shall come to pass that whosoever will not believe in my words, who am Jesus Christ, which the Father shall cause him to bring forth unto the Gentiles, and shall give unto him power that he shall bring them forth unto the Gentiles, (it shall be done even as Moses said) they shall be cut off from among my people who are of the covenant. 3 Nephi 21:9-11*

Concerning the writings of the brother of Jared, John, and those of others, including more of the words of Jesus Christ Himself, that are still to come forth, I believe that a great purpose they will have in the future is the same that the Word has always had from the beginning—transmission of God’s infinite power to create and save for those able to believe in Jesus Christ, rejecting the precepts of men, and exercising faith sufficient to bear a celestial law, loving God before all else, loving neighbor not just in word, but in deed, ultimately living the most fundamental of celestial principles such as taking care of the poor both physically and in terms of care, value, and true charity in the body of Christ so that there are no poor physically or spiritually, and in this way taking part in the establishment of Zion.

I believe that this dispensation is comprised of two great spiritual phases: first, the gathering of Israel in the times of the Gentiles, and second, continued gathering, including physical gathering to the New Jerusalem and the establishment of Zion, as the Gospel goes in power from the Gentiles to the House of Israel, including all those who repent, are meek, believe in Jesus Christ, and are numbered among the House of Israel, all in preparation to receive the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

These two great sequential spiritual phases may be understood in the context of the universal temple pattern as the world and wilderness comprising the first phase and the Promised Land coming out of the wilderness as the second phase, to use Exodus symbolism, with the distinction between these two steps in progression being an increase in humility, belief in Jesus Christ, charity, full consecration, and the

resulting blessing of the Lord's presence. Everything included in the gathering in the times of the Gentiles is preparatory to receiving the presence of the Lord, and everything associated with the physical gathering and establishment of Zion when the Gospel goes from the Gentiles to the House of Israel involves the great blessing of being one and abiding in the Lord's presence continually.

*The spirit of Elias is first, Elijah second, and Messiah last. Elias is a forerunner to prepare the way, and the spirit and power of Elijah is to come after, holding the keys of power, building the Temple to the capstone, placing the seals of the Melchizedek Priesthood upon the house of Israel, and making all things ready; then Messiah comes to His Temple, which is last of all. TPJS 340*

These two spiritual phases follow a sequential Joseph to Moses pattern, just as in ancient times, and, again, in both cases an outpouring of revelation is essential. The beginning of this dispensation with the Gospel restored through the prophet Joseph Smith includes much revelation, particularly the Book of Mormon, which is the *keystone of our religion*. These are the times of the Gentiles, as is recorded in Doctrine and Covenants 45:28-30:

*And when the times of the Gentiles is come in, a light shall break forth among them that sit in darkness, and it shall be the fulness of my gospel;*

*But they receive it not; for they perceive not the light, and they turn their hearts from me because of the precepts of men.*

*And in that generation shall the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.*

The Moses period, when the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled, and when the Gospel goes in power to the House of Israel who are the covenant people of the Lord, brings more revelation, including the piercing of the veil as those who are able to live the celestial law abide in and enjoy the presence of the Lord.

*And also that a feast of fat things might be prepared for the poor; yea, a feast of fat things, of wine on the lees well refined, that the earth may know that the mouths of the prophets shall not fail;*

*Yea, a supper of the house of the Lord, well prepared, unto which all nations shall be invited.*

*First, the rich and the learned, the wise and the noble;*

*And after that cometh the day of my power; then shall the poor, the lame, and the blind, and the deaf, come in unto the marriage of the Lamb, and partake of the supper of the Lord, prepared for the great day to come. Doctrine and Covenants 58:8-11*

\*\*\*\*\*

*Therefore, I will proceed to do a marvelous work among this people, yea, a marvelous work and a wonder, for the wisdom of their wise and learned shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent shall be hid.*

*And the meek also shall increase, and their joy shall be in the Lord, and the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel.  
2 Nephi 27:26,30*

\*\*\*\*\*

*Behold, I say unto you, the redemption of Zion must needs come by power;*

*Therefore, I will raise up unto my people a man, who shall lead them like as Moses led the children of Israel.*

*For ye are the children of Israel, and of the seed of Abraham, and ye must needs be led out of bondage by power, and with a stretched-out arm.*

*And as your fathers were led at the first, even so shall the redemption*

*of Zion be.*

*Therefore, let not your hearts faint, for I say not unto you as I said unto your fathers: Mine angel shall go up before you, but not my presence.*

*But I say unto you: Mine angels shall go up before you, and also my presence, and in time ye shall possess the goodly land. Doctrine and Covenants 103:15-20*

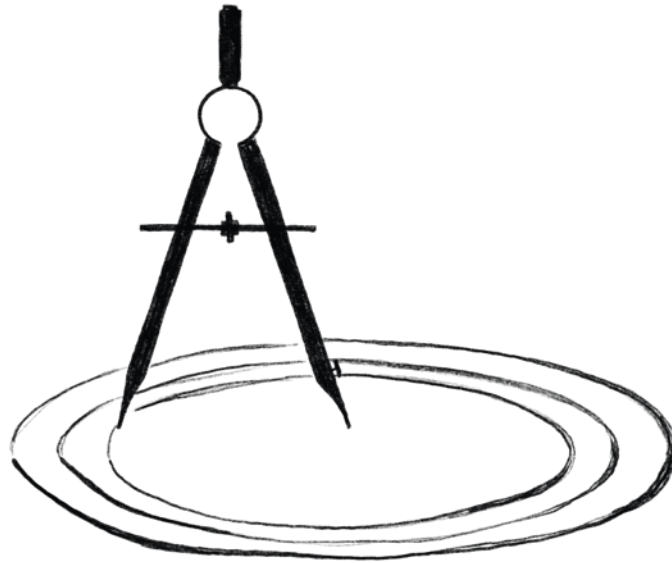
\*\*\*\*\*

*And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant, which I made unto thy father Enoch; that, when men should keep all my commandments, Zion should again come on the earth, the city of Enoch which I have caught up unto myself.*

*And this is mine everlasting covenant, that when thy posterity shall embrace the truth, and look upward, then shall Zion look downward, and all the heavens shall shake with gladness, and the earth shall tremble with joy;*

*And the general assembly of the church of the firstborn shall come down out of heaven, and possess the earth, and shall have place until the end come. And this is mine everlasting covenant, which I made with thy father Enoch. JST Genesis 9:21-23*

## Genesis One



What does the word universe mean and how is the concept of a universe related to the creative process? Universe may be understood as *one turn*, and may be viewed as one complete turn of a compass in the hands of the Creator. It may also be understood as one turn in the circular universal temple pattern from God's presence, through a terrestrial phase of innocence, through a telestial phase of sin and repentance, trial and sacrifice, returning back through a terrestrial, wilderness phase, culminating in a return into the presence of God in a refined, sanctified, consecrated, redeemed condition through faith in His Son. The arc of the creation, or in other words the entirety of the universe, drawn with the compass in the hands of the Creator is dependent on and determined by the fixed point of the compass, the point that does not move—the sure foundation of Jesus Christ—Creator and Redeemer.

\*\*\*\*\*

Christ is more than the best man who ever lived on this earth, infinitely more. In a universe that is infinite, with innumerable children of the Father and innumerable creations, Christ is alone in His infinite and eternal goodness, like His Father in every way.

Born into mortality by His mother Mary, He was the Only Begotten Son of the Father, and through that parentage He possessed power over death as a birthright from His Father. This is a birthright that He never relinquished through the commission of sin, even when He faced all temptation, all sin, and every pain, affliction, and death.

His sacrifice was not a human sacrifice. As Amulek states, recorded in Alma 34:10:

*For it is expedient that there should be a great and last sacrifice; yea, not a sacrifice of man, neither of beast, neither of any manner of fowl; for it shall not be a human sacrifice; but it must be an infinite and eternal sacrifice.*

His was the sacrifice of a God, being able to suffer all things, being willing to suffer all things in obedience to His Father and with charity for His brothers and sisters. He is recorded as saying in John 10:17-18:

*Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again.*

*No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.*

Death did not overcome Him. He overcame death. Sin did not overcome Him. He overcame sin. He did not die by crucifixion, but having accomplished all, He voluntarily lay down His life, saying as is recorded in John 19:30:

*...It is finished:*

And as is recorded in Luke 23:46:

*...Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost.*

Three days later He returned to the tomb and raised up His own body glorified and renewed through His own power in the first resurrection of all of His Father's children and creations. While all of His creations will be resurrected, He is the Resurrection, and the Life—the Power through which all have immortality and can receive eternal lives.

His judgment was singular as well, as He ascended to His Father without mediation in a homecoming unparalleled and indescribable in its glory and fullness of joy.

\*\*\*\*\*

The first verse of Genesis one is more of an overview than a starting point, the creation being described after that in the rest of the first two chapters. *In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.* And, then, successive verses detail this process.

The second word of verse one in Hebrew is very important in how it may be understood and in its links to related words that provide additional insight. This word, translated as *created*, is closely related to words translated as *blessing, covenant, and healing*, and pictographically can be seen as *nourishing and fattening*.

Through the creation, God blesses His creations in a covenanting process that binds God to them and them to Him based upon how His creations keep the covenant. Rather than being a creation from nothing, the creation is a process of organizing, blessing, and increasing agency in already existing, eternal intelligences and matter based upon eternal principles of truth possessed and lived fully by God that bless His creations, allowing them to return, forgiven, renewed,

sanctified, and magnified through the Son to the Father, inheriting eternal lives and a fullness of joy. All created beings who exercise faith in Jesus Christ through repentance and keeping binding covenants are saved by His grace.

Different insights come by thinking of this verse while substituting in some of the above meanings: For instance, *In the beginning God blessed or healed or covenanted with the heaven and the earth.* Then as a comparison, in what other instances in the Old Testament does God bless or heal or covenant with His children and for what purpose and with what effect?

For example, in Isaiah:

*From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it: but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment.*

.....

*Therefore saith the Lord, the Lord of hosts, the mighty One of Israel, Ah, I will ease me of mine adversaries, and avenge me of mine enemies:*

*And I will turn my hand upon thee, and purely purge away thy dross, and take away all thy tin:*

*And I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counsellors as at the beginning: afterward thou shalt be called, The city of righteousness, the faithful city.*

*Zion shall be redeemed with judgment, and her converts with righteousness. Isaiah 1:6, 24-27*

This contrasts a state of decay and evil, just as is the condition in the darkness, emptiness, and chaos in the beginning before the creation, with the creative and redeeming power of God.

How may the creation be viewed as a covenanting process? The creation, although preceding the great atoning sacrifice of the Son in chronological sequence from a mortal perspective, is founded on the Son as the sure foundation. All created beings in whatever mortal time can look to Christ and live, with sure expectation, through their faith in Him, of salvation, from the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

*...thou art in the similitude of mine Only Begotten; and mine Only Begotten is and shall be the Savior, for he is full of grace and truth...*  
Moses 1:6 (Emphasis added)

This sure expectation and faith is foundational to the creation, which is based on covenant with God who at all times is and will be mighty to save and fulfill all His promises. Eternal existences, dwelling in darkness, must willingly receive creation, receiving light and life from God. These blessings cannot be forced upon them. The alternative to receiving creation and salvation from the one true God is to remain in darkness and receive any number of false forms of salvation from false gods, just as this is the continually available alternative in this mortal life.

Another way to look at creation is as an act of nourishing or fattening with increased capacity, character, and agency. The pictographic Hebrew of the verb root translated as *to create* is:



A two-symbol parent root in this word is from right to left the picture of a house followed by the picture of a man's head. This parent root suggests a *house or family of heads*, as in a head of wheat or barley. The sound of this parent root is *bar*, as in the English words barley or barn, which are derived from this ancient Semitic root. Added to this parent root is the bull's head, and the combined symbols may be understood as *grain being fed to a bull for the purpose of nourishing or fattening it*. The bull also represents God, and as the first letter in the

alphabet, it may represent a first or primary position. The word may then also be understood, without contradiction, as the beginning act of nourishment or fattening, or the fattening or nourishment that comes from God through His power of salvation, including both redemptive and enabling power, which nourishes both for survival and for growth and development in capacity, character, and agency.

There are many complementary ways that this word may be understood: Another way of understanding this word is in terms of male and female, and the power of procreation. The house is the first feminine symbol in the alphabet, and the bull as the first masculine symbol in the alphabet, and the connection between the two, in the middle symbol, in this context may indicate the combining or becoming one of the male and female in the beginning. This way of looking at the word is in harmony with the word translated as *God* used in this verse and chapter: Transliterated as *Elohim*, it is plural.




With this as context, the first three words of the English version of Genesis 1:1, *In the beginning*, are translated from one word in Hebrew, depicted in pictographic Hebrew as follows:



There are so many possibilities with this word as with many Hebrew words in the biblical account. An important point is that often words are translated as nouns when they may also be understood as verbs, or vice versa. Or they may be understood as referring to time when they may also refer to place. Or they may include objects, action, time, and place, and even be understood as a story. In general, Hebrew originates from a language construction and way of thinking that is more concrete than abstract, more dynamic than static, and more based on

function than descriptive of appearance.

One way of looking at the above pictographic word is from right to left, *the home of the first, or primary God shines forth or gives light to provide or enable, or to give knowledge for, or to throw towards the end purpose, target, or salvation.* Looking at parent roots lends complementary insight. For instance, the parent root  is associated with sight, having a vision, and revelation.

Is the entire word descriptive of time, or is it a place? Or both? Is it a story? Is it a house of revelation, or temple, and the purposes for that house? And how does how this word is viewed provide context for the second word and the work of creation? Is it important that the first three letters of the first word in Hebrew are also the second word? In that case, one way of understanding the word is *creation, or fattening, pressing or consuming knowledge of or throwing towards the mark, target, or Son.*

Verse two describes conditions before the creation when the earth is formless, confused, empty, chaotic, desolate, vain, void, and filled with darkness. It is interesting that in the creation stories in Genesis, Moses, and Abraham the darkness is described differently in each case. In Genesis darkness *is* upon the face of the deep. In Moses God *caused* darkness to come upon the face of the deep. In Abraham darkness *reigned* upon the face of the deep. These versions show different aspects of God's relationship with darkness and the law of opposition in all things. First, darkness exists independently as a natural state. Second, darkness is allowed to inhabit spheres of existence at certain times and under certain conditions to serve God's purposes for opposition. Finally, where allowed to exist, darkness always acts to gain power, to control, and to reign.

The darkness spoken of in verse two is translated from a Hebrew word that suggests *darkness, obscurity, and secret place.* It can have additional negative connotations such as misery, destruction, sorrow,

ignorance, and death. This Hebrew word comes from a root verb that may be understood as *to darken, hide, conceal, obscure, and confuse.*

שׁלמ

Pictographically, this is a fascinating word. From right to left the first symbol is that of a wall or fence, often referring to outside rather than inside things, secular or worldly things rather than that which is within the covenant. It can also refer to the function of dividing or separating, as for instance it can refer to a divider in the middle of a tent or house that divides male from female. The second symbol can be seen as *two teeth* and may represent functions of teeth in the process of eating, such as pressing or cutting or consuming, or talking. It may also refer to light, and it may be viewed as a crown. The pronunciation of this symbol is *sheen*, and it is the ancient source from which the word *shine* is derived.

These two symbols form a parent root that may be understood as a *binding or silencing of the mouth and of the functions of the mouth*, or as a separation from, or existing outside of light. This relates to the experience Joseph Smith has before his first vision when his tongue is bound, and he is in darkness:

*After I had retired to the place where I had previously designed to go, having looked around me, and finding myself alone, I kneeled down and began to offer up the desires of my heart to God. I had scarcely done so, when immediately I was seized upon by some power which entirely overcame me, and had such an astonishing influence over me as to **bind my tongue so that I could not speak. Thick darkness gathered around me**, and it seemed to me for a time as if I were doomed to sudden destruction. Joseph Smith—History 1:15  
(Emphasis added)*

Combined with the final symbol in this pictographic word, which is the symbol of a hand or palm of a hand, or a cup, or a hand in cupping

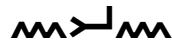
shape, the meaning may involve a degree of acceptance or even of embracing or holding onto the binding of the mouth or separation from light. Nearing the extreme, this acceptance or embracing may involve covenanting with darkness, or in other words, secret combination, and eventually the unpardonable sin of denying the Holy Ghost.

This conceptualization of darkness as being held onto and even embraced is similar to that suggested by the Hebrew word translated as *Egypt*. Rather than being a singular or multiple form word, this word is specifically a dual form word, and dual form words in Hebrew often convey profound, symbolic duality. One way of understanding the Hebrew word translated as *Egypt* is as a dual binding or dual bondage, with the duality being extremely important. The natural condition in the universe is to be subject to bondage and captivity from external oppression, as for beings lacking some degree of knowledge and power there will always be someone with more knowledge and power who can overpower them. In addition to externally imposed captivity, imperfect beings impose captivity on themselves through sin, as they desire and pursue what is not in their self-interest from an enlightened perspective, and through these desires and pursuit miss the mark and choose captivity, just as happens with the enslaved inhabitants of Egypt, Babylon, Assyria, the Great and Spacious Building, and our own modern cultures. Sinful beings are complicit in their own enslavement, willing slaves to systems of oppression that provide the allure and rewards of pride, idolatry, materialism, and anything else that separates sinful beings from God.

*And they said one to another, Let us make a captain, and let us return into Egypt.* Numbers 14:4



The pictographic representation of Egypt may be viewed as a specific application of the element of water



that is either before the creation or in general in an unsaved state of darkness. It may be viewed as a *beginning and virtually universally necessary winding path preparatory to receiving knowledge and salvation*.

One way to view the difference between these two words is by focusing on the characters that are in the pictographic representation of *Egypt* and not in the word translated as *water*. The winding path and man's head may be understood as a *narrow way* or as *pressing in on someone*. They may also be understood as *crooked head*. These two characters are related to and pronounced similarly to the words *Tsar* and *Caesar*, and it is interesting to think of the word translated as *Egypt* as *Tsar* or *Caesar*, or *crooked head*, or *one who presses in on someone, in the water*, as a symbol of oppression in the dualistic element of water and to think of Pharaoh as an oppressor in the midst of static, corrupt Egypt, and subsequently during the Exodus, of the Egyptians in the midst of the dynamic, flowing water as oppressors meeting their destruction.

In both the cases of these words translated as *water* and *Egypt* there is a comforting inclusion of the symbol of the hand or arm extended, providing knowledge and salvation, and a way out, or Exodus.

Viewing the pursuit of symbolic Egypt as a return to sin is a meaningful contrast with the return enabled and desired for us by God, to return to Him. This contrast is the crux of the duality that exists in the terrestrial sphere, which is designed as a sphere of communion, refinement, and progression on the one hand or retreat back into Egypt on the other hand. The choice between these two polar opposite destinations in the terrestrial sphere, except in the case of Christ who spends forty days in the wilderness communing with His Father without the slightest movement away from Him, is a back and forth process based on pursuing desires and receiving according to desires, experiencing joy

and suffering, having a character formed over time, until a return in either direction is complete. The moon as a symbol of the terrestrial sphere is apt in this way as it waxes and wanes in a cyclical pattern. The oppressor and the Redeemer stand at opposite ends of this pattern and spectrum, offering the false salvation of misery and oppression at one end and of liberty and a fullness of joy at the other end:

*And it shall come to pass in that day, that the remnant of Israel, and such as are escaped of the house of Jacob, shall no more again stay upon him that smote them, but shall stay upon the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, in truth.*

*The remnant shall return, yea, even the remnant of Jacob, unto the mighty God.*

*For though thy people Israel be as the sand of the sea, yet a remnant of them shall return; the consumption decreed shall overflow with righteousness.*

*For the Lord God of Hosts shall make a consumption, even determined in all the land.*

*Therefore, thus said the Lord God of Hosts: O my people that dwellest in Zion, be not afraid of the Assyrian; he shall smite thee with a rod, and shall lift up his staff against thee, after the manner of Egypt.*

*For yet a very little while, and the indignation shall cease, and mine anger in their destruction.*

*And the Lord of Hosts shall stir up a scourge for him according to the slaughter of Midian at the rock of Oreb; and as his rod was upon the sea so shall he lift it up after the manner of Egypt.*

*And it shall come to pass in that day that his burden shall be taken away from off thy shoulder, and his yoke from off thy neck, and the yoke shall be destroyed because of the anointing. 2 Nephi 20:20-27.*

In manifestations of symbolic Egypt and in the existence before the

creation a condition of darkness and chaos is the natural state, opposed to truth, progression, and true salvation, in which motives and actions are hidden, concealed, obscured, and confused because they cannot be reconciled with truth and bear the light clarifying and exposing them. Darkness opposes anything that disturbs its static, comfortable condition, again, even if that condition is enslavement and suffering. At the extreme, darkness exists in secret combinations that work to destroy anything of light.

In contrast, secrecy, on the other end of the spectrum, is also a component of God's plan for reasons of sacredness, involving the heavens and represented in the holy of holies in the temple. This contrast of light and dark and protection from intrusion by the other side is an interesting pattern. Each side, or end of the spectrum, at its deepest or most extreme level must remain completely isolated from intrusion by the other or be destroyed. For instance, *no unclean thing can enter into his kingdom* (3 Nephi 27:19) because if that were allowed, darkness would do what it always does—corrupt and seek power, to control and to reign. At the other end of the spectrum, darkness allowing light in at its extreme would lead to exposure and destruction by the light of its twisted self-concept and static condition, and for this reason it cannot allow the least ray of light to penetrate it, and so, darkness flees from or destroys anything containing light. It is interesting to contemplate this in the context of matters such as the unpardonable sin of denying the Holy Ghost, or, in other words, saying that the *sun does not shine while he sees it* (TPJS, 358). At its core, pure evil always involves an extreme degree of cognitive dissonance, or the denial of inherent evil by self, despite self continually working evil, to the extent that anything external to self that bears light must be completely scapegoated, rejected, corrupted, or destroyed in order to eliminate any painful contrast.

*For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd.* John 3:20

One way of looking at pure evil, complete darkness, and the sin of denying the Holy Ghost is as a return from creation and salvation into a former existence of pre-creation darkness and chaos, a complete rejection of the Creator and His creations, of any light and life received formerly—a metaphorical, spiritual return into Egypt that doesn't stop there, but continues into the symbolic land of Nod where Cain dwells after his rejection of and separation from God—a land of wandering in darkness. The sin and the punishment of denying the Holy Ghost are one and the same—complete rejection of God and the light that comes only from Him is axiomatically existence outside of light, or existence in outer darkness.

On the opposite extreme of the spectrum those who are perfected in good must reject evil completely because of evil's insidious, destructive influence. Whether with regard to heaven, Zion, and temples, which are all dedicated to be God's abodes, or bodies, which are designed to receive the spirit of God, great care must be taken to protect against evil influence, primarily by actively receiving and focusing upon light and good.

In these extreme positions of good and evil lies the crux of the battle between light and dark, which manifests itself over and over again, and which exists from the beginning. At the extremes exist complete light or good and complete dark or evil. In the middle but on the same side of the spectrum as the dark is the mob, which is controlled by the dark but is more transitory in nature than pure evil. Despite its somewhat transitory nature it will do the dark's bidding unless a change in its nature occurs. On the other side of the midpoint of the spectrum are the sunshine patriots, which always occupy the key battle ground of the immediate conflict from the perspective of evil and are the most transitory group. These are they for whom the principle that evil can

only triumph when *good* men do nothing pertains<sup>1</sup>. To the degree that the dark controls this group through apathy, fear, idolatry, class structure, the honors of men, other forms of pride, or any other means, evil is in its viewpoint in the best possible position, able at a certain point fully to control a culture and kill the prophets, whether physically or through reducing or eliminating their influence.

Doctrine and Covenants 121:34-46 describes this battle well. How can Satan lead men to trade communion with the Spirit of the Lord and true priesthood and authority for gratification from the rewards of pride, honors, ambitions, control, and power? How can he eliminate as much as possible true spiritual power and influence?

The light has a different perspective and plan based upon revealing and promulgating truth through the word and completely honoring and periodically restoring agency with the purpose of delivering individuals from a mob and sunshine patriot condition into a path of sanctification and eventual perfection. Preserving and restoring agency is, in fact, one of the most fundamental blessings of the Atonement and purposes of the priesthood, and both from before the creation and from the beginning in this world this priesthood purpose is accomplished always beginning with revelation and the word of truth. As is recorded in JST John 1:1:

*In the beginning was the gospel preached through the Son. And the gospel was the word, and the word was with the Son, and the Son was with God, and the Son was of God.*

And in the beginning times in this world God speaks His word through men with the spirit of inspiration or revelation:

---

<sup>1</sup> I do not quote or attribute this principle because I cannot find where Edmund Burke wrote it. Is it possibly a Wrongly Attributed Statement or WAS? The closest sentiment I can find is in Burke's *Thoughts on the Cause of the Present Discontents* where Burke writes *When bad men combine, the good must associate; else they will fall, one by one, an unpitied sacrifice in a contemptible struggle.*" Regardless, I believe the principle I allude to is true.

*And then began these men to call upon the name of the Lord, and the Lord blessed them:*

*And a book of remembrance was kept, in the which was recorded, in the language of Adam, for it was given unto as many as called upon God to write by the spirit of inspiration;*

*And by them their children were taught to read and write, having a language which was pure and undefiled.*

*Now this same Priesthood, which was in the beginning, shall be in the end of the world also. Moses 6:4-7*

The above described spectrum and structure from complete light to complete darkness is also found in the three degrees of glory and outer darkness, and in practical cultural examples throughout history. It is often in times of greatest stress and upheaval that this spectrum is most evident. For example, at the time of the death of Joseph Smith these four groups are clearly distinguishable. Joseph and a few of the faithful, including some who are sent on missions so that they are not present at the martyrdom of Joseph and Hyrum, are at a point of repentance and conversion that allows them to be firm and steadfast in supporting good. There are others of the church or in the world who support him or not based upon the degree of opposition at any given time and murmur or complain with little provocation. The mob clearly exists, and is the principle, immediate instrument in martyring Joseph and Hyrum. Finally, there are those knowledgeable and wholly choosing evil who apply pressure on the sunshine patriots, direct the mob, and orchestrate the martyrdom.

The greatest example of this spectrum is with the condemnation and crucifixion of Christ—the one important distinction being that due to His disciples not yet receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost, and with John the Baptist already martyred, Christ is virtually without support among mortal beings at the time of His atoning sacrifice in this part of the world.

*Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me. John 16:32*

Returning to verse two of Genesis one, darkness exists upon the face of the deep, which contains more and deeper darkness within the deep.



The Hebrew word translated as *the deep* is related to bodies of water but may also be related to the abyss and the grave, showing the depth of the darkness at its extreme and condition of spiritual stasis and death. This word is linked to root verbs that can be understood as *to murmur, discomfort, roar, put in motion, confuse, disturb, and destroy*. The first two symbols of this word, the cross and the man with his arms raised, as a parent root are often understood as *waste*. With the third symbol, the tent pole often being understood as *securing or connecting*, and the last symbol an image of water, the word may be understood as *waste linked to water*, or as it is tied to depth, *water that is stagnant and unclean*.

I believe strongly that there is another way to view this word, involving another way of understanding the characters that, for obvious reasons, has not been passed down and used commonly in interpretation and commentary. As context, there is a tradition or belief that there is a code within the Torah that if understood yields deeper, greater truths. This bible code is often perceived or expected to be mysterious or complicated, beyond the comprehension of humanity except for those able to reach a certain degree of mystical enlightenment, or, alternatively to be a matter of discovering just the right understanding of Gematria, which is an assignment of numeric values to Hebrew letters to find additional meaning in words and links between words sharing the same numeric values. My belief is that a true bible code is much more simple and involves looking at the record with the spirit of prophecy and revelation, being able to understand holy, ancient symbolism as

pointing towards and testifying of Jesus Christ with all other truth and symbolism being tied into that understanding.

The symbol of the man with arms outstretched may symbolize Christ, rather than the traditional understanding of the symbol as expressing astonishment or excitement, and doing so often results in a deeper understanding of words containing that symbol. The first symbol is another symbol that can be tied to Christ, as it may be understood as a cross, which is complementary to the traditional way of viewing it as a mark, target, or sign. This understanding of these two symbols opens up so much more depth and insight into this word translated as *the deep*: Is it *Christ secured to the cross, descending below all things*? Is it the power of Jesus Christ as a result of His infinite and eternal sacrifice to secure that life which is symbolized by and contained in the water? Is it contradictory or complementary to other meanings outlined? One way of understanding this meaning as complementary lies in the truth that Christ descends below all things both in His suffering and in His searching out and saving whomever will hear His voice and receive salvation. Considering the word from this perspective, the tent pole may be viewed as a vertical link, or securing device, from Christ to those in the depths of darkness as He reaches down to find, secure, and draw out existences in captivity there, represented by the letter and pictographic symbol associated with water.

Water appears as a key component of nature and of the creation from the beginning. The Hebrew word translated as *water* is a dual form word that may be understood as not only water but is related to violence, danger, transitory things, death, and on the other side of the duality refreshment, cleansing, life, and rebirth. The pictographic word translated as *water* illustrates this duality as it can be understood as a picture of surrounding water with an arm and hand reaching down in the middle to provide salvation.



The connection between water and the deep and these negative and positive dualities is significant as is shown symbolically in the ordinance of baptism, which is a symbolic representation of these connections and dualities as baptism by immersion in water symbolizes both death and ensuing rebirth and cleansing. Water is a constant element of birth and rebirth, whether it be at this early point in the creation, later in the rebirth or recreation with the flood, at physical birth, or with the rebirth of baptism. In the creation the water, and the deep in particular, represent the natural state, a state of chaos, violence, danger, and transition from which existences are born to a relationship with their Creator who lovingly hovers over the face of the waters with the purpose of saving or drawing them out. Interestingly the name Moses is often seen as *to be drawn out* and is part of Moses' life as a type of the temple pattern:

*And the child grew, and she brought him unto Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. And she called his name Moses: and she said, Because I drew him out of the water. Exodus 2:10*

Moses is literally or symbolically drawn out of water, violence, and darkness and saved from death by the Lord at this time, as well as two more times during his life, when he first leaves Egypt, and when he and the children of Israel are saved from the Egyptians at the crossing of the Red Sea as he leaves Egypt the second time. His life may be seen as following the three temple phases in forty year increments each beginning with one of these events of salvation, beginning with salvation from physical death in Egypt, continuing with rejection of and salvation from Egypt and exodus into the wilderness, and culminating in spiritually passing through the veil and communion with God, or, in other words, the blessings of the Promised Land (for the children of Israel this third phase is the wilderness, but Moses is continually in God's presence during this period of time, and so is personally in a promised land association with God).

The Hebrew word translated as *spirit* has many traditional meanings, among them being: *wind, breath, mind, spirit, animation, life, vigor,*

*prophetic spirit, gift of God, and desire.* It is linked to the root verb to *smell*, which is fitting as the spirit is generally unseen and moves through the air or wind. The first use of this root verb in the Bible is in Genesis 8:21, which begins as follows with both words that are linked to the root verb in bold:

*And the Lord **smelled** a sweet **savour**;* (Emphasis added)

This is the Lord's reaction to Noah offering sacrifice according to the commandment given to Adam and Eve by the Lord, as He smells the smoke and receives the ordinance and covenant from Noah and his family.

*And Noah builded an altar unto the Lord; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar.*  
Genesis 8:20

The pictographic word translated as *spirit* is a man's head, a tent pole, and a fence or wall.

𐤍𐤃𐤏

One way of understanding the symbols is as a *first or primary securing of separation*, or as *man secures separation*. It is interesting to think of this way of understanding the symbols in connection with the ways the word is translated, listed above. Spirit, desire, and the spirit of prophecy (or testimony of Jesus), for example, universally separate existences, including exodus to liberty and promised lands for those with righteous desires.

The Hebrew word translated as *moved* involves a sense of hovering in softness, tender love, and cherishing.

𐤍𐤃𐤏

Pictographically, the middle symbol of the root verb of this word may be understood as involving a wall or fence as a separating component, in

this case forming a protective covering with the last symbol being a mouth, which in this context may represent those requiring nourishment, strength, and salvation. As a parent root these two symbols are often associated with a bird covering a nest, in the same sense of protection, nourishment, and salvation, and represent an eternal pattern of Christ continually hovering over and reaching down to save, as in the following:

*O ye house of Israel whom I have spared, how oft will I gather you as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, if ye will repent and return unto me with full purpose of heart. 3 Nephi 10:6*

The spirit moves upon the face of the waters with compassionate desire to save and with all other characteristics necessary to influence and separate out existences attracted to light and truth.

From the perspective of existences requiring salvation, the symbolism of the nest and the winged Savior is also manifest in the symbolism of the fiery, flying serpent, mentioned throughout the scriptures as a symbol of salvation, and that continues to symbolize salvation in modern times as with the medical doctor's symbol, the Rod of Aesculapius, the ancient mythical Greek god of medicine, which certainly derives from more ancient sources, such as that recorded in Numbers 21:8-9:

*And the Lord said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live.*

*And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived.*

Verse three is the first time God speaks, saying: *Let there be light.* This is on the first day of the creation with the sun and moon and stars not being created until the fourth day of the creation. It is important to

note that the first day of creation is wholly dedicated to light. The word translated as *light* here in Hebrew is comprehensive of all kinds and applications of light. This light is the light of truth, and it is embodied in and emanates from God. The account of the days of the creation does not speak of the creation of heaven other than possibly this first day, although this day may also apply wholly to the creation of the things of the earth through heavenly light, the light of Christ. In any case, God creates heaven first as an abode, filled with the light and truth with which He is filled and as a pattern and source of light for all subsequent creations.

*... This is the light of Christ. As also he is in the sun, and the light of the sun, and the power thereof by which it was made.*

*As also he is in the moon, and is the light of the moon, and the power thereof by which it was made;*

*As also the light of the stars, and the power thereof by which they were made;*

*And the earth also, and the power thereof, even the earth upon which you stand.*

*And the light which shineth, which giveth you light, is through him who enlighteneth your eyes, which is the same light that quickeneth your understandings;*

*Which light proceedeth forth from the presence of God to fill the immensity of space--*

*The light which is in all things, which giveth life to all things, which is the law by which all things are governed, even the power of God who sitteth upon his throne, who is in the bosom of eternity, who is in the midst of all things. Doctrine and Covenants 88:7-13.*



The pictographic Hebrew word translated as *light* includes the symbols from right to left of the head of a bull, followed by a tent pole, followed by a man's head. The head of the bull is the first letter in the alphabet and is associated with God and with strength. The tent pole provides connection and secures objects together. The man's head often refers to a primary role, either in time or importance. One way of looking at this pictographic Hebrew word translated as *light* is that *God binds, gives structure, and secures from the beginning and as the foundation of all things*. How does He do this? He does it through being full of and acting continually in light and truth. The tent pole, with its meaning of securing, also may refer to the Atonement of Christ, and another complementary way of understanding this pictographic Hebrew word is as *God secured from the beginning, or the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world* (Revelation 13:8). Finally, the word may be understood as *God connecting, nourishing, and securing all lesser beings, as represented by man*.



In verse four God sees that the light is good, and the pictographic Hebrew word translated as *good* reinforces the nature and purpose of light in nourishing and saving. The first character is a basket or other type of container. This is followed by the tent pole and the home. Together, in sequence, these symbols represent action more than trait or appearance—an active securing to the home of what is in the basket, or a continual, active pursuit of bringing home nourishment and those in need of nourishment, protection, and salvation. It is this active, eternal pursuit and activity that is good.

Heaven and earth are at this point completely opposite in terms of light, one filled with light, one filled initially with darkness, emptiness, and lack of form and subsequently returning to that state of darkness and chaos left to its own nature, receiving light only from God, yet with existences capable of receiving salvation.

These verses about light in Genesis 1:3-5 and the beginning of the creation they describe may be viewed as an instance of the preaching of the gospel. *In the beginning was the gospel preached through the Son...* JST John 1:1. Or as Joseph Smith teaches:

*God himself, finding he was in the midst of spirits and glory, because he was more intelligent, saw proper to institute laws whereby the rest could have a privilege to advance like himself.* Joseph Smith, King Follet Discourse.

This pattern of contrast in nature and provision of salvation occurs repeatedly in different times and manifestations in terms of spirit and light from God and water, and what water represents—for example with the renewal after the flood, Jesus calling his apostles to be fishers of men, baptism by immersion, etc.

God divides light from darkness, as one of many instances of or even a continual pattern of separation, including waters from waters, water from earth, day from night, clean from unclean animals, Enoch and his people from the wicked, etc. When separation is based upon righteousness God makes divisions to bring clarity, provide choice, and offer mercy, protection, restoration, and salvation.



The pictographic Hebrew word translated as *divided* includes the parent root of the house or tent followed by the door. This is where the father of the house often sits to watch over the family and to watch for approaching strangers and danger. It is a point of separation, in this case from a protected home and all that which can be outside the home. This principle is fundamental to the creation, where God watches over, and separates as part of the work of salvation. The pictographic word ends with the shepherd's staff, which may be understood to reinforce the Lord's involvement in the process of separation as a saving work.

At the end of the first day it becomes clear that each day progresses from sunset to sunset, marking the transition from light to dark to begin a new cycle of symbolic death, refreshment, renewal, and preparation for the return of light. In this way darkness in this cycle closely parallels the dual nature and role of water and ideally has a similar complementary relationship with light.

מַיָּוֶה

The pictographic Hebrew word translated as *day* can be seen as *throwing a line on the water*, as at the end of the day the sun reflects on a line on the surface of the Mediterranean or other body of water from the sun at the horizon in the West to an observer in the East. The sun is casting its last light of the day, or revelation, to the receiver in the East, across the water as it has followed throughout the day the direction of return to the presence of God in the temple pattern from East to West.

לַיָּוֶה

The pictographic Hebrew word translated as *night* is a shepherd's staff, followed by an arm and hand, followed by another shepherd's staff, followed by the man with arms outstretched. This word is related to a root that I believe provides insight into the nature and purpose of the night. The root word,

לַיָּוֶה

in pictographic Hebrew, is also visually meaningful in the biblical and modern Hebrew form

לַיָּוֶה

This word appears only once in the Bible, in 1 Kings 6:8, translated as *winding stairs*:

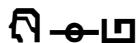
*The door for the middle chamber was in the right side of the house: and they went up with **winding stairs** into the middle chamber, and out of the middle into the third. (Emphasis added)*

In the pictographic Hebrew the two shepherd's staffs may be understood as pulling around the pole in a spiraling pattern, and in the biblical Hebrew the beginning and ending letter have a form similar in appearance to stairs. These winding stairs of Solomon's temple are constructed as a spiral through the three levels of chambers adjacent to the wall of the temple on the south. In general, the spiral form is important and present throughout nature as the golden or natural spiral and is the primary structure and pattern of growth and regeneration in nature. The night ideally follows this structure and pattern as it provides refreshment and regeneration physically and spiritually through the watches of the night to the fourth watch as the spiral gradually opens to receive the light of the new day, or in other parallel imagery, the pictographic Hebrew word translated as *night* begins with the winding stairs opening up and receiving the symbol of the man with arms outstretched, or Christ. This is interesting in terms of the fourth watch, and highlights the importance of finding those times, places, and conditions in which a person may most fruitfully listen for the voice of the Lord.



The Hebrew word translated as *evening* may be understood as *to grow dark*, and the beginning of each creative period starts with an existing condition of, or the introduction and increase of dark. The pictographic Hebrew word includes a parent root of the man's head followed by the tent or home, representing the family. The symbols suggest the *head of the tent, home, or family*, or in other words as the *master*. This parent root is found in words like *rabbi*, which means *my master*, and is used to denote greatness of number, strength, and authority. With the symbol of the eye preceding this parent root, the word can be visualized

as the act of looking to the head of the family or the master, which occurs as members of the family return home in the evening and report on their activities of the day to the head of the family. Combined with the ideal purpose of the night, evening may be understood as a time to rest from worldly activities and look to God—to give account, to receive revelation, and to be nourished and refreshed. This is particularly the case on the Sabbath, which begins in the evening as God’s children begin a holy day of looking to Him in worship and rededication.



The Hebrew word translated as *morning* comes from a root verb which is often interpreted as *to seek, enquire, and consider*, showing the possibilities inherent with the introduction of light. It is also the root for the verb to visit, as people come together again after a night of being apart. Finally, the symbols may convey activity directed away from the home with the morning’s activities, as the second symbol, which is a picture of the horizon, follows the picture of the home.

The sequence of darkness with night followed by light with day follows the pattern established beginning with God hovering over the darkness and then saying let there be light. Each creative period begins with relative darkness, and varying degrees of chaos, uncertainty, stress, and/or rest, refreshment, growth, and revelation, leading to greater clarity and growth during the light of the day. This shows the law of opposition as it is intrinsic to progression—the reality that imperfect beings in general follow the same pattern of progression through a cyclical process from darkness to light repeatedly in a pattern of growth.

In verses six and seven the waters above the firmament are separated from the waters below the firmament, which leads to some questions: Is there a difference between the nature of these two bodies of water? And, if so, what is that difference?



The Hebrew word translated as *firmament* may represent an extended surface that is beaten out, spread out, stretched, and made thin. In pictographic Hebrew the word may simply be understood as *the first or beginning of the horizon is thrown, or extended, as far as can be seen*. According to ancient Hebrew tradition this firmament is a solid, smooth, supporting surface upon which a heavenly ocean rests (or rested at some time) and to which the stars are also affixed. God calls the firmament heaven, which indicates that the waters above the firmament are at that time in heaven.

What is the difference between the two bodies of water at that point in time? Perhaps the distinction is important both as a literal, physical distinction here, and also in terms of duality—in the dual symbolism of the water, with refreshment and life from above contrasted with stagnation and darkness lying below, and perhaps the symbolism of the expanse as a surface beaten out describes the nature and requirements of separation, accomplished through suffering and refinement.

Another way to think about this meaningful duality found in the separation of the waters above the firmament from the waters below the firmament is the noun water, or waters, in Hebrew, which is in dual form. As explained earlier, water in Hebrew is representative of transition, and it can involve both disease, danger, and violence as well as, in contrast, refreshment, cleansing, and life. The fact that God places waters above the firmament suggests another symbolic link in that the Hebrew word translated as *heaven* is identical with the word translated as *water* except for the addition of a first letter in the word translated as *heaven*.



The ancient Hebrew pictographic symbol for this first letter is pronounced *shin*. The one syllable word that is closest to the individual letter is the word translated as *tooth*, and the symbol looks like two front

teeth. It may also be symbolic of and look like a crown and is associated with light as it is the ancient origin of the word *shine*. This letter and symbol also relate to change, the number two, and the year. The combined symbolism of the Hebrew words for water and heaven is wonderful. Water is dual in nature and in many states represents God's imperfect creations, particularly man. Water can become stagnant and diseased; it can overcome and destroy; it can also become purified as it moves in contact with stones and other refining substances; it can refresh and cleanse; in its transitory state it can pursue a virtually limitless number of paths, in all cases downward unless changed and elevated and at points separated by God, wearing the crown, above all creations, always since before the creation moving with mercy *upon the face of the waters* (Genesis 1:2). Thus, the heavens are a condition in which man is elevated out of a natural, flawed, changing state, refined of imperfection, and existing in peace and harmony. Another complementary way of looking at this word is *to consume waters*. This suggests that heaven is an abode where celestial beings have consumed waters in their negative and positive aspects to gain experience and receive refinement and continue to consume waters as they bless those working through states of imperfection.

One other word occurs for the first time in verse seven: This word appears to have little significance in English, however in Hebrew it may have tremendous meaning. The end of verse seven reads, *and it was so*.

The Hebrew word translated as *so* is translated as *so, therefore, or thus*, however its root may be understood as *to be firm, stable, established, and securely fixed and fastened*. This word appears several times throughout this chapter, and in the context of a covenant-based and binding creation may hold profound meaning.

*Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said:*

*Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?*

*Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto Me.*

*Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? Declare, if thou hast the understanding.*

*Who determined the measures thereof, if thou knowest? Or who stretched the line upon it?*

*Whereupon were the foundations thereof fastened? Or who laid the corner-stone thereof, Job 38:1-6.*

The creation is fastened securely upon Jesus Christ as the Atoning One. Every time God directs something to occur, created intelligences do so based upon covenant, with God's part of the covenant fastened upon Jesus Christ, based on His atoning sacrifice. Jesus Christ is the sure foundation that created intelligences exercise faith upon from the foundation of the worlds, and, thus, they are fastened or bound to Him as the sure foundation. Thus, this phrase at the end of verse seven and at other points in the creation account could be translated, *and it was fastened* or *and it was secured*.

This word is also interesting in pictographic Hebrew beginning with the symbol of the hand or palm in a cupping or receiving form, followed by the symbol of a seed sprout.



One way of understanding these symbols in sequence in the context of the phrase *and it was so* is *it is received by the seed*, or specifically in the creation, God's seed, and that God's seed is enabled to grow and progress through what it receives from God. The symbol of the hand in a cupping shape is often tied to the submitting and receiving component of covenanting, and thus this word in pictographic Hebrew carries the same message of God's seed receiving the creation and the plan based on faith in and covenanting with their Creator.

The third day brings a third division, this time between the waters below heaven and the earth. With this separation, the third day brings in this third element of earth and earth life in a sequential pattern of light to water to earth that repeats itself a second time further on in the creation and, again, at times subsequent to the creation, such as with the flood where the order found in the creation is reversed as destruction occurs and Noah and his family journey back to a new beginning, from the earth to and through the water in its destructive role to light, represented in the Zohar to be described later. Then the pattern occurs again in the original sequence with a renewal of covenant, beginning with light from the Zohar and the symbolism of the dove, the olive leaf, and the returning sun, followed by water in its refreshing and cleansing role, and finally earth, plants, and animals (including man).

The Hebrew verb translated as *be gathered together* is translated in other occurrences in the Old Testament as to wait, look for, hope, or expect, and only in this one instance as *be gathered together*, which casts an interesting light on the changed nature of the water after having been gathered together. Before this gathering, the water is dispersed and mixed with the earth. After, the water is in a purer state; it is obedient to God's commands and possesses a changed nature; and as is the case with all of God's faithful creations, it possesses hope and is waiting upon the Lord.

אָרַבְתִּי

The pictographic Hebrew for this word begins with the symbol of the horizon, followed by the tent pole, and ending with the man with his arms outstretched. In sequence these symbols can be visualized as *connecting the distant horizon with Christ* or *having the distant horizon of one's existence secured to Christ*.

אָרַבְתִּי

The gathering together of waters prepares the way for the *dry land* to

appear. The pictographic Hebrew word translated as *dry land* contains the word translated as *dry* with the man with his arms raised added at the end. This word contains a parent root of the house and the two teeth that may be understood as *house consumed* and is the Semitic root for the first syllable in the word *bashful*. The house may be understood in this case in a broader sense as skin or clothing, and the parent root communicates the consumption, removal, or desiccation of that covering. This word, translated as *dry*, includes the same parent root as the word translated as *clothed* in Genesis 3:21, which can be seen as *wrapping around or covering a house consumed* or as *a lamb or shepherd's house consumed*, and the characterization of the earth as *dry land* has reference to Christ and His saving mission in the earthly sphere, which is the only sphere in which it can be done, a place where His house, or flesh, is consumed in order to clothe all those whom He saves. Symbolically and literally, His clothing is removed when He is crucified, in symbolism and in contrast as He provides covering or clothing for the sins and weaknesses of all those He saves.

*For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet.*

*I may tell all my bones: they look and stare upon me.*

*They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.*  
Psalms 22:16-18

The pattern of light to water to dry land, which repeats itself twice in the creation is the universal temple pattern, with light typifying the celestial sphere or Holy of Holies, water with its duality, representing the terrestrial sphere or Holy Place, and the *dry land* representing the telestial sphere, or the Court of Sacrifices.

The word translated as *earth* is symbolically meaningful in at least two ways:



First, Adam comes from the earth; his name is associated with land, earth, dust, red, and the last two characters at the end of his name form the shorter word translated as *blood*. Adam and the earth or ground, which is the same word as Adam but with the addition of the character representing Christ on the end,



represent the most basic, humble beginnings of earthly life. In Genesis 3:19 Adam is told: *for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return*, and the word translated as *dust* also is interpreted as *ashes, rubbish, and debris*, reinforcing the message that man in his mortal state is fallen and lowly, in a symbolic sense returned to the natural state of darkness, chaos, and emptiness before the creation. Second, the earth is strongly tied to God's covenant with man. The *Land*, specifically when capitalized, refers to the *Holy Land*, a land of promise and covenant, either on the earth or in heaven.

Within the commandment to honor father and mother, for instance, this understanding of the *Land* helps to impart a greater understanding of the blessing of the commandment as the promise is that *thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee* (Exodus 20:12), which speaks of not just any land, but the Promised Land, or the blessing of abiding with God eternally.

Understanding these two symbolic meanings of the earth as a whole, then, provides a more complete picture of earth with its plants and animals and man as God's creations, beginning in the most humble and fallen of conditions, but possessing great potential, which is realized as these creations follow God's plan and are saved and exalted through God's grace and abide with Him.



The pictographic Hebrew word translated both as earth and at times as

land may be understood as *God*, symbolized by the bull's head, *establishing a beginning or first path*. The last symbol is an interesting one. It is not a straight path, but a winding path showing an imperfect, waxing and waning progression, understood in imagery as a winding path on a mountain or hillside, with the English word *side* being derived from this ancient origin.

The three elements, light, water, and earth together provide a meaningful whole: Light separates out that which will be drawn to it from the transitory, dangerous, and chaotic state of darkness that exists in the water, organizing it into more solid matter and beings with humble beginnings but infinite potential. In this context it is interesting, again, that the name Moses is interpreted as *to be drawn out* or can be seen as *to draw out to salvation*, and Moses is in fact drawn out of water, violence, and darkness and progresses toward light, eventually seeing the face of God and abiding with Him.

With this third day in verse eleven, the distinction between male and female first appears as plant life is created in two basic groups: vegetation, which produces and scatters seed, and fruit, which contains its seed within itself. This distinction occurs again and again both practically and symbolically in God's creations, showing the importance of sexual identity and role in God's plan.



The pictographic Hebrew word translated as a verb, *to bring forth*, and as a noun, *grass*, includes a parent root with the symbol of the door followed by the teeth, and can be visualized as a *door moving in a pressing action*, as with the process of threshing, which brings forth seed from chaff, to disburse and seed new grass. Combined with the symbol of the bull, which is a male symbol, the word can be a verb, as the *bringing forth of the male seed to regenerate*, and as a noun it may be understood as *progeny*, just as the English word *seed* may be used both as a verb and as a noun that is the product of the action of the

verb, both with plants and animals, including humans.

The female is typified by the fruit, which has its seed within itself. The Hebrew word translated as *fruit* includes a parent root composed of the mouth followed by the head and is the ancient origin of the English word *pear* and is also part of the word *apricot*. This symbol and letter is pronounced with a p sound or with an f sound depending on its usage, and with the f sound, it is an ancient root of the English word *fruit* and other words like Ephraim, which is a dual form word meaning *doubly fruitful*, as Ephraim is the birthright son, receiving the double inheritance and with that the responsibility not only for his immediate family but also for the widows, orphans, and strangers in the land.



Another important word that includes this parent root is *kippur* as in Yom Kippur, or the Day of Atonement. Pictographically, this can be interpreted *receive fruit*.



The full pictographic Hebrew word translated as *fruit* may be understood as the action of *opening the head* or, as the mouth is the edge or border or opening of what is contained inside, this parent root can be seen as *containing the head, or the beginning*. Combined with the last symbol, the pictographic word may be understood as *opening or containing the beginning of what comes forth, or the origin of knowledge and power and future progression*. This is a process involving pain and suffering, in the opening of the head, which is necessary to gain experiential knowledge, progress, and continue more fruit.

It is interesting to consider these meanings as they relate to the name Eve. Genesis 3:20 reads,

*And Adam called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of*

*all living.*

Or, in other words, she contains the beginning, or life, of all that comes forth. In Hebrew the word *Eve* is a variation of the word translated as *life*, and her name suggests *life giver*, and throughout nature, symbolism, and eternal principle and practice the female is more closely linked with offspring than the father is. Before birth, the mother and the child are one. After birth, the mother and child are still essentially one, and in many cultures and in nature may be considered as one existence for the first year or two of life, dependent and inseparable, with great loss associated when separated. This close link continues and is primary throughout eternity, as is evident in many ways, for example, in the fact that the Hebrew word translated as *family* can be interpreted as *from a maiden*, and in the world, children in most cultures remain with the mother when a mother and father separate, and this link generally continues in this way in the eternities.



The pictographic Hebrew word translated as *Eve*, the mother of all living, and the first and prototypical woman, may be understood in a beautiful way, as *the fence, wall, or divider, encloses the connection with Christ, the Creator*. As will be explored later with regard to the charges given to Adam and Eve after the Fall, the female as a receptacle, giver, and sustainer of life is a type of Christ, through motherhood doing work in similitude of what He does.

Verse 14 begins the light, water, and earth/plant/animal sequence again with the creation on the fourth day of the sun, the moon, and the stars, or in other words *lights in the firmament*. God creates these lights for four purposes:

First, there is another division, this time between day and night from a physical perspective after the pattern of the spiritual day and night previously created on the first day. This demonstrates the principle that

God teaches truth and provides opportunity for progress through many means and representations, with physical elements and occurrences, as in this case, patterned after spiritual truths.

Second, God creates the lights of the firmament for signs. The Hebrew word translated as *sign* is a three-letter word with the first letter being the first letter in the Hebrew alphabet and the last letter being the last letter in the Hebrew alphabet. The middle letter is the letter that as a one letter word is the conjunction *and*, and thus the three letter Hebrew word translated as *sign* may be understood as *alpha and omega, the beginning and the end*, or in other words the signs in the heavens witness the Son of God who is the Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End.



The pictographic Hebrew for this word may be understood in a way that supports this meaning: From right to left is the head of a bull, which is associated with God and strength, followed by a tent pole or peg, or even a nail, which is a means of connecting or attaching, followed by two crossed sticks, which can be seen as a target or mark or cross. Thus, one way of understanding this word is as *God secured or nailed to the cross*. With the understanding of sin as *missing the mark*, this word may also represent the opposite of sin, or in other words *God secured to the mark, or target, or finishing His work in securing salvation for His creations*.

Just as this word testifies of Christ in many ways, so the physical lights that are part of God's creations also testify of Christ in many ways. The sun provides physical life directly and indirectly to the world and all its inhabitants; the great new star in the heavens at Christ's birth testifies of Him; and all the lights in the heaven separately and together possess and reflect the light of Christ:

*And behold, all things have their likeness, and all things are created*

*and made to bear record of me, both things which are temporal, and things which are spiritual; things which are in the heavens above, and things which are on the earth, and things which are in the earth, and things which are under the earth, both above and beneath: all things bear record of me. Moses 6:63*



Third, these lights act to create order and structure and meaning through seasons, days, and years. The Hebrew word translated as *season* focuses on appointed times and places, meetings, and the sacred. In both Judaism and Christianity there is significant focus placed upon holy seasons. There are parallels between seasons in these two religions, and often important events occur during these holy seasons. For example, Passover, Easter, and Christ's birth, death, and resurrection all coincide, and, in addition, follow the pattern of morning (as the year's morning is Spring), bringing light and salvation. These and other holy seasons place emphasis on sacred symbolism and principles and provide an opportunity for God's people to learn through rich and repeated experience at the same time that repeated physical seasonal events such as Spring rebirth and planting, Summer growth, Autumn harvest, and Winter death and rest reinforce the sacred principles. The Hebrew root verb of the word translated as *season* may be understood as *to fix, appoint, assemble, meet, set, and betroth*, all of which are important symbolic aspects of the sacred purposes of seasons and their place in God's covenant-based creation.



The pictographic Hebrew root verb of the word translated as *season* is from right to left composed of an arm and hand, followed by an eye, followed by a door. The door is a passageway or step in a journey; it may also be an entryway into another sphere, or as a veil. It is the picture of the door to a tent—a curtain suspended from a doorway height horizontal pole or rod. The eye looks through the door, and the

combination of the eye and the door is a parent root meaning *witness* or *testimony*, as the eye views what lies through the door. The addition of the hand or arm preceding the eye and door indicates a facilitation or offering of the witness or testimony or passage through the door or veil, which is one way of considering the role of seasons.

These symbols suggest a number of related variations of this facilitation or offering of witness: For instance, *seeing the next step in the journey*, or *facilitating the understanding of the purpose of the journey*, or *gaining a vision or knowledge of the next step in the journey or next sphere of existence*, or *being given the knowledge and understanding necessary to pass through a veil*. Contemplating these symbols and the various meanings they may contain in sequence gives insight into the purpose of seasons and how they can serve as a form or manifestation of light in the bringing forth of order, structure, meaning, knowledge, and progression. Seasons are repeated segments of time and of life, and the same events and occurrences are observed and understood in an evolving manner throughout a person's growth, so that like rings in a tree, the impact of seasons in time and life become an indelible part of a person's being.

In connection with seasons, days and years are also mentioned and include the same pattern found in the creative periods and in the pattern of progress reviewed earlier. In each case, they provide periods of dark and light, cold and warmth, through which to learn and progress.

The final purpose of these lights is simply to give light upon the earth, with this light emanating from heaven. This purpose encompasses the other purposes and parallels the spiritual light of the first day. God provides light from heaven to earth to give life, order, truth, salvation, and every good thing. From the beginning of creation to the end times and into the celestial existence of the earth and its inhabitants, light of and from Christ, the Creator and Redeemer, is the central principle and theme. Just as Christ is the sole light in the beginning, and at different times during the history of the world as a reminder that all is darkness

without him, He continues as the light in the end and eternally—Alpha and Omega, as other representative or borrowed sources of light pass away.

*And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.*

*And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.*

Revelation 21:22-23

Verse 16 names the specific lights in the firmament: the sun, the moon, and the stars, with the sun and the moon being described as great lights, the sun being the greater of the two. Here is another pattern found repeatedly—the pattern of three degrees of light or glory: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost; Celestial, Terrestrial, and Telestial (as spheres of stewardship rather than individual glory because the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are all celestial beings); and degrees of holiness in the ancient temple with first the Holy of Holies, then the Holy Place, and last the Court of Sacrifice, etc. The degree of light and characteristics of each of these lights in the firmament hold important meaning, which, again, individually and as a whole embody true principles.

Christ teaches clearly that His Father is greater than He, and that He can do nothing without the Father. In this sense Christ testifies that light comes first from the Father, and that Christ possesses and reflects His Father's light just as the moon reflects the light of the sun. As another example regarding the temple, which is the pattern of the progression to perfection, the High Priest can only enter the Holy of Holies through the Holy Place, as man can only approach the Father through Christ. These two beings are the great lights, the Father being the greater of the two. The Holy Ghost is as the stars dispersed throughout the universe, providing light representative of and preparatory to receiving greater light. Of course this is a representation

of things at creation with all of the Father's children having the potential to receive a fullness of light possessed by the Father, which at this point is fully received by the Son who progresses from sinlessness to fullness as described in the following verses:

*And I, John, bear record that I beheld his glory, as the glory of the Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth, even the Spirit of truth, which came and dwelt in the flesh, and dwelt among us.*

*And I, John, saw that he received not of the fulness at the first, but received grace for grace;*

*And he received not of the fulness at first, but continued from grace to grace, until he received a fulness;*

*And thus he was called the Son of God, because he received not of the fulness at the first.*

*And I, John, bear record, and lo, the heavens were opened, and the Holy Ghost descended upon him in the form of a dove, and sat upon him, and there came a voice out of heaven saying: This is my beloved Son.*

*And I, John, bear record that he received a fulness of the glory of the Father;*

*And he received all power, both in heaven and on earth, and the glory of the Father was with him, for he dwelt in him. Doctrine and Covenants 93:11-17.*



These two great lights are created to rule—the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night. The pictographic Hebrew word translated as *to rule* is formed with two characters depicting water, followed by the two teeth, followed by the shepherd's staff, ending with the man with arms outstretched. When the same character is repeated

twice this often gives comparative or superlative emphasis to the meaning of the characters, and in this case the picture of the water, or waves, may be interpreted as great and powerful, as water has great power and force, both to sustain life and to destroy and in general to affect and shape the environment. This character is pronounced as an m, and its characteristic of power and greatness is passed down to modern language in words such as the English words magna, magnanimous, magnificent, marvelous, and magical among others with similar characteristics. The word may be understood as *to shine powerfully with the shepherd staff of the Lord, or to powerfully hold the Lord's shepherd staff*. This word combines great power with great mercy and humility, both extended perfectly by the Lord.

The water and shepherd's staff symbols are also found combined in the word translated as *king*:



This word is very closely linked with the words translated as *to work, messenger, and angel*. All of these words in their ideal form combine the concepts of power and shepherding, reinforcing the eternal principle lived by God and taught continually, beginning with Adam in the Garden of Eden, that righteous power must always be exercised to serve and bless, never to exercise unrighteous dominion. The final symbol in the word translated as *king* is the hand in cupping shape, from which the English word cup originates. In this word this character suggests *receiving*, and thus the word can be seen as *one who receives power to be a shepherd or one who receives a powerful shepherd's staff*, which beautifully places the emphasis in the right place, as power is either useless or, worse, destructive in the hands of one who is not a true shepherd.

The words translated as *to rule* and *heaven* contrast with a word that is opposed in meaning to both of these words, but has interesting linking characteristics with them. Daniel prophesies of an *abomination that*

*maketh desolate* in chapters 11 and 12 of Daniel. Daniel 11:31 reads,

*And arms shall stand on his part, and they shall pollute the sanctuary of strength, and shall take away the daily sacrifice, and they shall place the abomination that maketh desolate.*



The root verb of this form of desolation is the pictograph of the two teeth, followed by two of the water/wave pictographs. This pictographic word is identical to the word translated as *heaven*, but with the hand and arm symbol, which may be understood as a hand reaching down into the water in an act of salvation, removed from the water; and it is identical to the beginning of the word to rule, but in reverse. One way to understand this image is as the teeth in the act of consuming power represented by the repeated water/wave symbols, and as this word is combined in Daniel with the word translated as *abomination*, which is associated with idolatry, it is the stark opposite of heaven and God's merciful rule, as it suggests an all-consuming power based on idolatrous desires and allegiance, pitted against everything that is holy and good, and devoid of true salvation. This wording, *the abomination that maketh desolate*, describes a universal pattern and association between power and idolatry that is repeatedly and always at the core of great, destructive evil, or secret combinations, as in the following type:

*Now the people of Akish were desirous for gain, even as Akish was desirous for power; wherefore, the sons of Akish did offer them money, by which means they drew away the more part of the people after them. Ether 9:11*

Beginning with verse 20, the fifth day involves life within the waters, and the fowls of the air, which fly in the firmament, the firmament being tied to the waters as it holds the waters of heaven. Thus, the two main water related animals are those who inhabit the seas and those who fly and inhabit the firmament.

The verb *hath*, in the English translation of this verse is a poor translation. This word is translated most often as *soul*, and is associated with taking breath, being refreshed, and being breathed upon, as in being breathed upon by God with the breath of life.



The pictographic Hebrew symbols of this word may be understood as a relationship, sequence of action, or story, and they also indicate a circular rather than linear sequence and pattern. The seed sprout consumes, or receives, represented by the symbol of the mouth, nourishment, or light, represented by the symbol of the two teeth, and this process repeats generationally with new seeds. The soul may in this way be understood as similar to the word translated as *create* that can be seen as *to fatten*, as the creation fattens souls seeking nourishment. The relationship between the two words is seen through the creation and through continual bestowals of salvation. The seed, or in other words, the mustard seed of intelligence and existence can only receive life and light as it is bestowed by the creator who aims to fatten, to increase, and to give light to imperfect seed-like souls, having the potential to become like their Creator.

As Jesus teaches, affirming clearly that the Father's children are forever lost without Him, but with Him can become like Him:

*Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.*

*I am that bread of life.*

*Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead.*

*This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die.*

*I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my*

*flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.* John 6:47-51

Or, as He teaches in Doctrine and Covenants 50:24:

*That which is of God is light; and he that receiveth light, and continueth in God, receiveth more light; and that light growth brighter and brighter until the perfect day.*



The pictographic Hebrew word translated in English as *life* is translated in Job 38:39 as *appetite*, and this word is also associated with the stomach as a full stomach leads to continued life. In this sense the symbol of the fence or wall is an enclosure, containing the symbol of the arm and hand, representing action, knowledge, and power, both physically and spiritually. The final symbol of the man with arms outstretched, may be understood to emphasize that life comes from Christ.



The creature that is described as a sea monster or as a whale could also be a dragon or dinosaur, serpent, or venomous snake. This word is from the same root as the verb translated as *to give*, and the pictographic root word begins with the character in the appearance of a cross, followed by the seed sprout.



Verse 22 is the first time the Hebrew word translated as *blessed* appears. The act of blessing by God occurs, beginning at this point in the creation, only with creations that require sustenance. The root verb is similar to the Hebrew word translated as *to create*, with only the last symbol different. The parent root, pronounced as *bar*, which can be seen as *a house of heads, or grain*, is followed by the hand in the form of a cup, indicating that the grain is received in the cup, or that the act

of blessing and of being blessed involves receiving sustenance or fattening.

*man*

On the sixth day God creates all creatures that inhabit the dry earth including man as His culminating creation. God creates man, male and female, in **Our** image and after **Our** likeness. The Hebrew word translated as *image* begins with a parent root with the traditional meaning of a shadow. The symbols are the winding path followed by the shepherd's staff, which may be visualized as the shepherd with his staff casting a shadow on the side of a mountain or into a valley. With the symbol of the water as the third character, this word may be understood as *the shadow of power*, and that man is created in the shadow of His power, both in terms similar to the imagery referenced previously of the covering, protective wings, and in terms of man being a shadow and type of God, having the potential to receive His nature and power.

The Hebrew word translated as *likeness* is tied to the short word translated as *blood*, indicating that we are of Their blood.

*mat*

Genesis 9:4 reads: *But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof...* This communicates the fact that we are God's children, His blood, and, thus, like Him not only in appearance, but in our potential to possess the same characteristics and attributes He possesses.

Another insight into being of His blood is that the life that is in us is given us through the Lord's atoning blood, and we are dependent on Him for every breath, for every moment of life and for all good things. Blood is specifically tied to this sphere of existence, in terms of the Atonement, in terms of the Fall and dependence of our natures upon God, and in terms of our mortality.

## †Υמ□

This pictographic Hebrew word translated as *likeness* may be read as the combination of the word translated as *blood*, the *door with water*, which suggests the flow of liquid in a life form, followed by the word translated as *death*, *the water connected to the mark*, which can be seen as the *mark*, or *end of chaos*. This suggests that God's children are created according to the pattern that always exists as one part of an eternal progression that in this mortal phase involves a *blood-death*—both a death involving mortality, or blood, and an end or death to the necessity of having blood in us, as after this existence we will be immortal, filled with spirit in place of blood through the resurrection that comes upon all through Christ.

The preposition translated into English as *after* more often means *because*, and thus the Hebrew word with its attached preposition may be read as *because of our blood-death*. This way of reading and understanding the word more closely ties the creation by and through Jesus Christ to the atonement of Jesus Christ as our creation in God's image is made possible through His atoning sacrifice and infinite power to save.

The use of the plural *Our* in reference to image and likeness as highlighted above, as well as the fact that man is created male and female, indicate that men and women are of heavenly spiritual parentage of both a Man and a Woman. Again, sexual identity and role are at the core of all animate life and not just as a new component in this sphere of existence but as an eternal, essential basis for life, progression, organization, and fullness of joy. Sexual identity and role from an ideal, eternal perspective involve complete dedication and consecration, to sacrifice and serve others and exist in happiness and joy.

In these ideal, eternal roles man and woman are powerless without each other and are equal in their contributions. These roles and this

relationship and their symbolic and practical purposes will be explored again in this commentary, particularly in connection with the ancient temple and the relationship between the high priest and the temple. These principles provide great clarity and meaning, informing our understanding regarding sexual identity in a practical sense. In a worldly context, sexual activity and relationships are too often debased and cheapened and not understood in terms of selflessness and service, but understanding them in this spiritual way can lead to a completely different and joyful state of heart, mind, conduct, and oneness.

As the one creation that is created after God's image, man is given dominion, which, again, indicates man's position and destiny as the offspring of God. God has dominion over all the universe, which is a stewardship requiring complete consecration through which He blesses and saves His creations. So, too, man's dominion is intended to be a stewardship and an opportunity to *dress* (or serve) and *keep* all the creations with which he has been entrusted. God gives man dominion over the animate creations listed in the same order as they have been created on the fifth and sixth days, beginning with water related creations and then earth related creations. The things of the fourth day of creation, or sources of light, are not given to man as part of his dominion but are retained by God. Man is intended to exercise dominion in accordance with the principles of the creation and after the manner that God does, truly in His image and in similitude of His sacrifice.



The Hebrew word translated as *dominion* in the pictographic Hebrew includes the man's head, followed by the door, followed by the man with arms outstretched. The beginning parent root carries the traditional meaning of a man through a door or tent opening or veil. Completed by the final character of the man with arms outstretched, the word may be

understood in terms of the man with arms outstretched being what is found on the other side of the door or veil, or it may be understood as a person becoming the man with arms outstretched through progression through the door or past the veil, or it may be understood without contradiction and instead with beautiful connection in both ways. True dominion in this sense carries meaning that the English usage of the word does not convey or conveys poorly or antithetically. In this difference of meaning, the difference between satanic dominion and Godly dominion is evident, as well as the fact that the typical, natural human conception of dominion is satanic and foreign to that lived and extended by God who is the true Steward and Savior.

In verse 28 God gives the first commandment to mankind:

*Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion...*



The Hebrew verb translated as *Be fruitful* is from the same root word as the word translated as *fruit*, discussed earlier. One way of understanding this word, in its active form of being fruitful, is *to open the head* in a treading process, which separates the fruit or the seed inside the fruit from the chaff. Treading, especially symbolically, is often done by a bull, which represents God. Being the subject of a treading process is a painful, refining process, and it also reveals what is inside, or an existence's true nature. This describes much of the purpose of this world and of mortal existence. Creation is not a creation out of nothing, and it is not a process of producing according to specification. Creation is a process of revealing and then refining and enabling development in what is each existence's true nature and potential. In this process, God, knowing better than lesser beings how indispensable freedom and agency are in the existence and development of His creations, takes no shortcuts and accepts and utilizes difficult and even agonizing processes that truly bless His creations.

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

*All truth is independent in that sphere in which God has placed it, to act for itself, as all intelligence also; otherwise there is no existence.*  
Doctrine and Covenants 93:29-30

This Hebrew word may also be understood in terms of sexual symbolism, as the first character is a feminine symbol, the second is a male symbol, and the third represents connection. This first commandment is given as a commandment to fulfill sexual or procreative roles righteously in accordance with covenant and as the first step and with the purpose of dedication, consecration, and service to posterity and all other creations, and to become an *apprentice creator*, with all the messiness and dysfunction that comes with having imperfect beings create and take on the roles of father and mother for other beings who are likewise imperfect. This commandment also involves basic, universal principles that apply to all covenants and commandments, to fundamental reasons commandments are given, and to the eternal purpose and destiny of man as are evident and have been discussed in studying the creation:

First, God gives commandments to instruct and guide us on the path of happiness. Commandments that may appear to the natural man as wrong or foolish and to the somewhat enlightened man as paradoxical, are in truth enlightening, liberating, and exalting.

Second, and as an example of the first point, joy cannot be obtained without discipline, selflessness, and service, among other ennobling characteristics, all through God's grace.

Third, the covenant blessings that bind created beings together based upon true principles provide the only conditions in which family associations can be preserved and exalted, and darkness overcome completely and forever within certain individuals and spheres.

*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. Moses 5:11*

In the last three verses of Genesis one God says that He gives all of His creations into the hand of man, and this for the purpose of seeing how His children will act in their position of dominion—to act as God with love in blessing and enabling life and progression or to act as Satan with enmity to control, abuse, and destroy. This is the great test and objective of this life, the test and objective of love, expressed by the Lord in the following verses:

*Master, which is the great commandment in the law?*

*Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.*

*This is the first and great commandment.*

*And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.*

*On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.*

Matthew 22:36:40

Those who are able to grow in love for God and neighbor to the perfect day will retain this first stewardship given by God in these verses and will be given more, even all the Father has:

*And he that receiveth my Father receiveth my Father's kingdom; therefore all that my Father hath shall be given unto him. Doctrine and Covenants 84:38*

## **Genesis Two**

*And he called upon our father Adam by his own voice, saying: I am God; I made the world, and men before they were in the flesh. Moses 6:51*

The second chapter of Genesis continues the creation, but in a different phase or sphere of existence. Verse one reads:

*And the heaven and the earth were finished, and all the host of them.*

Yet verse five reads:

*No shrub of the field was yet in the earth, and no herb of the field had yet sprung up; for the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was not a man to till the ground;*

How can the creation have been finished at this point and yet there not be shrubs, herbs, and man which all are mentioned as being created in chapter one?

Moses 3:4-5 provides clarification:

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

*And every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew. For I, the Lord God, created all things, of which I have spoken, spiritually, before they were naturally upon the face of the earth. For I, the Lord God, had not caused it to rain upon the face of the earth. And I, the Lord God, had created all the children of men; and not yet a man to till the ground; for in heaven created I them; and there was not yet flesh upon the earth, neither in the water, neither in the air;*

The things of the earth are created first in heaven, organized in spiritual form, purpose, and substance in preparation to take on earthly

substance and become physical life. The fact that all life is created first spiritually by the Lord carries significant and comforting insight concerning all life, including man.

First, physical life is an embodiment of something that exists and is created spiritually previously, and, in fact, in one form or another exists forever, without beginning or end. Creation is not a beginning from nothing, but rather is a process of giving light, covenanting, nurturing, blessing, organizing, and fattening, all under the direction of God and as a result of His love. Man exists in some form forever, and being created in God's image and likeness, is literally His offspring, His sons and daughters, and as such undergoes this spiritual creation before physical life for the purpose of endowing man with the spiritual form and potential to become like God. This purpose is celebrated in Job 38:7 by God's offspring before physical life begins:

*When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?*

Second, after physical birth and having this spiritual past and eternal existence, man has varying degrees of spiritual remembrance and recognition of God directly and through observation of and interaction with His creations. This remembrance and recognition is manifest and described in many ways including appreciation of natural beauty and truth, inspiration, strokes of enlightenment, epiphany, revelation, gifts, talents, abilities, etc. Man has varying degrees of strength of connection with God and desire to follow Him and fulfill the purpose to become like Him. It is man's purpose to see beyond the physical plane and discern and see spiritual things and draw closer and closer to that which is spiritual and of God, choosing to become born again spiritually through following God's spiritual guidance and commandments.

God's children are created and have the potential first to progress from spiritual to physical through physical birth and then from physical to spiritual through spiritual rebirth, which involves a gradual and eventual

conformance of the physical to the spiritual ideal and perfection. The Lord, in Matthew 6:10 prays, *Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven*, which describes the ideal conformance of the physical or earthly, to a perfected, spiritual state. In Doctrine and Covenants 29:31-34, the Lord states:

*For by the power of my Spirit created I them; yea, all things both spiritual and temporal—*

*First spiritual, secondly temporal, which is the beginning of my work; and again, first temporal, and secondly spiritual, which is the last of my work—*

*Speaking unto you that you may naturally understand; but unto myself my works have no end, neither beginning; but it is given unto you that ye may understand, because ye have asked it of me and are agreed.*

*Wherefore, verily I say unto you that all things unto me are spiritual, and not at any time have I given unto you a law which was temporal; neither any man, nor the children of men; neither Adam, your father, whom I created.*

This pattern and intended progression from spiritual to physical and then from physical to a spiritually transformed physical being, in which eventually in resurrected form blood is replaced by spirit and flesh is glorified and perfected, shows the great importance of the first and most important law, which is that of obedience through which imperfect beings can follow a perfect, benevolent Creator and progress to a spiritually blessed condition, not possible to attain without God. Commandments are simple but profound means to enable us to receive this progression, often beginning with negative directives, followed by the positive, and continuing to spiritual enlightenment, accompanied by freedom and joy. An example of this is found in the Word of Wisdom contained in the 89<sup>th</sup> Section of the Doctrine and Covenants that first gives prohibitions, followed by positive commandment, and finally culminates in rich spiritual blessings.

This characteristic of the creation and of the pattern of spiritual to physical and physical to spiritual and the progression this pattern involves occurs throughout the scriptures, as well as in the ancient temple, in many forms and on many levels. The journey of Israel into Egypt and their subsequent exodus from Egypt is a type of this pattern of progression. The house of Israel seeks the preservation of physical life in Egypt, after which the same Israel, having taken upon themselves the ways of physical, carnal Egypt journeys out of Egypt through the wilderness to the Promised Land, which is representative of the spiritual.

This universal pattern is found in the following parallel ways of looking at the pattern, to highlight a few:

Innocence and purity → impurity and captivity → salvation from captivity → return journey to purity → purity with knowledge.

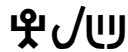
Premortal existence with God → Garden of Eden → World → Wilderness → God's presence.

Holy of Holies → Holy Place → Court of Sacrifices → Holy Place → Holy of Holies.

These and other examples show a circular, yet progressive journey in many forms and on many levels, all of which convey a spiritual journey from innocence, to experience and choice, to captivity, and ideally to salvation, sanctification, and oneness with God.

Through all of this journey God primarily influences softly, gently, with complete honor for the agency of His creations, and through the instrumentality of the spirit, while in opposition, Satan influences loudly, brashly, and openly at times, while subtly and deceitfully at other times, with manipulation, control, and force, attacking primarily through the instrumentality of the flesh. God seeks to save man through influencing and enabling him to conform the flesh to the spirit, and Satan seeks to blind, captivate, and destroy man through enslaving the spirit to the

flesh.



*Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*

*Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.*

*For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.* Matthew 11:28-30

The first verse of Genesis chapter two communicates the completion of the spiritual creation, both of the heavens and the earth. The pictographic Hebrew word translated as *finished* begins with the hand in cupping shape followed by the shepherd's staff, followed by the man with his arms lifted up. The first two symbols form a parent root that is often understood as *tame for the yoke* in the sense of an animal of burden being prepared and fitted for submitting to its designated work. In this sense the hand in cupping shape may be understood as *to receive as an act of submission*, which is required for true receiving, and the hook of the shepherd's staff may be viewed in its function of encircling a neck and as a yoke.

With this as context, one way of understanding the word with the addition of the man with arms outstretched is as being *tamed for the yoke of the Lord*, which is apt, as the creation to this point is complete as a spiritual plan and becomes a design and preparation for the next phase or work for those of the Father's children having accepted the plan.



The word translated as *host*, in singular form begins with a man on his side or a winding path followed by the house and ending with the bull. The man on his side or winding path and the house form a parent root

often understood as the side of a house or tent, which protects and shelters what is inside the house or tent. This parent root as a two letter word is translated as *turtle*, which is a land animal that includes in its own body a protective shell or house. The full word can be visualized as the *side of God's house or that which protects His kingdom*, and this word is often used to indicate a protective, guarding, and warfare function of men and angels in God's service and working in pursuit of His purposes.

This verse and these two words communicate an insight into the creation as being brought about by the Lord with the objective of the development of righteousness and increase of righteous influence throughout the universe in order to protect, preserve, nourish, and develop what is innocent and what is good. Again, evil or darkness will always attempt to extend its influence and power given the opportunity. The battle between good and evil is constant and eternal as long as darkness exists, and the combination of these two words suggest the objective of the creation being for this function of warfare, in the sense of the hosts of God being tamed and prepared for the yoke of a very active and essential righteousness as individuals and as families sealed together, which unitedly through the grace of God, are the eternal hosts of God.

This is a good way of understanding the priesthood. The priesthood is the power of God, emanating from God's goodness, from the atonement of Jesus Christ, which is the foundation of the creation, of life and light, and of all good things. Holders of the priesthood have power and authority only as they are aligned with God's will. The priesthood is the power by which angels, men, women, and families, united and working together, may work true righteousness, fulfilling God's purposes and extending His righteousness and influence in protecting and blessing that which is good and innocent. The priesthood cannot be used to accomplish any other purposes and to satisfy any other motivations, and it must be aligned with God's

character and the grace and truth He embodies. As is written in Doctrine and Covenants 121:36-37 and 41-42:

*That the rights of the priesthood are inseparably connected with the powers of heaven, and that the powers of heaven cannot be controlled nor handled only upon the principles of righteousness.*

*That they may be conferred upon us, it is true; but when we undertake to cover our sins, or to gratify our pride, our vain ambition, or to exercise control or dominion or compulsion upon the souls of the children of men, in any degree of unrighteousness, behold the heavens withdraw themselves; the Spirit of the Lord is grieved; and when it is withdrawn, Amen to the priesthood or the authority of that man.*

...

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

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



With the spiritual creation accomplished, and on the seventh day, God rests from all His work. The Hebrew word translated as *work* here is very meaningful as an indicator of God's priorities and the principles He lives by and upholds. The root word from which this word is derived is associated with words translated as *work, worker, king, queen, messenger, representative, and angel*. The first three letters in this word are translated as the verb *to fill*, and in pictographic characters are the water, followed by the shepherd's staff, followed by the bull. With the addition of the hand in cupping shape and the man with his arms outstretched, this word may be understood as *filling the cup for or by*

*the Lord.*

The fact that the creation is described as work, and the fact that God is king, involves no inconsistency, as a true king works for and serves his people. As God states in Moses 1:39,

*For behold, this is my work and my glory—to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man.*

God works to bless and save because of who He is and His love for His creations. Additionally, those who assist God in His work are related symbolically with the same root word being used. God works with and through other workers, messengers, representatives, and angels. Another word that contains this same root is Melchizedek, which literally means *king of righteousness*, but at the same time can be interpreted as *worker of righteousness, messenger of righteousness, and representative of righteousness*. The great king after the flood by the name of Melchizedek is a righteous man, the king of Salem (or peace) and priest (or worker, messenger, or representative) of the Most High God, and the Melchizedek priesthood is named after this man as a type, after God as the true King of Righteousness, and as an indication of the purpose of the Melchizedek priesthood. The Melchizedek priesthood is an order of the priesthood as recorded in Psalm 110:4:

*The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.*



The Hebrew word translated as *order* is also translated as *thing* or *word*, and it also may be understood as *business, occupation, acts*, and is related to the inner room of the temple and to the desert, which may serve as a temple. These related meanings show the kinds of work involved with possession of the Melchizedek priesthood, and its saving purpose, beginning with *the Word*, continuing with righteous action, and leading to salvation as symbolized in temple imagery. The greatest

order of the Melchizedek priesthood is the new and everlasting covenant of marriage, which is the key to the greatest blessings of the priesthood and existence, received by a man and a woman, sealed together, and exercising power with their posterity as united, eternal families and linked together with all of God's family becoming the hosts of heaven.

*In the celestial glory there are three heavens or degrees;*

*And in order to obtain the highest, a man must enter into this order of the priesthood [meaning the new and everlasting covenant of marriage];*

*And if he does not, he cannot obtain it.*

*He may enter into the other, but that is the end of his kingdom; he cannot have an increase. Doctrine and Covenants 131:1-4*

Pictographically the word translated as *order* includes the parent root that can be seen as a *house of heads*, which is in the word translated as *to create* and may be understood as *to fatten*. In this word, preceded by the symbol of the door or tent opening or veil, the word can be visualized as the *door, passage, or way to fatness*. It is in this way that Christ is *the Word*. He is the door or veil to all good, to light and life, to eternal progression and increase.

This word may also be understood with the door or veil and the house or tent forming another parent root, one discussed previously, with the tent door or veil being the place of the father. In this way of looking at the word with this parent root followed by the man's head, it can be seen as the *tent door or veil in the beginning*, which is aligned with the message of JST John 1:1-2:

*In the beginning was the gospel preached through the Son. And the gospel was the word, and the word was with the Son, and the Son was with God, and the Son was of God.*

*The same was in the beginning with God.*

These different ways of looking at this important word demonstrate the beauty of pictographic Hebrew. These meanings are not contradictory but are instead very complementary and can lead to fruitful reflection on God and His purposes.

אִשְׁרָא

In the word translated as the verb *to speak* or the noun *desert*, which is the same as the previous word except for an additional initial character symbolizing water, which in this case may be understood as *flow* or *element* within which *the Word* is transmitted, or also as *power*, it is the spiritual fatness that is important, and the action or object is one of imparting what is enriching or fattening. This way of understanding speaking and *the Word* illuminates how powerful the impact of speaking and *the Word* is and how powerful language can and should be. The connection between *the Word* and the desert symbolically and practically as a place of holiness and spiritual preparation is conveyed with the connection between these words. The desert is perhaps the place in the earth where it is most possible to experience nearly complete silence naturally, and it is there and in similar places such as the temple where God's voice may most clearly be heard by those who desire to hear Him. One additional, complementary way of understanding this word is to read this first character as the preposition *from*, in which case the word can be interpreted as *from The Word*, highlighting the purpose of the desert as a place to hear from *The Word*.

שָׁבַת

The Hebrew word translated as *rested* in verse two also is interpreted as *Sabbath* as a noun. One way of understanding this word is as the combination of two shorter words: *return* and *home* or *house*. This combination is meaningful on several levels showing the importance of

the seventh or Sabbath day:

The members of a family return home from their fields or other work-related activities of the six preceding days to rest, worship, and enjoy one another's company. As with the creation, work is completed, and there is rest and reward on the seventh day, upon return home. This seventh day is the most frequently occurring of seasonal days or periods mentioned in verse fourteen of chapter one in connection with the lights of heaven, and it involves the shortest time period. Related to this, the seventh year, called the sabbatical year, is the year in which, among other things, the land is to be allowed to rest. The jubilee year, which occurs in the year after seven times seven years, among other things, involves both the resting of the land and a return home of the children of Israel to the land with restoration of their lands of inheritance if applicable:

*In the year of this jubilee ye shall return every man unto his possession.*

*And in all the land of your possession ye shall grant a redemption for the land. Leviticus 25:11,24.*

The Sabbath day with other holy days as well as the seventh millennium involve worship in a return both to a familial earthly home, lands of inheritance, the house of the Lord, and eventually into God's presence in His heavenly home, which for the righteous involves a restoration of inheritance as the righteous inherit from the Father all He has. With reference to the millennial application Isaiah writes:

*And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it.*

*And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall*

*go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.* Isaiah 2:2-3.

Related to this, the ancient tabernacle and temple are constructed with both a home and a point of turning, which is intended to allow and begin a return to that home. The circular progression of the ancient tabernacle and temple leads from the holy of holies through the holy place to the altar in the court of sacrifices, at which point the journey eastward is intended to end, and a return journey westward to the holy of holies commences. There is nothing more important in the symbolism and the practical application of the ancient temple than these two points—the point of turning and beginning of the return, which is the altar of the temple, and the final destination of the return, which is the holy of holies. The first six days of the creation are another representation of the eastward journey from the holy of holies, away from God's presence, or the light of the first day, and then with the seventh day there is a return to God's presence and the light found therein.

The Sabbath day, as well as the sabbatical and jubilee years, also serve a similar purpose to that of night and day in the creation and in progression as these all provide regular, periodic rest, and opportunity to return, renewed and refreshed, to God's light and purposes. The Sabbath day is sanctified, separated, and blessed. It is outside of and separate from all other days, pursuits, and activities. It is a symbol of and a pattern for the requirement and blessing of becoming separate from the world.

One way of understanding the word translated as *Sabbath* pictographically is pressing (symbolically with the teeth) the house to the goal or purpose of existence, or Christ. This is complementary to the other understandings of the word mentioned and emphasizes the importance and purpose of the commandment to keep the Sabbath day holy for the purpose of returning a family or house, as in the House of Israel, to Christ and the Father.

ⒶⓂⓁⓂ

The pictographic Hebrew word translated as *sanctified* includes a common parent root at the end in the symbols of the door followed by the two teeth. This parent root symbolizes grass or grain, as the door may represent moving back and forth, and the teeth may represent pressing, which together can be visualized as the *process of threshing*. With the addition of the pictograph of the horizon preceding this parent root, the word can be seen as *grass or grain that is in the distance, on the horizon*, separate and apart from the common grass that is tread upon and the common grain that is consumed close by.

ⒶⓂⓁⓂⓂ

This word is closely related to the word translated into English as *new* shown above, and the symbolic meanings of these two pictographic Hebrew words are very similar. In this case the symbols may be understood as *grass or grain that is protected, preserved, or separated by a fence or enclosure*, symbolized by the first symbol in the word, which represents a fence or wall. These two words may be linked or may have been used interchangeably at some point as their meanings are so closely related and as the first symbols in both cases have fairly similar pronunciation. With this in mind it is interesting to ponder uses of both words, particularly the word translated as *new* and how it may relate to a condition of sanctification. For instance, sacrificial offerings are sometimes referred to as *new offerings*, which leads to the question, what is most important about the newness of the offering—the fact that it is new in time or the fact that it is unpolluted? Can being *new* represent being sinless in the case of Christ, or in the case of other existences being innocent, or purified through being reborn, or finally becoming sanctified, holy, and spotless? It is also interesting to think of this link in connection with the new and everlasting covenant, and how that covenant relates to things that are safeguarded, protected, and also on the horizon, symbolizing eternity.



The Hebrew word translated as *generations* comes from the root verb meaning to beget, bare, or bring forth, and as a noun it is translated as *child* or *boy*. The first symbol, the arm and hand outstretched, is a male symbol, and the last symbol, a picture of a tent opening with a covering, or a door, is a female symbol, and as these characters are joined in the middle by the shepherd's staff, this word may be understood as the male and female coming together in both a shepherding and a linking and binding relationship, both with each other, and with and for their posterity.

Verse five ends with the phrase, *and there was not a man to till the ground*, and the Hebrew word translated as *to till* is more often translated as *to serve*.



The two last symbols of this word are the home or tent followed by the door or tent opening, and together they form the parent root discussed previously that is often understood as the father of the family sitting in the door of the tent observing and watching over what is happening and protecting and serving the family and any strangers in the land. One beautiful example of this symbolism is an account from the life of Abraham, which indicates his character in serving his neighbor. The beginning of this account is recorded in Genesis 18:1-8:

*And the Lord appeared unto him in the plains of Mamre: and he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day;*

*And he lift up his eyes and looked, and, lo, three men stood by him: and when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground,*

*And said, My Lord, if now I have found favour in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant:*

*Let a little water, I pray you, be fetched, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree:*

*And I will fetch a morsel of bread, and comfort ye your hearts; after that ye shall pass on: for therefore are ye come to your servant. And they said, So do, as thou hast said.*

*And Abraham hastened into the tent unto Sarah, and said, Make ready quickly three measures of fine meal, knead it, and make cakes upon the hearth.*

*And Abraham ran unto the herd, and fetcht a calf tender and good, and gave it unto a young man; and he hasted to dress it.*

*And he took butter, and milk, and the calf which he had dressed, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree, and they did eat.*

This parent root that can be seen as the *tent door* is also found in the Hebrew word translated as *honour* in the fifth of the Ten Commandments, in which it is preceded by the hand in cupping shape.



This gives meaning to the verb *to honour* and the fifth of the Ten Commandments as a commandment to *receive those who sit or stand in the tent door*, for children to be grateful for all their parents do and sacrifice and to be observant of their righteous requests and counsel.

This parent root suggests a veil rather than a door, which is more generally the case with reference to a tent or an ancient tabernacle, which is really a large tent, and thus this parent root may be viewed as having temple symbolism, as the father sits or stands at the veil and monitors who approaches and passes through the veil.

Preceded by the symbol of the eye, the word translated into English as *to till* in this verse but more often translated as *to serve* or *to work* may

be understood as *to see or know the tent veil and all that is included in the Father sitting there*. In this verse it is interesting to consider the difference in meaning if the verb is understood as *to serve* or even *to see or know the tent veil and all that is included in the Father sitting there* instead of *to till*, particularly since the verse is descriptive of the Garden before the Fall, at which time there is no need for tilling the earth. From this perspective the tent door or veil would refer to the Father as the one sitting at the veil, in the Garden, and offering the sacrifice to make all creation possible and seeing the tent door or veil in this context suggests being grateful to, worshiping, honoring, and obeying the Father. In the Garden there is no need for mediation as Adam and Eve have access to the tent door or veil and presence of the Father continually and as there is no intervening world and wilderness to pass through to journey to the veil and the presence of the Father. This indication of man's role as an intended grateful and obedient steward and caretaker is further emphasized in verse 15 when the man is charged to dress and keep the garden of Eden.

God gives physical life in verse six and seven through the combining of the three major elements found in the creation. God causes a mist to arise and water the earth and then breathes life, or the light of life into man to make of him a living soul.

Verse seven reads that God *formed* man, and there is an important distinction between this spelling of the Hebrew word, and the spelling of the same word in verse nineteen in which God forms the beasts of the field and fowls of the air. In the first instance, involving the creation of man, the first letter in the Hebrew word is included twice.



This letter is pronounced yod; it is the smallest of all the Hebrew letters in most forms of the Hebrew alphabet (י is how it appears in the Hebrew Bible) but has great significance. Pertinent to this instance of the word involving the creation of man is the understanding that the letter

symbolizes humility due to its size and divine potential due to its symbolism of gifts given from God uniquely to man. The letter yod is tied both to knowledge and action: The Hebrew word translated as *I know* begins with the letter yod and its sound is yod with a vowel ending. Yod also is the first letter in and sounds similar to the Hebrew word translated as *hand* and the form of the letter in biblical Hebrew may represent a hand that is reaching upward towards God in the most important action that man can perform—that of prayer. Moses 7:32 reads:

*The Lord said unto Enoch: Behold these thy brethren; they are the workmanship of mine own hands, and I gave unto them their knowledge, in the day I created them; and in the Garden of Eden, gave I unto man his agency;*

Man is endowed uniquely by God as his literal children with a degree of agency and knowledge possessed by none of God's other creations. He is created with these unique gifts spiritually and last in Genesis one as the culmination of God's creations and in Genesis two physically and first as the chief and beginning of God's creations. The double yod at the beginning of this word may represent these two gifts tied to the two trees, one the *tree of life* and the other the *tree of knowledge of good and evil*. The double yod may also represent relative superiority of creative intent and power with the creation of God's children compared with the creation of God's other creations.

Pictographically, the last two characters of this word form a parent root with a man lying on his side followed by a man's head, and this parent root is commonly understood as the action of forming or molding as in the creation of pottery. The addition of the yod at the beginning of the word may be understood in connection with the subsequent parent root as the action of throwing the clay in the creation of the pottery, or the agency and knowledge required to form, mold, or create, with the two yods, again, indicating the additional endowment given to man to become like his Maker with power and knowledge to create in the

eternities.

At the end of verse seven man becomes a *living soul*, and the word translated as *soul* has important meaning as explored in chapter one, involving the taking in of nourishment, or life and light from the Lord, with the potential to continue the cycle and create new life physically and at some point spiritually for future generations. Verses 15 and 16 of Section 88 of the Doctrine and Covenants define and indicate the purpose of the soul as follows:

*And the spirit and the body are the soul of man.*

*And the resurrection from the dead is the redemption of the soul.*

Thus, the soul is the spiritual and the physical creation bound together, designed to experience good and evil, joy and sorrow, passion, desire, and all other experiences that prepare man for a fullness of joy, impossible without the spirit and body in combination. On the other hand, and necessarily, man has the greatest potential for destruction and evil of any of God's creations, and thus the double yod also may represent duality in the nature of man—spirit and flesh, good and evil. The Hebrew word translated as *soul* includes this duality in its usage, including appetite, mind, desire, emotion, passion, and the inner spirit of man, all these things providing the full range of potential for good and evil in concert either with God or with the devil, God influencing the soul through the spirit and the devil influencing the soul through the flesh.



In Hebrew the word translated as *breath* comes from an interesting root word, which ties the breath of life to the travail of a woman in labor, linking the original means of giving physical life as part of God's physical creation with the means of physical creation subsequent to that event. The role of the woman in the creation of physical life, then, is tied to God's creative role and power. As the word translated as *God*, transliterated as *Elohim*, is plural, it may be that the connection between

the breath of life and the travail of a woman in labor relates to spiritual creation and parentage as well.

Breath is tied to character as well, and is even equated with it, as the breath is considered to carry and contain the essential character of an existence. This process of giving life, then, is one of transmitting character from parent to child, both that of the Father and of a Mother, or woman in labor.

Pictographically this word includes a parent root in the middle composed of the two teeth followed by the symbol of water. This parent root can be seen as *pressing water*, which process creates wind, and is also the word translated as *name*, which is representative of who a person is and of their character. Preceded by the symbol of the seed sprout and ending with the symbol of the man with arms raised, the full word may also be understood as *continuing the name, character, or essence of the Creator*.

Once man is created God creates man's first earthly habitation, after the pattern of heaven, and as a pattern for earthly living according to God's will. In Hebrew a garden may be understood as a place to enclose, surround, and guard, showing the divine intention that the Garden of Eden perform the same role as heaven, to be a sanctuary protected from outside destructive forces and designed for the blessing and nurture of the innocent—that no unclean thing enter in or exist within the garden.



Pictographically, the Hebrew word translated as *garden* is a leg or foot followed by a seed sprout and indicates the action of walking about spreading seed, or being engaged in the process of creating and nurturing life.

Eden is understood commonly as pleasure, luxury, and delight. As a terrestrial and innocent domain, Eden does not involve pain, hunger,

fatigue, discomfort, injury, sickness, or anything else physically, emotionally, or spiritually negative. Eden is a place of innocence and enjoyment, with vegetation and fruit growing and abundantly available for the use and pleasure of man without the opposition and burden of weeds, thistles, and thorns.



The first two pictographic characters in this word, the eye and the tent opening or door, form a parent root often understood as seeing through the door or witnessing. With the seed sprout as the last character the word may be understood as *viewing, seeing, or witnessing children, posterity, or continuation*. This may be posterity who are literally in the garden, or symbolically it is the natural place of children, as the Garden of Eden is a terrestrial sphere that is specifically meant for inhabitants who are innocent.

It is interesting that the scripture reads that *God planted a garden eastward in Eden*; Eastward from what? The direction is important in terms of temple symbolism, as the holy place, which is a terrestrial sphere including Eden as a component of the terrestrial existence, is east of the holy of holies, or east of the place in which God dwells and from whence man comes into Eden.



The last two characters of the root word translated as *east* form a parent root that is interpreted as *blood*, and with the addition of the first character, the horizon or the sun on the horizon, the word may be visualized as *blood on the horizon, or looking to blood on the horizon*. From the perspective of the holy of holies in the temple or tabernacle an observer looking to the east, through the holy of holies and outside the door or opening of the tent, will see the altar of the temple, or the altar of burnt offerings and the sacrifices made there, and will thus see blood on the horizon. In the morning an observer will also see the sun rising

in the east emerging with dark colors including red, symbolizing Christ's blood as it appears in the sky both at the end and at the beginning of each day. In the case of the sunrise and the sun, the red in the sky is outside the city gate, symbolizing Jesus *without the gate* just as the altar is also outside of the temple enclosure, in the outward court of sacrifices.

*We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle.*

*For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned without the camp.*

*Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate.*

*Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach.*

*For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come.*

Hebrews 13:10-14

Verse nine continues the theme of what provides pleasure and is desirable. God makes to grow every tree that is both pleasant to the eye and good to eat. The fact that Eden may be understood as *pleasure* and that the theme of pleasure is continued in the description of the trees provides important insight. It is God's desire that man enjoy physical existence, and that an enjoyable physical existence enhance and combine with that which is spiritual. Man is to experience zest for life, exhilaration, pleasure, passion, personality, and desire. There is no prudish or controlling intention that these experiences be eliminated, no intention that they be suppressed beyond what leads to true happiness, leaving man passionless, or in other words soulless.

Instead, God desires man to learn through experience, obedience, and through His grace to enjoy these things in the optimal way, involving knowledge, wisdom, action, and greater agency that leads to joy for self

and others. As an example of this, the word of wisdom from an immature perspective limits pleasure but from a more mature perspective enhances pleasure and joy both physically and spiritually. Addiction and physical destruction are the results of immature satisfaction of appetite, while eating well and resulting good health lead to greater physical enjoyment and freedom and accompanying spiritual fulfillment.

Christ is the ultimate example of this principle in action: For instance, in Luke 22:15, the Lord says:

*With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer:*

The wording here is an example of an ancient linguistic form, including that found in Hebrew, where the repetition of a word indicates comparative or superlative emphasis. In this case the verse may indicate that Christ desires the experience of celebrating the Passover meal with his apostles as well as providing salvation to His creations in an intense way. Christ, in any case, is never devoid of passion, but He always channels his passion righteously, and increases not only in knowledge and wisdom, but also in his ability to experience passion, desire, and joy.

*And for this cause ye shall have fullness of joy; and ye shall sit down in the kingdom of my Father; yea, your joy shall be full, even as the Father hath given me fullness of joy; 3 Nephi 28:10*

With this in mind it is meaningful that the tree of knowledge of good and evil is not two separate trees, one containing good fruit and the other evil fruit, or one tree with two kinds of fruit, some good and some evil. Instead, there is one tree of knowledge of good and evil with one kind of fruit, beautiful to behold and enjoyable to eat.



Pictographically, the root verb of the word translated as *knowledge*

begins with a parent root comprised of the hand or arm followed by the door or tent opening and can be visualized as *hand moving*. This parent root is also the Hebrew word translated as *hand*. With the addition of the character of the eye, the root verb may be understood as *vision or knowledge from hand moving*, which indicates that the knowledge referred to is experiential rather than factual knowledge, and, again, it is in the way that man experiences, and chooses, and grows through experiencing many things and gaining this experiential knowledge that he can undergo a real, tangible change of nature involving both the physical and the spiritual, combined to receive a fullness of joy. Critically, knowledge involves both the hand and the eye as is further understood in looking at the word translated as *evil*:



*The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.*

*But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!* Matthew 6:22-23

\*\*\*\*\*

*And calamity shall cover the mocker, and the scorner shall be consumed; and they that have watched for iniquity shall be hewn down and cast into the fire.* Doctrine and Covenants 45:50

The Hebrew word translated as *evil* is a parent root beginning from the right in pictographic characters with a man's head followed by an eye. This parent root can be seen as *man watching*, and it is also the root of the word translated as *shepherd*, which is literally a *man watching*. How is it that this parent root leads to such seemingly different meanings, or are these meanings necessarily different? Often, in prophetic symbolism and in practice, shepherds feed themselves rather than feeding the sheep, watching the sheep as prey in order to *get gain*:

*Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God unto the shepherds; Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! should not the shepherds feed the flocks?*

...

*Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I am against the shepherds; and I will require my flock at their hands, and cause them to cease from feeding the flock; neither shall the shepherds feed themselves any more; for I will deliver my flock from their mouth, that they may not be meat for them. Ezekiel 34:2,10*

Jesus addresses this topic in John 10, which describes similarly self-serving people engaged in watching the sheep, calling them thieves, robbers, and strangers. Jesus alone is the Good Shepherd, and those who truly serve Him, must testify of Him and fulfill His purposes by His grace. The Joseph Smith Translation of verse 8 with the JST addition highlighted clarifies this point:

*All that ever came before me **who testified not of me** are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them.*

From the broader animal kingdom, where watching prey is common, to humankind where watching unrighteously takes many more forms, watching is a basic component of judging, controlling, harming, and destroying others.

Watching leads to imposing expectations and exerting control to modify the beliefs, opinions, choices, and behavior, and limit the freedom of others. This watching and what accompanies watching occurs in minor examples, which are a type of common, pervasive characteristics of oppressive association, such as Martha observing Mary not being helpful in the way Martha wants and asking the Lord to correct Mary (see Luke 10:38-42), and it occurs on larger scales, such as totalitarian desires and systems that are always present in this world from the

bondage of the children of Israel in Egypt as a type, to so many other historical and current totalitarian systems, to the future totalitarian system such as is described in Revelation 13.

All of this is a continuation of the darkness present before the creation and is always present outside of God's kingdom. In large and small ways much of humanity throughout history chooses to commit their lives to the pursuit of the objectives of others who watch them, and they place bondage upon themselves based on their awareness of being watched. Often, and for much of humanity, there is little choice available, and those who watch unrighteously in hard and soft ways snuff out freedom, controlling, abusing, enslaving, torturing, forcibly changing, and destroying others.

God acts and influences completely differently as described in Doctrine and Covenants 93:30:

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

God sees clearly and prizes who we are and leads us along in a way that develops who we truly are, giving us through His grace the capacity to choose, experience, learn, grow in knowledge, and become truly free and truly in possession of fully developed agency as a permanent attribute and foundational component of a sanctified and perfected character.

There is nothing more important to consider from a practical standpoint and more pervasive in relationships and communities than the impacts of watching on agency and freedom: What relationships and roles may involve righteous watching, judgement, and influence, and where should limits on this be set? On a very practical, day to day, and continual basis, how much of our own agency, or ability to choose opinions, beliefs, and actions, and our freedom, or ability to act based on our agency are modified and limited by others watching and acting upon us? And, viewing ourselves honestly, what impact do we have on

others to modify and limit their agency, freedom, and resulting existence, based on how we watch, judge, and act upon them?

In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus addresses how much watching affects the way people live their daily lives and how that can spread throughout and change a community and a culture. In 3 Nephi 14:1-2 He teaches:

*...Judge not, that ye be not judged.*

*For with what judgment ye judge ye shall be judged; and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.*

Judging begins with watching, and judging unrighteously has many harmful effects on people, communities, and cultures. One category of harmful effects is addressed by Jesus in the previous chapter, 3 Nephi 13, where He teaches about not doing things to be seen of men—not doing alms, not praying, and not fasting to be seen of men. He teaches us to reject the honors of men. These honors come about as people watch each other, focused on appearances, making judgements, and acting upon those judgements. It is instructive to see these two sins, seeking for the honors of men and judging unrighteously as a cycle that feeds on itself, spreading like a cancer through relationships, communities, and cultures, becoming completely accepted aspects of life.

So powerful is the impact and pervasive nature of this cycle of evil that it inevitably leads through an increasing hold of pride on people, communities, and cultures to the establishment and spreading of secret combinations. All along this path, agency declines and freedoms are increasingly limited.

At the extreme, Satan is the great watcher who continually watches for the purpose of trying people, as in the account of Job, corrupting them as happens when people *do good* for the purpose of being seen of men and thus engage in priestcraft and break the third of the Ten

Commandments, and also as he accuses them as recorded in JST Revelation 12:10:

*For the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.*

Christ is the Advocate and Righteous Judge, and the ideal in terms of watching is to become more like Him, judging righteously with wisdom and charity, doing good in secret, and progressing to see eye to eye, to establish Zion and inherit eternal lives.

*Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing, for they shall see eye to eye when the Lord shall bring again Zion. 3 Nephi 16:18*



The Hebrew word translated as *good* is covered in chapter one. The first character is a basket or other type of container. This is followed by the tent pole and the home. Together these symbols suggest an active *securing to the home of what is in the basket*, or a continual, active pursuit of bringing home nourishment and those in need of nourishment, protection, and salvation. It is this active, eternal pursuit and activity that is good.

Looking at these two words translated from Hebrew as good and evil pictographically in this way provides an instructive and complete contrast. Good is a continual, active pursuit of nourishing and blessing those in the home and extending that blessing outward, whereas evil begins passively and selfishly, watching for opportunities to get gain and elevate self and taking action based on self-interest.

The duality of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil parallels the duality of man endowed with knowledge and agency sufficient to choose and walk a path of good or a path of evil. Except for Jesus Christ who is pure from the beginning, all men are like potter's

clay possessing impurities but with the potential to be refined and formed into new and honorable creations. This transformation or a rejection of this transformation in favor of darkness occurs through a process involving man, what is received from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, and what is available from the tree of life.

This tree of life is also in the midst of the garden. As with the word translated as *formed* in verse seven there is a double yod in the word translated as *life* in this verse. This word translated as *life* is also the plural form and so is really *lives*. Doctrine and Covenants section 132 verse 24 uses some of the same language as John 17:3 with one change being the use of the plural *lives* in section 132 as compared with the singular *life* in John 17:3.

*This is eternal lives—to know the only wise and true God, and Jesus Christ, whom he hath sent...*

In this verse as well as in many usages of *lives* in the Old Testament the word is filled with significance: Eternal lives is exaltation, a state in which a man and a woman are sealed together eternally as exalted beings, or Gods, with the blessings given to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as follows:

*My name is Jehovah, and I know the end from the beginning; therefore my hand shall be over thee.*

*And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee above measure, and make thy name great among all nations, and thou shalt be a blessing unto thy seed after thee, that in their hands they shall bear this ministry and Priesthood unto all nations;*

*And I will bless them through thy name; for as many as receive this Gospel shall be called after thy name, and shall be accounted thy seed, and shall rise up and bless thee, as their father;*

*And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse them that curse thee; and in thee (that is, in thy Priesthood) and in thy seed (that is, thy*

*Priesthood), for I give unto thee a promise that this right shall continue in thee, and in thy seed after thee (that is to say, the literal seed, or the seed of the body) shall all the families of the earth be blessed, even with the blessings of the Gospel, which are the blessings of salvation, even of life eternal. Abraham 2:8-11*

This covenant and these blessings are received together by a man and a woman who act in complete unity to create and bless throughout eternity, and thus the singular form of the word is not fully descriptive. In addition, the double yod indicates knowledge and agency, which are perfected in exaltation as omniscience and omnipotence.

The tree of knowledge of good and evil and the tree of life describe a complete process of progression, which is encompassed in the above referenced John 17:3 and Doctrine and Covenants 132:24. The knowledge spoken of is experiential knowledge, and it is necessary to experience good and evil and choose between the two with what is chosen becoming who a person becomes through a lifetime and into eternity. This process of progression as represented beginning with the tree of the knowledge of good and evil is followed by the gifts of the tree of life, which are the blessings of resurrection and eternal lives received after mortal life, and, in the case of eternal lives, received through developing a full experiential knowledge of God—to know Him only in the way that a man or woman can if he or she becomes like Him through His grace.

In verse fifteen the Lord puts the man in the Garden of Eden for two important purposes: to dress and to keep the garden. These first purposes are not temporary assignments in the Garden of Eden, unconnected to man's nature and role in the world and in the eternities but instead are fundamental to who God is and what man may become.

The word translated as *to dress*, which is translated from the same Hebrew word translated as *to till* in verse five more clearly suggests to work and to serve others and God and pictographically *to see the tent*

*door and God who sits or stands there, while the word translated as to keep may be understood as to guard, protect, save, watch, treasure up, and celebrate.*

One way to understand the meaning of the word translated as *to keep* is to think of the English word as a noun. A *keep* in English can refer to the innermost stronghold of a tower or of a castle. This is the place where a keeper of the tower or castle keeps that which is most precious, particularly his wife and children, safe and nourished with provisions that he also keeps there for that purpose. In this sense the Garden of Eden is a *keep* just as heaven is a *keep* where God keeps, protects, saves, and nourishes His family, or as the holy of holies is a *keep* as a representation of heaven.

This understanding of the word *keep* is meaningful in other usages as well. For instance, it gives greater weight to what it means to keep commandments, implying obedience with a deep recognition of the importance of the commandment and of honor for the giver of the commandment. As another example, the Samaritans whose name comes from the Hebrew word translated as *to keep* consider themselves keepers of the ancient word of God and commandments as found in the first five books of the Old Testament. Finally, is it a stretch to believe that there are ancient connections between cultures and languages and that, for instance, the *samurai* (using the same three letter root word and meaning servant in Japanese) who are also *keepers* of ancient traditions and the land of Japan, also come out of this ancient understanding?

In any event, together these purposes of serving and keeping include much of what man should do and what God does do. Perhaps the greatest sermon about these two principles and their righteous application to lend understanding to the charge *to dress* and *to keep* the Garden of Eden is found in Mosiah chapter two in which King Benjamin teaches about how God serves and keeps us, and how He expects us to do likewise in reciprocation to Him by keeping His commandments

and in service to others:

*And even I, myself, have labored with mine own hands that I might serve you, and that ye should not be laden with taxes, and that there should nothing come upon you which was grievous to be borne—and of all these things which I have spoken, ye yourselves are witnesses this day.*

*Yet, my brethren, I have not done these things that I might boast, neither do I tell these things that thereby I might accuse you; but I tell you these things that ye may know that I can answer a clear conscience before God this day.*

*Behold, I say unto you that because I said unto you that I had spent my days in your service, I do not desire to boast, for I have only been in the service of God.*

*And behold, I tell you these things that ye may learn wisdom; that ye may learn that when ye are in the service of your fellow beings ye are only in the service of your God.*

*Behold, ye have called me your king; and if I, whom ye call your king, do labor to serve you, then ought not ye to labor to serve one another?*

*And behold also, if I, whom ye call your king, who has spent his days in your service, and yet has been in the service of God, do merit any thanks from you, O how you ought to thank your heavenly King!*

*I say unto you, my brethren, that if you should render all the thanks and praise which your whole soul has power to possess, to that God who has created you, and has kept and preserved you, and has caused that ye should rejoice, and has granted that ye should live in peace one with another—*

*I say unto you that if ye should serve him who has created you from the beginning, and is preserving you from day to day, by lending you*

*breath, that ye may live and move and do according to your own will, and even supporting you from one moment to another—I say, if ye should serve him with all your whole souls yet ye would be unprofitable servants.*

*And behold, all that he requires of you is to keep his commandments; and he has promised you that if ye would keep his commandments ye should prosper in the land; and he never doth vary from that which he hath said; therefore, if ye do keep his commandments he doth bless and prosper you. Mosiah 2:14-22*

The creation, the Garden of Eden, and every blessing included therein are priceless gifts given by God who Himself serves and keeps us, and we as His children are to keep His creations as faithful stewards, keep His commandments, and humbly serve Him and others.

The Lord is the exemplary, ultimate, great Keeper who provides, shelters, and protects His creations. One beautiful example of this is what He does after suffering in the Garden of Gethsemane when He sacrifices Himself into the hands of His accusers, shielding His friends who stand behind Him as He stands near the entrance to the garden, leaving them unharmed and free from apprehension, as He continues on alone with those who have come to the garden as His enemies:

*When Jesus had spoken these words, he went forth with his disciples over the brook Cedron, where was a garden, into the which he entered, and his disciples.*

*And Judas also, which betrayed him, knew the place: for Jesus oftentimes resorted thither with his disciples.*

*Judas then, having received a band of men and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, cometh thither with lanterns and torches and weapons.*

*Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye?*

*They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am he. And Judas also, which betrayed him, stood with them.*

*As soon then as he had said unto them, I am he, they went backward, and fell to the ground.*

*Then asked he them again, Whom seek ye? And they said, Jesus of Nazareth.*

*Jesus answered, I have told you that I am he: if therefore ye seek me, let these go their way:*

*That the saying might be fulfilled, which he spake, Of them which thou gavest me have I lost none. John 18:1-9*



*And when they came to Marah, they could not drink of the waters of Marah, for they were bitter: therefore the name of it was called Marah. Exodus 15:23*

The pictographic Hebrew of the verb translated as *to keep* includes a parent root made up of the last two characters, the *water* and the man's head, which is often understood as *head waters*. Combined, these two characters are pronounced *mar* or *mer* and are the semitic root for Latin based words related to or translated as the *sea* and the name *Mary*, and they are also associated with a condition of bitterness, as head waters, being still bodies of water or springs may be stagnant and thus more likely to be bitter.

Combined with the first character, the two teeth, this Hebrew verb may be understood pictographically as *consuming or pressing bitterness*. How is the image or idea of *consuming or pressing bitterness* related to being a keeper? Revelation 10:9-11 reads:

*And I went unto the angel, and said unto him, Give me the little book. And he said unto me, Take it, and eat it up; and it shall make thy belly*

*bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey.*

*And I took the little book out of the angel's hand, and ate it up; and it was in my mouth sweet as honey: and as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter.*

*And he said unto me, Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings.*

This mission in the symbolic form of the little book involves bitterness for John as he lives it, in contrast to the sweetness that the mission initially carries as he desires to tarry until the Lord comes again (John 21:22-23). Does this mean that being a true keeper, or a true shepherd must unavoidably involve something of bitterness?

Christ, as the true Keeper and true Shepherd, fully drinks of the bitter cup in accomplishing His mission of taking upon Himself the sins, pains, and death of the world:

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

*And behold, I am the light and the life of the world; and I have drunk out of that bitter cup which the Father hath given me, and have glorified the Father in taking upon me the sins of the world, in the which I have suffered the will of the Father in all things from the beginning. 3 Nephi 11:10-11*

This bitter cup is presaged throughout the Old Testament. The feast of the Passover includes the consuming of bitterness as recorded in Exodus 12:8:

*And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; and with bitter herbs they shall eat it.*

The entire chapter 53 of Isaiah is prophetic of the bitterness and sorrow that Christ will suffer. The first five verses of the chapter highlight this bitterness:

*Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?*

*For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.*

*He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.*

*Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.*

*But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.*

True discipleship requires the acceptance and consuming of bitterness, to, in as much as is possible for sinful beings, identify with the Lord and be able to abide with Him here and in the eternities. In Luke 14:26-30, Christ says:

*If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.*

*And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.*

*For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it?*

*Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him,*

*Saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish.*

The greatest attribute of God, which man can only obtain as a gift, through faith and grace, is charity, or the pure love of Christ, and true charity cannot ultimately be received in part. Charity requires the sacrifice of all things and the willingness to bear and suffer all that is required by the Lord, who purgeth those who bear fruit so that they may bring forth more fruit (John 15:2). As Christ declared in John 13:15:

*Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.*

In verses 16 and 17 the Lord gives man the commandment not to eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil along with the permission to eat the fruit from all the other trees. The linguistic pattern of emphasis through including a word twice is used both in connection with eating all the other fruit, which may be translated as *thou shalt surely eat* rather than *thou mayest freely eat* using the same form as the English *thou shalt surely die*, as the Hebrew form in the two phrases are parallel. While emphasis is placed on the importance of the two trees and their fruit, God also teaches the principles of agency, freedom, and experiential knowledge through the fact that there are many trees and many kinds of fruit, all available to touch and to eat, and only one fruit that is proscribed. The Garden of Eden is the original, prototypical *kindergarten*, which from the German means *child's garden*, in which much can be experienced and learned.

The fact that the Lord states that death will occur in the day that man eats the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil is given in a different sphere of existence, a terrestrial sphere, and by the Lord whose time frame is different. As stated in Psalm 90:4:

*For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night.*

And, again, in 2 Peter 3:8

*But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the*

*Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.*

In the early days of the earth's telesstial existence there are many who are recorded to have lived over nine hundred years, but no one over one thousand years, thereby fulfilling this word of God.



In verse 18 God states that it is not good for the man to be alone, which involves separation and isolation and is the opposite of the objective the Lord has for man of eternal lives. The Hebrew root of this word is the same tent door written of earlier, and it may be understood in this case in terms of the loneliness that is part of the responsibility assumed and necessary in the role of sitting or standing in the tent door while the family is thereby made safe and enabled to pursue other objectives. While this loneliness is necessary and inevitable for those who shoulder responsibility, it is good that it be shared.



The Lord states that He will make a *help meet* for the man, and the Hebrew word translated as *help* is the same root that is part of the Hebrew word translated as *Ebenezer*, which is translated as *stone of help* from the instance in which the Lord helps the Israelites in battle against the Philistines, and Samuel places a stone as a marker in remembrance of the Lord's help. Pictographically this word translated as *help* may be understood in terms of two different parent roots or it may be understood in terms of a combination of both. The middle character is the picture of a plow, but its meanings are wider and are varied on a spectrum from weapons, to cutting tools, to tools in general, including a plow, and finally to the end result of the use of these tools, or the harvest or, by extension, other results of work. The eye and this second character, form a parent root that is commonly understood as *strength*, or *knowing the weapon, cutting implement, or plow*. The second parent root, formed by the second character and the man's

head, can be visualized as a *harvest of heads*, or simply as the *harvest*. These two parent roots suggest different kinds of help, and, combined, as a range of help that is as wide and varied as the interpretation of the middle character that looks like a plow. This wide range of help is both necessary in the marriage and family life of the man and woman that is intended in the need for a *help meet*, and it is also vital to the growth of love, unity, and shared commitment that the man and woman may develop temporally and spiritually, in this life and in the eternities. Finally, the word may, without contradiction, be understood as *knowing the harvest* with that knowledge being experiential, or in other words a true knowledge, inclusive of the whole process of all the various kinds of work necessary to achieve the harvest and a profound understanding of the work, the resulting harvest, and the joy that comes only through that experiential knowledge.



The Hebrew word translated into English as *meet* may be understood as *what is conspicuous, what is in front of, before your face, in your view or purpose*. The second and last characters are the leg or foot and the door. This combination can be visualized as a *foot in the door*, and it is the ancient origin of the English word *gut*. The gut is the center and beginning of nourishment and physical health, and it carries a related spiritual meaning as well. Combined with the seed this word can be seen as a *continuation of that which is most important and that which is the foundation and essence of life*.

Together these two words support the purpose in the creation of man, male and female, after the image and in the likeness of God, to form an equal and complementary union designed to look to each other for support and to give each other the greatest loyalty and devotion second only to that given to God. These words, in fact, show the similarity between the marriage covenant between a man and a woman and the relationship man should have with God as is found in the definitions of

the words and their other usages. The word translated as *help*, again, is used in reference to and remembrance of the Lord's help, and the word translated as *meet*, which indicates prominence of position and relationship, emphasize that man and woman should look to each other without competing loyalties and relationships as regards their unique relationship in the same way that the Lord commands that we have no other gods before him.

At this point God physically forms all other creatures, after which He brings them to the man to see what he will call them. It is instructive that God does not tell man the names of all the animals but instead gives the naming opportunity to man. As with the opportunity for man to eat of every kind of fruit but one, God gives man as much opportunity both to experience his environment and to express himself as possible. God prizes agency and freedom with no other principles being more important, and He delights in His creations, particularly mankind.

It is the same God, involved in the development of man at this time and giving the opportunity for expression and development that interacts with and observes Elijah when he taunts the priests of Baal and honors Elijah and the sealing power He has given him by sending down fire at his word. He honors Elijah's agency and delights in and loves his character. It is the same God who converses with Abraham about the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, allowing Abraham to extract a commitment from Him not to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah as long as there are ten righteous inhabitants. He loves Abraham, who He calls His friend. It is the same God who interacts with the brother of Jared to the point where the brother of Jared exercises sufficient faith to enter into His presence and gain a sure knowledge of Him.

Perhaps the faith that the brother of Jared exercises at its core involves the capacity to grow in a grace enhanced character to the point where he can associate closely with God on terms that God respects and embodies Himself, free of guile, ulterior motives, pride, pursuit of power, honor, lust, material possessions, and all other things that impede pure

and joyful association.

*When the Savior shall appear we shall see him as he is. We shall see that he is a man like ourselves.*

*And that same sociality which exists among us here will exist among us there, only it will be coupled with eternal glory, which glory we do not now enjoy. Doctrine and Covenants 130:1-2*

Many of the themes associated with the creation and the garden are instructive with regards to God's role as parent and to how He facilitates eternal progression—the theme of pleasure enjoyed within boundaries that enhance them rather than decrease or eliminate them; the theme of full development of character, personality, and desire; the fact that there is only one forbidden tree amongst a multitude and variety of other trees; the fact that God desires man to exercise his agency and character in naming other creations; and the fact that God leaves Adam and Eve alone in the garden to act for themselves according to their own desires and understanding rather than watching or monitoring them continually to ensure they always make the right choices.

How God acts as a parent fully illustrates the principle of agency and the great importance of that principle as a component of existence itself. As contained in Doctrine and Covenants 93:30:

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

There are no principles more important to God than agency and freedom because they are the foundation for everything else we can receive and become—to existence itself. On the other hand, there seems to be no principle that is harder for the natural man to grasp, as it is the natural tendency of man to manipulate, control, engineer, systematize, monitor, and dominate. This tendency is evident in totalitarian systems, which attempt to mold society to fit certain objectives with little if any regard for the individual pieces of the

society—the people. This tendency is pervasive in more subtle manifestations in cultures and in human relationships as people continually attempt to exert their wills on others with the real effect of suppressing existence rather than following the principle Joseph Smith promotes to teach correct principles and let the people govern themselves.

The Garden of Eden is designed and developed like the ideal and original concept of a kindergarten (children’s garden in German) where the man and woman have the opportunity to explore and experiment with and find joy in God’s creations, learning through that association with His creations divine principles in their natural setting. The greatest lessons to be learned in this setting are that of agency as foundational to existence, which can increase into a fullness of existence, joy, and revelation or, in other words, an experiential knowledge of who God is and how to associate with Him in a way that completely honors and fosters agency and that can ultimately result in the full realization and blossoming of existence.



The Hebrew word translated as *name* in English is associated with the verb translated as *to put, place, set, appoint, or give position*. It is also associated with wind, which carries the breath, smell, or essence of a person. The first of the two characters may in this context be understood as representing the sun, which shines, and the second character is a pictograph of water. Both characters are also related to the moon, which also shines, and the beginning sound of which derives from the מ. Together, the sun, the moon, and the water combine in their interplay and cycles with the earth to create wind.



The account reads that God causes a deep sleep to fall upon Adam. The Hebrew word translated as *deep sleep* in English may be

understood in three components: The first character points toward the *target* or *goal*, indicating that what follows in the word is the purpose sought. The next two characters, the man's head and the door, can be visualized as *man through the door*, or in other words as a journey from one place to another. The last two characters are the water followed by the man with arms raised and may be understood as the *power, rest, peace, death, and/or renewal associated or given by Christ*. The full word may be understood as the *purpose in the journey to Christ's power and existence*, which is fulfilled in this case by the formation of the woman.

oJan

The Lord takes a rib from the man to form a woman. Symbolically the Hebrew word translated as *rib* also is interpreted as *side* or *wood* as in a plank or tree, and is related to self. Each of these meanings is significant: First, the fact that the woman is symbolically taken from the side of man reinforces their equally valuable and complementary roles and teaches that they should act in those terms, unified and literally side by side. Second, the woman is related to the tree in terms of association with fruit as the woman bears fruit within herself, as compared with the male symbol of grass and other vegetation that scatters seed. Third, the fact that the woman symbolically comes from man, or his self, and that man, then forever afterward comes from woman united with man, creates a cyclical and unifying relationship.

Pictographically, the first and second letter form a parent root commonly understood as *shade, shadow, or image* with the symbols representing the winding path followed by the shepherd's staff, which may be visualized as the shepherd with his staff casting a shadow on the side of a mountain or into a valley. Followed by the symbol of the eye, the word suggests an image or replication of knowledge, or that fundamental essence which conveys or transfers existence, or in scientific understanding, DNA.



As is written, man and woman are truly one flesh and are designed physically and spiritually to be connected and only to function fully and completely together. The Hebrew word translated as *flesh* is just that, but it derives its root from a verb that may be understood as *to bear, publish, preach, show forth, and gladden with good news*. The body as a gift from God, and man and woman as one flesh, are core to the purpose of the Atonement of Jesus Christ, or the good news, and to the end of eternal lives.

As another cycle, man and woman come from woman coupled with man, wholly as a part of her (and him as they are one), and then with marriage are commanded to leave mother and father and cleave to, or wholly become a part of each other. Again, the commandment to cleave or to form a bond that ideally is unbreakable and full of power and increase is one more emphasis on the supreme importance of that core building block of eternity that is the eternal marriage of man and woman.

The symbols communicate this message as well. In this context the first character, the house, may represent the body, and the second and third characters suggest *pressing or consuming the beginning*. The word, then, may be understood as the *body containing the beginning of life, or also the Gospel, which encompasses the creation, which is preached by the Son from the beginning*.

The last verse of Genesis chapter two is very much linked with the beginning of chapter three, and I will include that verse with commentary on chapter three.

## **Genesis Three**

Chapter three of Genesis begins with the introduction of the serpent. The English word *serpent* as found in different verses in the Old Testament is translated from three different Hebrew words. One instance is when Aaron casts down his staff before Pharaoh, and the staff becomes a serpent. In this case the Hebrew word can also be translated as *dragon* or *sea monster* or even *dinosaur* and is the same word used in the creation account in Genesis one, which in the English King James version is translated as *great whales*.

Two other instances are found in the account of God commanding Moses to make a fiery serpent and set it upon a pole for the children of Israel to look upon for healing when they have been bitten by the fiery, venomous serpents that God sends among them. The fiery serpent God commands be made is translated into English as *seraph*, or in the plural, *seraphim* which are serpents with wings that are servants of God, or *burning ones*. The fiery, venomous serpents God sends are described both by the second word and a third word, both translated into English as *serpent*. This third word describes a different kind of serpent, in opposition to, but also connected with the seraphim. Although commanded by God to make a *fiery serpent*, the serpent Moses makes is also described with this third word, which has the same root as the word translated as *brass*, which makes sense as that is the best material Moses has available to make an image.

This third word translated as *serpent* is also the word translated as the serpent that enters the Garden of Eden and interacts with Adam and Eve, and the opposition and connection between this serpent and the seraphim is an important principle in the story of the Garden and the Fall. For the purpose of the Garden of Eden account I believe it is helpful to view the serpent as an imposter, coming in the guise of something that Adam and Eve recognize and are comfortable with, or,

in other words, coming in the form of an angel of light, or in other words a *seraph*, or *burning one*.

The root of the Hebrew word translated as *serpent* in the Garden account may be understood as *to practice divination, observe signs, and practice fortunetelling*, which reinforces the idea of the serpent, or Satan whom the serpent represents, having formerly possessed, and at times still possessing in this world a brightness and a positive appearance that is always eventually exposed to show who Satan truly is from the beginning:

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

*And whatsoever is more or less than this is the spirit of that wicked one who was a liar from the beginning.* Doctrine and Covenants 93:24-25

In this way, as part of his constant, crucial role of opposition necessary for salvation, Satan is a counterfeit god, and in his own mind Satan directly and through those with whom he works, like the serpent, assumes the role and illusory appearance of savior according to his own twisted, dark, self-interested perspective, and, counter to his desires, he aids the process of true salvation through his role as adversary. The serpent, in the Garden and as a type, is an imposter or false angel of light as a representative of Satan. Moses 4:5-7 reads:

*And now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which I, the Lord God, had made.*

*And Satan put it into the heart of the serpent, (for he had drawn away many after him,) and he sought also to beguile Eve, for he knew not the mind of God, wherefore he sought to destroy the world.*

*And he said unto the woman: Yea, hath God said—Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? (And he spake by the mouth of the serpent.)*

Just as God speaks through true angels of light, so Satan here speaks through his own agent, an imposter, the serpent, who appears as an angel of light. The phrase in parentheses included in verse six is interesting. It may mean that many are drawn away already in this phase of existence in the Garden of Eden, or it may refer to those of God's creations drawn away by Satan in the premortal existence, or both.

This case of outwardly authoritative or compelling appearance being utilized by self-serving beings to cloak intentions, duplicity, and evil works, and project a sense of righteousness occurs throughout scripture and history as much as any other theme, showing the great importance of living without pretense or guile. Man cannot communicate with God, or accomplish His purposes, as an imposter, hypocrite, or motivated by self-interest, as that is completely opposed to who God is and how He lives. False appearance and deception are among the chief characteristics of those who reject Christ, truth, and the need to repent as they develop spiritual blindness, becoming their own distorted frame of reference, and walking a path of darkness to destruction for themselves and others. I believe that manifestations of this use of false appearance and authority to accomplish self-interested, evil works, while invoking God's authority, constitute the true meaning of the third of the Ten Commandments, which I believe is often misunderstood as being limited to disrespectful and profane uttering of God's name by those believing and unbelieving. A truer, more comprehensive meaning of this commandment is, I believe, a commandment against priestcraft:

*Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain. Exodus 20:7*



Pictographically, the word translated from Hebrew as *serpent* in Genesis three includes a parent root beginning with the fence or wall

followed by the teeth, which can be seen as a *binding or silencing of the mouth and of the functions of the mouth*, or as a separation from, or existing outside of light, as is found in the word translated as *darkness* in Genesis 1:2. In this case, preceded by the seed sprout, this word may be understood as *the seed, beginning, or continuation of the binding or silencing of the mouth, or as the seed, beginning, or continuation of darkness, sin, and bondage*. It is an interesting image to view the serpent as Satan's planting of the seed of sin and bondage in the Garden as his representative, and also of his efforts to continue the rebellion and sin he promoted in the premortal existence, or, in other words, continuing that which has been done in other worlds.



The word translated into English as *subtil* is very important in understanding the serpent, and it ties back to the final verse of the second chapter. In that verse the account reads that the man and the woman are *both naked*, and the Hebrew word translated as *naked* is identical with the word translated as *subtil* in the characters that form it and only differs in a slight vowel sound. A connection between these two words is as follows:

In Hebrew the word translated as *naked* may also be understood as *ragged, poorly dressed, or poor*. Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden are poor or lacking in knowledge, so their physical condition of nakedness is symbolic of their spiritual condition of nakedness or innocence. In contrast, the Hebrew word translated as *subtil* is understood to be *crafty, shrewd, sly, calculating, manipulative*, and, in effect, *to make others naked, or lacking, for the purpose of obtaining gain of whatever kind*.

Pictographically, the Hebrew word translated as both *naked* and as *subtil* begins with the eye and the man's head, which are the same two symbols that form the word translated as *evil*, which can be visualized as *man watching*. In this case the symbols are reversed in order and

may be understood as *watching man*. Combined with the final two symbols, representing the tent pole and the water, which in this case can be seen as danger or alternatively the destructive power that leads to danger, the word may be understood as *watching man with the power to get gain or destroy*, or alternatively as *knowledge (or lack of knowledge) of man resulting in danger*. The knowledge of someone in a condition of danger and vulnerability is innocence or spiritual nakedness, and watching someone in that condition may be done by someone who is watching for the purpose of taking advantage of that person to get gain.

The following principles taught by Joseph Smith apply very well to these two Hebrew words and the interaction between the serpent and Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden:

*A man is saved no faster than he gets knowledge, for if he does not get knowledge, he will be brought into captivity by some evil power in the other world, as evil spirits will have more knowledge, and consequently more power than many men who are on the earth. Hence we need revelation to assist us, and give us knowledge of the things of God.* Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, 217.

In addition to the serpent and Adam and Eve in the Garden these principles also involve God. These three types of beings involved in what happens in the Garden are representative of three general categories of existence, which may be inclusive of all existence:

1. Evil, with varying degrees of knowledge that carries power to make other beings naked or poor and bring them into captivity and destruction.
2. Innocence, possessing little or no knowledge, resulting in a position of vulnerability, which can lead to nakedness, poverty, captivity, and destruction.
3. Good, represented by God, possessing all knowledge, being

perfectly good, and having the charity and power to save those who exercise faith in Him and repent.

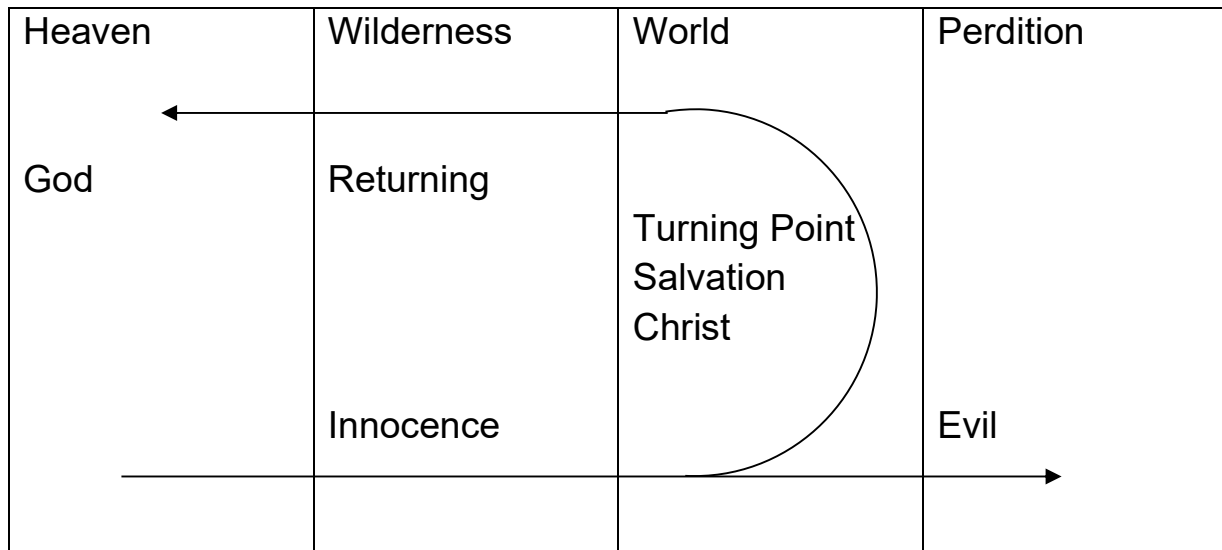
These categories of beings, together with the interactions they have, the directions they take, and their final state show a pattern here, which repeats itself again and again, for example, in the account of Cain and Abel, and is central to the ancient temple pattern, which is the great universal pattern of existence.

The illustration included below represents something of these categories, relationships, and pathways combined with the pattern of the battle between light and dark dealt with during the review of the creation. The only category that appears to be added to this pattern from the three categories defined above is those who are returning to God as Adam and Eve are after their Fall, however, this category is really a subset of evil until those returning are fully sanctified and reach their final destination to be truly good and one with God. As the Lord states:

*Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is, God:*  
Matthew 19:17

Returning individuals are good only as they receive that which is good from God and are thus completely dependent upon God for all good things. With the ever-present capacity to fall away and follow evil they act and *do good* only on borrowed light until they are finally perfected and filled with light through the grace of God.

This illustration and pattern will be developed further in review of other events, people, doctrines, and the ancient temple upon which pattern upon pattern can be overlaid in the great universal pattern of truth. The language and manner of presenting this pattern below is but one way among many, using some of the concepts previously discussed, but it fits the common components and principles of the pattern:



To continue with a discussion of the great universal pattern of truth and the role of the serpent and Satan whom the serpent represents I will turn to the Fall. In my observation there is as much difference of understanding regarding the Fall as there is regarding any doctrine. For this reason, I will spend some time writing about principles I believe are applicable to understanding the Fall as groundwork before turning to the scriptural account of the Fall.

The Fall is one part of a spiritual journey, and for context in understanding the principles involved I will briefly consider aspects of a more complete spiritual journey, including the premortal existence, objectives of mortal life, and return into God’s presence. History is full of spiritual journeys that have many key components in common, and comparison of key aspects of these journeys can yield valuable insight into the overall pattern, and so I will turn to one of these stories first to highlight some of these common components:

The Book of Mormon begins with Lehi and his family living in Jerusalem and with Lehi’s recognition through observation and revelation that the

inhabitants of Jerusalem need to repent and that staying in Jerusalem will lead to their destruction unless the people repent (themselves included). Lehi prophesies and preaches repentance in Jerusalem, but he is rejected and almost killed by those who hear his words. While the whole family, and later Ishmael's family, follow Lehi into the wilderness, they do so with varying degrees of willingness and recognition of the necessity of the journey, including recognition of the spiritual condition of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and more importantly recognition of their own spiritual condition and need for salvation. Some, such as Nephi, have a healthy understanding of the spiritual principles involved in the journey and in their own personal spiritual journeys. They have soft hearts, open minds, objective recognition of their own imperfect condition, faith in Jesus Christ, and are quick to repent and seek salvation from Jesus Christ. Others, including Laman and Lemuel, view the journey as foolishness and regard conditions in Jerusalem as good and remaining in Jerusalem to be the best option. Laman and Lemuel choose not to engage in self-examination, and not to turn to the Lord for understanding, which again will lead to recognition of their own shortcomings and need to repent. In general, they cannot abide the truth, as is recorded in 1 Nephi 16:1:

*And now it came to pass that after I, Nephi, had made an end of speaking to my brethren, behold they said unto me: Thou hast declared unto us hard things, more than we are able to bear.*

Their perspectives on and approach towards their own personal spiritual journeys mirror their perspectives and approach towards the physical journey they take with their family. For Laman and Lemuel, both journeys are unnecessary and foolish, and the status quo in both cases is preferable.

A full spectrum is represented in this story, just as is present in the myriad of beings involved in the creation and as also represented in the ancient temple pattern—light and dark, repentant and hardened, peaceable and destructive, innocent, good, and evil, and the remainder

of the journey of Lehi and his family involves the predictable course and outcomes that always occur given those involved. Those more repentant accept Christ and exercise faith in Him, progress, and have their natures changed and strengthened both physically and spiritually through God's grace, and they arrive in the promised land, again both physically and spiritually. Those who cannot abide truth, including honest self-examination and repentance, reject Christ, do not progress, and due to the cognitive dissonance they develop involving the difference between how they live and true principles, become antagonistic and destructive. Finally, a separation necessarily occurs because these two groups cannot coexist, as a peaceable community of God can have no antagonistic, destructive beings remain in it, otherwise it will cease to be a refuge of peace, as evil cannot abide the light and will seek to destroy that which is of light.

This journey story repeats itself throughout the Book of Mormon, with the people and specific circumstances changing, but with the same basic components of increasing sin, recognition of the need to repent and progress out of a condition of increasing sin, faith in Jesus Christ, repentance, progression, and separation always present.

In what ways is this story of the first journey in the Book of Mormon analogous to the journey of God's children from their premortal existence with Him into and through mortality and back into His presence through the salvation Christ provides?

First, what would have happened had God's family remained with Him rather than embarking on their journey into mortality and onward from there? Doctrine and Covenants 93:38 states:

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

This verse identifies two points of innocence in the existence of God's children—first, the beginning, or the point of spiritual creation, and,

second, the beginning of mortal life. Just as in mortal life individuals progress from innocence and gain knowledge and agency through the fattening process of creation, so in the premortal existence individuals also progress from innocence and gain knowledge and agency through an earlier stage of the fattening process of creation, and, being imperfect, at a certain point begin to sin.

It is for this reason that the conflict that occurs in the premortal existence between those who follow God's plan, accepting the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and those who follow Satan is a conflict that is unavoidable and that starts from the beginning—the manifestation of varying degrees of evil in imperfect beings with developing knowledge and agency is inevitable and swift. It is not only the choice between God's plan and Satan's plan that leads to evil from a state of innocence. Evil naturally develops from innocence as imperfect beings gain knowledge, capacity, and agency. As taught in Doctrine and Covenants 93:25 and Moses 4:6 referenced previously, Satan is a *liar from the beginning*, and he draws many away from God. Attempting to maintain a static condition among imperfect, sufficiently knowledgeable beings can only lead to decline and destruction, and God, knowing all things, knows that as His spirit children grow in knowledge, capacity, and agency, evil and conflict will emerge.

In fact, conflict does emerge. This conflict is the War in Heaven, and if this conflict or war is allowed to continue in heaven, God's kingdom in heaven will no longer be clean and an abode of peace and happiness. The plan is not only a wonderful opportunity for progression, it is also absolutely essential and cannot be delayed. The Father fully recognizes this truth, and those of His children who are able to accept truth to one degree or another, including varying degrees of objective recognition of their own shortcomings, and varying degrees of faith in Jesus Christ, are to varying degrees supportive of His plan. There are also those who completely reject true principles and God, follow Satan, and become sons of perdition. Among the righteous, Christ is the

exception to those who need to recognize their shortcomings because He has none. He is God's only spirit child who is sinless and full of grace and truth, and as His Father does, He clearly and fully recognizes all that must occur, and He submits Himself fully to His Father's will, knowing and accepting that He will suffer and atone for sin and suffer the pains and death of all mankind.

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

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

*I am the same which spake, and the world was made, and all things came by me. Doctrine and Covenants 38:1-3*

With Christ as the sole exception to imperfection among God's children, it is a great key that among imperfect but repentant beings, righteousness always correlates directly with the ability to objectively self-examine, exercise faith in Jesus Christ, and repent. True righteousness cannot include self-righteousness. Those who have the least need to repent most recognize their need to repent, and in contrast those most in need of repentance are often least able to see who they really are, until at the extreme, they hate and destroy good, lest by contrast light reveal their true natures.

Among those at the righteous extreme is the brother of Jared who when he prays as recorded in Ether 3:2 says:

*O Lord, thou has said that we must be encompassed about by the floods. Now behold, O Lord, and do not be angry with thy servant **because of his weakness** before thee; for we know that thou art holy and dwellest in the heavens, and that **we are unworthy** before thee; **because of the fall our natures have become evil continually;***

*nevertheless, O Lord, thou hast given us a commandment that we must call upon thee, that from thee we may receive according to our desires. (Emphasis added)*

Like Nephi, the brother of Jared has a clear understanding of his nature, which he recognizes as being *weak* and *evil continually*, and of truth in general, making his personal spiritual journey one, which although not easy, he pursues, understanding its undeniable necessity.

Among those at the evil extreme are those who testify of their own righteousness while at the same time condemning Christ with sin during His ministry and eventually condemning Him to death. As discussed with regards to Satan and the serpent, false appearances, self-righteousness, and false claims on authority, often divine authority, are key components in the expression of extreme evil. Scribes and Pharisees in all times are the worst transgressors of the third of the Ten Commandments and are among the most willing to condemn and destroy others.

Christ speaks of the contrast between the ability to self-examine and a condition of self-righteousness as recorded in Luke 18:10-14:

*Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican.*

*The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.*

*I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.*

*And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.*

*I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.*

One of the phrases in these verses that strikes me the most is the phrase *prayed thus with himself*. The Pharisee is so completely unable to self-examine that he is unable meaningfully to communicate with God, and instead he communicates with a false god, created in his own mind, in his own image, based on his distorted world view—a god created to shield himself from the pain of facing truth. His own false appearance and perspective is his reality; his capacity to repent is extremely limited, and his capacity to condemn is plentiful.

A key corollary concept highlighted in the journey of Lehi and his family and in the journey of God's children from the premortal existence is the nature of sin. Sins may be viewed as individual actions, but I believe sin is more accurately understood as a condition or nature of an individual or a culture, in the words of the brother of Jared, being *evil continually*. Anything less than the perfected character or the perfected society of God is a condition or nature of sin, and sinful actions are merely manifestations of a sinful nature. As such, sin has an associative nature and a multiplying effect and finally without divine salvation sinful individuals and cultures follow a downward path through captivity to destruction, or in other words a continuing Fall. For instance, sin naturally leads to cloaking and deception and to assigning or transferring blame to others rather than accepting responsibility, all of which lead further and further away from God. Viewed in this way, sin cannot be overcome by eliminating specific sinful actions through discipline and reformation of character although working on both discipline and character reformation with God's grace is necessary. A sinful nature can only be truly overcome by a fundamental change in nature, which is impossible for an imperfect being to achieve except through receiving light and salvation from God and becoming a new creature through His grace. Until that mighty change is received, and a

subsequent path of sanctification to the point of perfection walked through the grace of Christ, individuals and cultures will always manifest their nature in sinful desire, thought, and action, to one degree or another, inevitably and continually.

Among the innumerable children of God sent to this earth, excepting Christ, no individual ever lives without sin until they are fully sanctified by the blood of Christ, and in this world no culture escapes the inevitable path of decline and destruction except as it is sanctified and delivered by Christ, as in the case of the City of Enoch.

Recognition of a sinful nature should never be a cause for despair; a sinful condition, or being *evil continually* as the brother of Jared describes the human, imperfect condition should be recognized as a simple matter of reality, and liberating hope can then only be found by anyone willing to exercise a mustard seed of faith in Jesus Christ and begin or continue on the journey of faith in Jesus Christ and repentance whereby a repentant soul can be miraculously and completely changed through the Atonement of Jesus Christ to become a new creation, eventually fully perfected to become like Christ. This is the good news, or the Gospel of Jesus Christ—a person does not need to wallow in their sinful nature, which is common to all imperfect beings, but instead can receive an amazing, miraculous change of nature through Jesus Christ.

Christ, in contrast to all others, is sinless as a result of His nature and character, which are completely pure to the point where His sinless desires and actions are natural manifestations of who He is. He is full of grace and truth. His righteousness is less a matter of actions that can be judged formulaically or by appearance and more a matter of completely pure desire, faith, knowledge, and charity, manifesting as righteous action, as for instance in the examples of healing or of picking and eating grain on the Sabbath, which are jealously condemned by the hypocritical Pharisees, but which are completely aligned with Christ's divine characteristics of healing and providing sustenance. Who Christ

is in mortality is, in fact, so good that He not only lives without sin but also has what to the limited, imperfect mind is the incomprehensible ability to drink the bitter cup in the Garden of Gethsemane and on the cross, suffering the pains, deaths, and sins of all of His Father's children—an infinite and eternal sacrifice.

Another key principle I want to mention is the direct correlation between the true righteousness of an individual or culture and the mercy they exhibit. Those most in position to judge and condemn are least condemnatory and most loving, while those full of iniquity are also full of condemnation and desire to inflict punishment. The two best examples of this correlation are at the extremes: One characteristic and role of Lucifer is as adversary and accuser, which role he pursues tirelessly as included in JST Revelation 12:10:

*For the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.*

Christ, on the other hand, as the only sinless Son of God who is most justifiably in a position to condemn others, is most merciful, long suffering, and kind. This is exhibited in one of many examples in His treatment of the woman accused of adultery in John chapter eight. Her accusers view her as an object, a tool to achieve their own purposes without regard for her actual wellbeing or even for the law they reference. Christ views her as she really is, with priceless value, seeing into her soul with infinite compassion, and He acts in her eternal interest.

Joseph Smith teaches the following concerning the relationship between righteousness and mercy and contrasting evil and condemnation:

*All the religious world is boasting of righteousness; it is the doctrine of the devil to retard the human mind, and hinder our progress, by filling us with self-righteousness. The nearer we get to our heavenly Father, the more we are disposed to look with compassion on perishing souls;*

*we feel that we want to take them upon our shoulders, and cast their sins behind our backs. My talk is intended for all this society; if you would have God have mercy on you, have mercy on one another.*

TPJS 241

He also teaches the following regarding the abundant mercy of God:

*Our heavenly Father is more liberal in His views, and boundless in His mercies and blessings, than we are ready to believe or receive; TPJS 257*

I believe John 3:17 is just as important as the more well-known previous verse 16 as it describes the saving, non-condemnatory, nature of Christ's mission:

*For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.*

To further illustrate the nature and extent of mercy, one characteristic of the creation account in the Book of Abraham lends profound insight into the merciful plan God provides for his children. Throughout that account *the Gods watched those things which they had ordered until they obeyed.* Abraham 4:18

This shows a characteristic of long-suffering kindness and an objective and committed perspective as to what is required for progression from imperfection to perfection without reactionary condemnation, but instead with watchfulness and care and regard for agency for the purpose of providing what is in the long-term best interests of God's creations. God fully comprehends the nature of His children and is willing to provide everything necessary for their progression and salvation including the great sacrifice of His Son in order to allow His children the time and continually extended salvation sufficient for them to progress one step at a time until they become truly transformed and perfected.

A corollary of this key principle is that repentance becomes easier and

more joyful for those who repent most. Not only are they more compassionate and non-condemnatory of others but also of themselves, and more importantly their relationship with and knowledge of God increases continually so that they more and more recognize their own complete dependence on Christ as their only source of salvation and become one with Him in purpose, and as recorded in Mosiah 3:19 become:

*...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, even as a child doth submit to his father.*

This ease of and joy in repentance also leads those who repent most not to cover their sins, as they understand that sin does not fundamentally consist in actions that are shameful and should be hidden, but rather in imperfections of a character that is progressing, necessitating a universal need for love and forgiveness. They are less concerned about the judgement of the world and more concerned about the judgement of a merciful, loving God.

This key principle further reinforces the necessity of spiritual journeying as in the case of the journey into and through mortality from the premortal existence. Condemnation and demands for justice initiate much of and are aligned with conflict, captivity, and destruction, just as begins to occur with Satan and his followers in the premortal existence leading to the need to separate from them by casting them out. Heaven must always be inhabited by sanctified beings who by their nature live in humility, peace, kindness, and charity together with innocent beings.

Finally, the greatest key in this journey is to believe in, exercise faith in, and know Jesus Christ, recognizing more and more who He is, His infinite goodness and strength, and our own complete dependence on Him as we fully recognize our own fallen state without Him, as the people of King Benjamin do:

*And they had viewed themselves in their own carnal state, even less*

*than the dust of the earth. And they all cried aloud with one voice, saying: O have mercy, and apply the atoning blood of Christ that we may receive forgiveness of our sins, and our hearts may be purified; for we believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who created heaven and earth, and all things; who shall come down among the children of men. Mosiah 4:2*

Just as the Fall is inevitable for God's imperfect children, redemption is sure from before the creation, as it is secured to Christ, the Unchanging Eternal One, full of grace and truth from the beginning. The scale of justice includes all the fallen on one side, forever lost without a counterbalancing power of salvation on the other side—Jesus Christ, having overcome all things through His infinite and eternal sacrifice, counterbalancing any evil, sin, pain, injustice, and death, fulfilling the law of justice and extending infinite mercy. Salvation does not and cannot come by the works of fallen, imperfect beings but only in and through the grace of Jesus Christ.

With this spiritual journey pattern and these principles in mind I will return to the scriptural account of the Fall: While the woman is not present when the commandment not to eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil is given she is certainly aware of the commandment, knows it comes from God, and refers to it in her conversation with the serpent as a commandment she is expected and initially plans to obey. The serpent encourages the seeds of consideration and desire in the woman's mind, and at some point whether immediately or after some amount of consideration she eats of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. One interesting point here is that the commandment is not merely not to eat of the fruit, but in addition not even to touch the fruit, and the Hebrew word translated as *touch* here includes even the act of approaching. Thus, the full meaning of this Hebrew word expresses the same principle taught in James 1:13-15:

*Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God*

*cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man:*

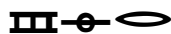
*But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.*

*Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.*



The pictographic Hebrew verb translated as *to touch* is the seed sprout, followed by the foot or leg, followed by the eye. One way of understanding this verb is *to begin to walk to knowledge* or *to begin the path to knowledge*, which is what may be done through touching something, and this pictographic meaning reinforces the reason why the man and woman are commanded not even to touch the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

The path to sinful action begins almost imperceptibly; it begins with even the slightest inclination or attraction inherent in innate weakness and imperfection. For this reason the Fall is inevitable, again not due to God's will or actions, but due to the fact that anyone less than a sinless being exists in a condition of imperfection of character and, as knowledge is gained, of sinful nature, which necessarily manifests itself in sinful action, and continues in sin, even while progressing, until the point at which a person through faith in Jesus Christ passes through a complete transformation of nature and becomes perfected through the grace of Jesus Christ. Anyone of God's innumerable children sent to this earth, Christ excepted, would have fallen in the Garden of Eden.



One other Hebrew word that is meaningful in verse five is the word translated into English as *shall be opened*. In pictographic Hebrew the first two characters of the root word, the mouth and the horizon, form a parent root understood as *eating the horizon* or as erosion. With the

addition of the final character of the wall or fence this word may be understood as *eating away the boundaries*. This illustrates the necessity of the Fall, of the acquisition of knowledge, and of sin. Although not earned, neither can perfection be given without being received through faith because perfection and the growth that leads up to it involve character and agency in an individual that has always existed. The process of truly receiving salvation and a perfected character is difficult, often as difficult as can be born, otherwise there is no real change of nature. The path to perfection is messy, involving pain, destruction, and death, together with pleasure and joy, in many ways and repeatedly, as erosion occurs both from external forces and as people eliminate their own boundaries and explore beyond where those boundaries are, in both positive and negative ways, with Christ continually there, expanding horizons that are eroding, and providing true knowledge and salvation through His grace.

The language employed in verse six is full of the extent of the attraction of the fruit for the woman: First, it is *good for food*, making it a desirable choice among other available foods to fulfill a basic need.



Second, it is *pleasant to the eyes*, the Hebrew word translated as *pleasant* carrying positive meanings including desire, wish, and longing of heart, and negative meanings including lust, appetite, and covetousness with the root verb including the connotations of desire, coveting, craving, wishing, sighing for, being greedy for, lusting, and preferring. Pictographically this word, formed with the bull, followed by the tent pole, followed by the man with arms raised, may be understood as *a strong sigh*. It may also be understood as *strength tied to Christ*, which communicates that what is pleasant and tied to desire emanates from Christ and from the goodness and strength of His creation. Good and salvation are not separate from that which is pleasant and desired but are rather enhancements and eventually a fullness of what is

pleasant and good, or a fulness of joy.

דָּמִים

Finally, the woman sees *that the tree was to be desired to make one wise*. The first two characters in the root of the Hebrew word translated as *desired*, the fence or wall and the water, form a parent root that is often understood as separating water and is the two character word meaning *hot* or *heat*. Desire is often associated with heat, and with the final character of the door or tent opening, the root word may be understood as *heat at the door*, which is an apt functional description of that feeling associated with a desired outcome.

בָּיָד

The Hebrew word translated here as *wise* is also translated as *understanding, success, and prospering*. It is often associated with prospering as a result of revelation and covenant keeping, as in Deuteronomy 29:9:

*Keep therefore the words of this covenant, and do them, that ye may prosper in all that ye do.* (Emphasis added)

Pictographically this word includes a parent root in the final two characters that is often understood as *tame for the yoke* in the sense of an animal of burden being prepared and fitted for submitting to its designated work. In this sense the hand in cupping shape may be understood as *to receive as an act of submission*, which is required for true receiving, and the hook of the shepherd's staff may be viewed in its function of encircling a neck and as a yoke. With the character of the two teeth preceding this parent root the word may be understood as *pressing or consuming taming for the yoke*. This is an apt imagery for wisdom as well as of prospering as a result of revelation and covenant keeping, as true wisdom is developed through submission to true principles and to Christ and involves among other righteous actions the

keeping of covenant with God. In a sorrowful connotation, this word is also tied to bereavement, loss, and barrenness, which are other paths to wisdom.

After eating of the fruit Eve then gives the fruit to Adam who also eats. Eve and Adam both face what appears to them to be just a two option decision and choose what they feel is the best option, albeit with an underlying comprehension that they are acting contrary to God's commandment, justifying their actions in their own minds enough to lead them to the course they choose. Eve chooses between obedience to God and continuing innocence on the one hand and knowledge, including all those good and beautiful things she sees that come with knowledge on the other hand. Adam faces the same choice, and, in addition, the loss of companionship with Eve is added to his option of obedience to God and remaining in innocence.

Both of their decisions run counter to the principles of faith in God and of revelation, which the garden is designed to develop in them, through experiential learning and direct access to God. Both Eve and Adam consider their perceived options and pursue their chosen paths in isolation from God's counsel rather than going to the Lord for further light and understanding, to understand what God would have them do, which perhaps might lead to options other than the two they consider. At this point in their existence, going to God for knowledge is easy as they are not yet cast out, and, living in the presence of God, they are able to talk with Him face to face.

This underscores the fact that limited man often finds himself in no-win situations, but only from a limited, imperfect perspective. God saves miraculously. He saves in ways that His creations most often cannot foresee or comprehend initially. He has different, more enlightened priorities, ways, and objectives. His salvation is always tied to revelation--the giving of light, knowledge, power, and salvation from a source above and greater than man.

*For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord.*

*For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts. Isaiah 55:8-9*

Without faith and revelation there are no good answers and all things eventually dead end into no-win situations. As with the creation, cleansing and salvation through the flood, the exodus from Egypt, and innumerable other instances of salvation from darkness that continually occur in imperfect spheres, the plain, unquestionable reality is that man is hopelessly lost and in darkness without God, but that salvation is always available with God.

Viewing these sinful actions of both Adam and Eve as a rejection of the principles of faith in God and revelation and salvation from God places them in the company of children of God who are repentant while still imperfect. A parallel to help understand how this is the case is the account of the loss of the 116 pages by Joseph Smith. God knows it will happen, not just 2,400 years before it happens, but from the beginning. It does not happen because God tempts Joseph. It is clearly sin, but at the same time it is an example of someone struggling to do what he feels is right, being pulled in different directions and caught in a seemingly two option, difficult choice, having the need of further spiritual development, suffering, tempering, and refinement, just as in the case of Adam and Eve.

No one who is imperfect is in a position to condemn Joseph, and God who is perfect does not condemn him, but instead richly blesses him, in part through the anguish Joseph suffers. Truly for Joseph this sin leads to even greater blessings due to the suffering he experiences and the refining effect that suffering has on Joseph's character, and this is the pattern of the effects of the Fall and the Atonement of Jesus Christ on all who repent and return to God. The Fall leads to a gaining of knowledge of good and evil, often through difficult experience and

suffering, and the Lord delivers, refines, and abundantly blesses all those who exercise faith in Him and repent. It makes just as much sense to condemn Joseph as it does to condemn Adam and Eve, or Peter when he denies knowing Christ three times, or anyone else who progresses from imperfection and is saved through faith in Christ and repentance.

Again, the Fall is just as inevitable for Adam and Eve as sin is inevitable for every one of God's children sent to this earth except Jesus Christ. God would have created a different plan if He had found Himself in the midst of innumerable sinless beings, but He finds Himself in the midst of innumerable imperfect children and works with that reality. Even in Heaven God finds Himself in the midst of imperfection in his children to the point of rebellion and war and carries out His plan to deliver His children from their imperfect and sinful nature.

There are many other questions asked and discussions that occur surrounding the Fall, but my belief is that many of these questions and discussions are pointless. As one example, some concern themselves with whether the Fall is more Adam's fault or more Eve's fault, but if they are both imperfect and both manifest their imperfect natures, and if it is imperfect people who seek to condemn one or the other as opposed to God who saves, what is the point of this question or discussion? God immediately prepares a way of salvation and forgives them, and Adam and Eve remain one flesh, forgive each other, progress, and are sanctified. What else matters? Why does imperfect man need to compare and rank the sinfulness of others, keeping the beam in his own eye while looking for motes in others, and not looking to others with mercy, understanding, and helpfulness?

Returning to the perspective of the sin of Adam and Eve as a rejection of the principles of faith in God and revelation and salvation from God, just as with Joseph Smith and the 116 plates, the principles of faith and seeking for and following revelation and receiving salvation from God are indelibly impressed on their souls. As will be seen, these principles

of faith in God, revelation, and receiving of salvation are ones that as a result of this initial experience they grow into and pursue increasingly above all other objectives for the remainder of their lives and that they exemplify for their posterity, just as Joseph Smith and all others who learn this same lesson do. In both examples, and in the examples of all other repentant children of God, faith in God, seeking and following revelation, and receiving salvation are principles that combine agency with obedience in the full development of mankind's divine potential.

### 𐤀𐤋𐤍

After Adam and Eve partake of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, their eyes are opened and they begin to gain knowledge, and one of the first things they do is to sew aprons to cover their nakedness. The word translated as *apron* can also be translated as *girdle, belt, loin covering, and armor*. In addition, its root verb is translated as *to gird oneself, bind on, be afraid, and restrain*, which indicates the negative effects of Adam and Eve gaining knowledge, or the further development of a sinful condition, as well as natural protective, shielding, and keeping characteristics as they increase in knowledge of the world surrounding them and move further away from innocence and vulnerability. Pictographically, the foot or leg followed by the man's head form a parent root that can be visualized as *walking man* or as *stranger*, and preceded by the fence or wall, the word may be understood as *placing a wall or fence around or separating a walking man or stranger*.

### 𐤍𐤃𐤀

In verse eight the English version reads that God walks *in the cool of the day*; The Hebrew word translated as *cool* is a word having various interpretations, which also appears in Genesis 1:2, translated as God's *Spirit*. It is a word that in different contexts carries the meanings of wind, breath, mind, spirit, animation, life, vigor, and seat of emotion. Considering these meanings of the word, the phrase can be visualized

as *God walking openly, in the day, in light and truth*, in contrast with the manner in which Adam and Eve hide, the Hebrew word translated as *hide* also meaning to withdraw or draw back.



Pictographically, the first two symbols of this word translated as *hide*, the wall and the house, form a parent root that can be visualized as the *wall of the house*, or that which provides cover or refuge from discovery as well as shelter. With the addition of the last symbol, the head of the bull, the word can be seen as *finding shelter or refuge from God*. This illustrates the principle that hiding at its core is in many cases hiding from truth recognized at some level within one's own conscience, which comes from God, or hiding from God Himself.

Adam and Eve hide themselves from the face of the Lord, which is part of a foundational and constant pattern in all of existence of man's relationship or lack of relationship with God. The great Melchizedek priesthood key of the knowledge of God refers to the potential of this relationship:

*And this greater priesthood administereth the gospel and holdeth the key of the mysteries of the kingdom, even the key of the knowledge of God.*

*Therefore, in the ordinances thereof, the power of godliness is manifest.*

*And without the ordinances thereof, and the authority of the priesthood, the power of godliness is not manifest unto men in the flesh;*

*For without this no man can see the face of God, even the Father, and live.*

*Now this Moses plainly taught to the children of Israel in the wilderness, and sought diligently to sanctify his people that they might*

*behold the face of God;*

*But they hardened their hearts and could not endure his presence; therefore, the Lord in his wrath, for his anger was kindled against them, swore that they should not enter into his rest while in the wilderness, which rest is the fulness of his glory. Doctrine and Covenants 84:19-24*

Throughout existence, from before mortality, it is God's desire that His children sanctify themselves and seek His face and enter into His rest. Adam and Eve, in eating the fruit, move away from God's presence, hiding from His face, just as it is with the children of Israel in the time of Moses. They, then, throughout their mortality seek His presence and seek this great blessing for their righteous posterity:

*This is why Adam blessed his posterity; he wanted to bring them into the presence of God. TPJS, 159*

It is recorded that Adam receives this great blessing, which is the culmination of all his desires, the final chapter of his mortality, and a meaningful, beautiful reversal of the hiding in the Garden of Eden:

*Three years previous to the death of Adam, he called Seth, Enos, Cainan, Mahalaleel, Jared, Enoch, and Methuselah, who were all high priests, with the residue of his posterity who were righteous, into the valley of Adam-ondi-Ahman, and there bestowed upon them his last blessing.*

*And the Lord appeared unto them, and they rose up and blessed Adam, and called him Michael, the prince, the archangel.*

*And the Lord administered comfort unto Adam, and said unto him: I have set thee to be at the head; a multitude of nations shall come of thee, and thou art a prince over them forever.*

*And Adam stood up in the midst of the congregation; and, notwithstanding he was bowed down with age, being full of the Holy*

*Ghost, predicted whatsoever should befall his posterity unto the latest generation.* Doctrine and Covenants 107:53-56

This pattern continues throughout all time, as some seek the face of God, exercising faith, repenting, receiving revelation, becoming sanctified through the grace of Christ, and entering into His presence and rest, and many withdraw from His presence. This is the great separator at the time of Christ's Second Coming, as those who are prepared see His face again in the valley of Adam-ondi-Ahman, in the New Jerusalem, and finally abide His presence and are not burned when He comes in glory to reign as King.

Verse ten conveys the fact that Adam and Eve hide due to fear. They recognize their condition, their nakedness, and the fact that they have separated themselves from God through disobedience. Fear generally follows from and is associated with hiding, with acceptance of lies, and in connection with this from some degree of lack of faith in God. As with Adam and Eve, fear leads to withdrawal from light and truth and from God's association, and if continued, to further withdrawal and separation from God and further acceptance of lies and darkness. It is at this time that Adam and Eve face the struggle and choice of continuing into darkness or turning back out of the shadows, symbolically around the altar, into God's light, accepting and receiving salvation through faith, repentance, revelation, and obedience to God's will.



The pictographic Hebrew word translated as *fear* is composed of the hand or arm, followed by the man's head, followed by the bull. In its positive usage, understanding fear in terms of *fear of the Lord*, these symbols can be visualized as *throwing the head to God*, in the sense of coming in humility to God and bowing at His feet.

Both of these Hebrew words translated as *to hide* and as *to fear* have

the bull as their final character and so can be seen as involving how people relate with God. Hiding which is weak or evil is creating a barrier between oneself and God, and fearing, in a positive sense, is the opposite, or the return from hiding back into God's presence, at His feet. While fear in a negative sense may be understood as the opposite of positive fear, or fear of the Lord, it may also be understood as part of a long-term process that through unavoidable and refining suffering eventually leads back into God's presence.

The serpent, or Satan, is continually influencing Adam and Eve—to cover, to fear, to hide and to withdraw from God. Satan in many ways sets up a counterfeit and mirror image plan to that of God. Satan desires to draw Adam and Eve away from the face of God, back into a precreation state of darkness, emptiness, and chaos where he can rule over them. As God, as a true savior and keeper, separates the heavens with a veil from all inferior kingdoms to keep it holy, so Satan, as an oppressor and destroyer, has his own veil, a veil of darkness, crafted and maintained to separate man from God, giving him a place of hiding, to keep his kingdom unholy and under his control. A reference to this veil of darkness, to Satan's purposes with it, and to the rest found outside of it is found in Moses 7:61:

*And the day shall come that the earth shall rest, but before that day the heavens shall be darkened, and a veil of darkness shall cover the earth; and the heavens shall shake, and also the earth; and great tribulations shall be among the children of men, but my people will I preserve.*

Satan forms this veil with sin and oppression, and it is his greatest objective to enslave men under his power within that veil as recorded in Moses 7:26:

*And he beheld Satan; and he had a great chain in his hand, and it veiled the whole face of the earth with darkness; and he looked up and laughed, and his angels rejoiced.*

In addition to hiding, both Adam and Eve blame others for their disobedience. Adam assigns partial blame to Eve, and Eve assigns partial blame to the serpent. Hiding and blaming are at their core the same reaction to and rejection of light and are basic characteristics of an imperfect and sinful condition. In both hiding and blaming men provide themselves cover to avoid light. Rejecting light, men choose to remain in darkness, which affords familiarity and rest from the demands of repentance and progression, which are demanded by acceptance of light. Rejecting light and choosing to remain in darkness stems from a desire to escape self-examination and repentance and the need to exercise faith in Jesus Christ.

*And the light shineth in the world, and the world perceiveth it not.*

...

*Which was the true light, which lighteth every man who cometh into the world;*

*Even the Son of God. He who was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.*

*He came unto his own, and his own received him not.*

*But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God; only to them who believe on his name. JST John 1:5, 9-12.*

The irony is that rejecting light leads to the suffering from which men choose to escape, albeit to a greater degree.

Returning to the comparison between the journey of Lehi and his family into the wilderness and then to the promised land and the journey of all God's children from His presence into this world and then back into His presence, these fundamental characteristics of those who reject light are always present. In these and other cases following this pattern, those who disobey and reject revelation generally seek to hide from

exposure of their nature and actions and to blame others.

נשך

The root word of the Hebrew word translated as *beguiled* in verse thirteen contains in its first two characters a parent root made up of the characters of the seed sprout and the two teeth that can be visualized as *continually pressing*. This parent root sounds like *nash*, and is the semitic root of the word *gnash* as in *gnashing of teeth*. This understanding of the Hebrew word as *continually pressing* suggests a meaning that may be broader than and somewhat different from that of the English word *beguiling*. It suggests the possibility that the temptation of Eve by the serpent may have been a continual application of pressure, rather than a one-time successful attempt by the *subtil* serpent. With the final symbol of this root word, the bull, this word may be understood as *continually pressing strength* or *continually pressing God*. Understanding this word as *continually pressing God* conveys the untiring, relentless way in which Satan pursues his objective of opposing God's plan and attacking His children.

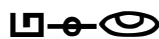
After receiving the responses of Adam and Eve, God curses the serpent from all the beasts of the field. As part of that curse he is to go upon his belly, which suggests that previous to the curse he does not go upon his belly, having legs or wings or both. He is an imposter previously, appearing in the form of an angel of light, or a burning one, or seraph, but lacking the true light and instead appealing to the aforementioned characteristics of darkness. Now he is separated and distinguished from all other beasts of the field due to his lack of legs or arms. He is as the Hebrew word translated as *cursed* indicates abhorred and detested.

אָרָב

One way of understanding the root word from which the Hebrew word translated as *cursed* is derived is *God to the beginning*, with the double

man's head adding emphasis. This may convey that a cursing from God takes away light and strips away blessings bestowed by God to take a created being back towards the beginning where darkness and chaos reign. This is illustrated with the serpent from whom abilities, features, and light are taken. With this withdrawal of blessings, suffering increases, but at the same time it is an opportunity to learn obedience through suffering, and may be a new beginning, an opportunity to start again, just as fear in its negative sense may at some point lead a created being through a thorny path once again *to throw the head to God*.

God says he will put enmity between the serpent and its seed and the woman and her seed. The woman's seed will bruise or crush the head of the serpent, and the serpent in turn will bruise the heel of the woman's seed. These two body parts are polar opposites and symbolically meaningful in this curse. The head represents the beginning, chief, director, and best of the body, whereas the heel can also represent the footprint, hinder part, or rear.



In addition, the Hebrew root of the word translated as *heel* is a verb meaning to supplant, circumvent, assail insidiously, attack, and overreach, highlighting the negative and deceptive approach that the serpent takes. The heel is also associated with progression and journeying, as in normal walking it is the first body part to contact the ground with each step. Pictographically, the symbols of the eye followed by the horizon followed by the home may be understood as *eye to the horizon for home or seeing or knowledge of a distant home*, which indicates pursuing a journey with the knowledge of a distant home at the end of the journey.



The name Jacob comes from this word, as Jacob takes hold of Esau's

heel as he is born, and Jacob's name and role relate to journeying in a way that is relevant to the role of the serpent bruising the heel of God's children. Jacob in pictographic Hebrew is formed by adding the hand or arm to the word translated as *heel*, which depicts the act of holding the heel. Another way of understanding these symbols in sequence is *holding vision or knowledge of a distant home*. With an understanding of ancient Jacob as a prophet who with long term vision sees both the temporal and spiritual need for his family to travel into Egypt, into bondage, and eventually to return through Exodus from Egypt into the wilderness and finally into the Promised Land, or in other words to follow the ancient temple pattern, this pictographic name makes complete sense and lends insight into the role of the House of Jacob throughout time in its journey in this world and into the spiritual Promised Land in eternity.

With the perspective of the heel symbolizing journeying, the imagery of *bruising his heel* may be understood as *attacking someone on a journey being pursued*, which is apt in this context as Satan continually lies in wait and attacks the seed of Adam and Eve with the objective of stopping and ideally reversing their course on their journey home and destroying them. In this endeavor Satan and those who follow him ironically perform an essential *bruising* role as they create the opposition required in the journey of God's children for the development of faith and play their part in the ancient temple pattern for all of God's children—tempting, opposing, and tormenting them at each step.



Verses sixteen through nineteen include some fascinating insights into the relationship between God and man, what salvation really is, and the role of Eve and Adam and their posterity. Some of these insights are illustrated in the Hebrew word used both in the case of Eve and Adam to describe their travail and toil, or in some English translations the sorrow that God gives them. It is a word that may be read as combining

the parent roots of two shorter Hebrew words *tree* and *son*, which carry great meaning associated with the crucifixion of the Son of God. In addition, the pictographic Hebrew composed of the eye, winding path, home, tent pole, and seed sprout is a beautiful example of how pictographic Hebrew can tell a story. One way of understanding this word is as *seeing or knowing the winding path home linked with posterity*, and this understanding and the understanding drawn from the combination of parent roots are beautifully complementary.

Due to the Fall of Adam and Eve, God provides a Savior to redeem them from the Fall and bless them with every blessing required to bring them back into the presence of the Father with perfected bodies to receive a fullness of joy. They are to walk a path partaking of this salvation and, as disciples, follow the Lord back to heaven, and one important component of this path and acceptance of light is to suffer, offering humble sacrifice in similitude of the Son of God. Thus, they may become like him through His grace and the salvation He provides, with part of this salvation necessarily involving a refining, learning experience, which cannot occur without trial and pain that are for these wise, long-term purposes often inflicted to the extent that they can be born.

*And there were gathered together in one place an innumerable company of the spirits of the just, who had been faithful in the testimony of Jesus while they lived in mortality;*

*And who had offered sacrifice in the similitude of the great sacrifice of the Son of God, and had suffered tribulation in their Redeemer's name.*

*All these had departed the mortal life, firm in the hope of a glorious resurrection, through the grace of God the Father and his Only Begotten Son, Jesus Christ. Doctrine and Covenants 138:12-14*

Adam and Eve differ in the types of sorrow they are given. Eve's sorrow includes the bearing and rearing of children. There is the

discomfort and burden of pregnancy, the great physical pain with delivery, and there is the sorrow of rearing children who cause her pain at other points of their rearing. Eve's sacrifice and sorrow truly are in similitude of the sacrifice and sorrow of the Son of God. She bears a burden; she suffers to bring forth life; her water breaks; she bleeds; and her flesh is torn in the process of bringing forth life. This physical birth process involves the three following elements of the process of salvation or spiritual rebirth:

*For by the water ye keep the commandment; by the Spirit ye are justified, and by the blood ye are sanctified; Moses 6:60*

After birth, the woman gives all she has to nourish the baby, even providing the baby nourishment from her body, as, in effect, she becomes for the child the bread of life. This physical nourishment symbolizes the relationship that she will have with her children to greater or lesser degrees depending on the child for the remainder of her life and into eternity.

Often, symbolic types of Christ involve the imagery and reality of the suffering of women for their children. For instance, Psalm 22:6 begins with, *But I am a worm, and no man*, and from a superficial reading of that phrase it certainly makes no sense. Why compare Christ to a worm?

A more in-depth examination of the language found here uncovers beautiful symbolism and profound meaning: There are three Hebrew words that are translated into worm in English, and the two occurring most frequently refer to entirely different creatures and carry completely opposite symbolic meanings. Both of these Hebrew words are found in Job 25:6 and are translated as *worm* in English:

*How much less man, that is a worm? And the son of man, which is a worm?*

In the English translation finding meaning is difficult but turning to the

Hebrew provides tremendous meaning. The first worm in this verse, which is associated with imperfect man, refers in Hebrew to a typical worm, which is involved in the process of decomposition and returning living matter into the earth. The second worm, which is associated with God in this verse, in Hebrew is a different creature altogether and is associated with life and new life in a wonderful way both in reality and symbolically.

This second worm is the crimson worm (*coccus ilicis*). When the female crimson worm is ready to give birth she attaches herself to a tree or other form of wood and spins a hard cocoon or shell. She attaches so securely to the wood that the shell cannot be removed without tearing her flesh apart and killing her. After attaching to the tree and spinning the cocoon she then lays her eggs under her body, which is under the protective, hard cocoon. When the baby worms hatch they remain there where the mother worm provides protection, and where they feed on the still living body of the mother worm. After a few days the young worms are able to live on their own, and at that point the worm dies, oozing in her death a crimson dye, which stains the wood to which she is attached as well as staining the baby worms so that they are colored crimson for the remainder of their lives. Finally, three days after her death the mother crimson worm loses her crimson color, turns into a white wax, and falls to the ground.

This entire process is richly symbolic of the sacrifice of Christ, as He died for us on the cross, and in that sacrifice makes us His children; as He provides protection from evil and becomes for us the bread of life; as He bled from every pore, and we are washed clean and transformed through His blood; and as He voluntarily lay down His life on the cross and three days later took His body up again in His resurrection, transformed and perfected.

Returning to Psalm 22:6, Christ is well typified by the female crimson worm who gives life to her children through her total sacrifice and death, and just as that creature is wholly different from a typical worm who is

associated with decay and the earth, Christ is *no man*, in that He is completely different from fallen man in His sinless nature and matchless character.

One characteristic of the female crimson worm and her symbolism of Christ that is particularly meaningful is the securely fixed attachment the crimson worm makes to the wood. There is nothing that can dissuade and prevent the crimson worm from making her sacrifice for her children except external force beyond her own strength, leading to her death.

Similarly, the atoning sacrifice of Christ is firmly secured from before the creation due to His pure and infinite love for His children. One crucial and comforting difference between the crimson worm and Christ here is that in the case of Christ there is no opposing power strong enough to overcome His love and power and by force prevent Him from accomplishing His mission. Death did not and cannot overcome Him; He conquered death. Hell did not and cannot overcome Him; He conquered hell. He overcomes all things and truly is the resurrection and the life, and while His creations may typify Him to one extent or another, no one approaches His goodness and power.

*Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee.*

*Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me. Isaiah 49:15-16*

The man's sorrow and toil also involve the work of salvation for his wife and his children in a way that is a symbolic type of Christ. This is an extension of the previous charge given to Adam to dress and keep the garden, but in a new context of a land that is cursed for his sake, and which includes toil and sweat, enemies and destructive forces. Again, it is his role within these conditions and in similitude of the Son of God, to keep his dependent family safe, sheltered, clothed, and fed. He is to be the primary provider and protector working in tandem with his wife to

bless their family.

The relationship between Adam and Eve is described in terms of the man ruling over the woman, and that her desire shall be to him. As this principle is properly understood and acted upon, the man is to rule as a keeper and a servant, which is paradoxical from a worldly perspective but true and profound for those meek, lowly in heart, and possessing charity. He is to provide, guard, protect, and, if necessary, give his life for his family, just as a good shepherd does for his flock. He is to serve, just as a righteous king is a servant, attending to the needs of his family. He is also to watch over and serve others including widows, orphans, and strangers in the land. In this way, the man's sacrifice is also ideally in similitude of the Son of God.



The Hebrew word translated as *rule* here includes the shepherd's staff as the final character, which often refers to shepherding, or keeping and serving. The first character, symbolizing water, may be understood in terms of power, and the second character, symbolizing teeth, may be understood as *consuming* or *pressing*. One way of understanding these symbols together is *with power consuming the shepherd's staff*, or in other words, as Christ does, fully committing to shepherding, being meek and lowly, no matter how far the requirement to descend may be, and no matter what the sacrifice might be, including life itself.

Taken and performed in the manner intended, Adam and Eve have a life-long tutorial in sacrificing in similitude of the Son of God. As they do this faithfully, they grow closer to God, understanding more fully who He is than they could in any other way. At the same time, they grow closer to one another as they unitedly work, serve, and sacrifice to bless the lives of their posterity.

Just as Adam and Eve sorrow and sacrifice in similitude of the Son of God, so the Son of God's sacrifice may be understood as being in

similitude of the sorrow given to Adam and Eve and their male and female posterity. Christ sweats great drops of blood in order to see His seed, just as the man earns his bread by the sweat of his brow, suffering in a life of labor to care for his family. He lays down His life for all as a provider, protector, and keeper. Christ provided new birth through bearing the burden of sin and death for us, through the agony He suffered as He bled from every pore and His flesh was torn, and His water was broken. He is the bread of life. As Adam and Eve are blessed with sorrow to bless their seed, Christ accomplishes all things for the blessing of His seed.

Looking at this Hebrew word translated as *sorrow* as it relates to the Hebrew word translated as *Eden* in the pictographic Hebrew provides additional insight: In pictographic Hebrew *Eden* is:



and the word translated as *sorrow* in Genesis 3:16-17 is:



These two words begin and end in Hebrew with the same symbols, and the connection between these words is instructive as they involve different but related paths to the same ultimate objective.

The first word may also be understood in Hebrew as pleasure, which provides contrast with the second word's meaning of sorrow. This first word begins from right to left with an eye followed by a door followed by a seed sprout, and it may be understood in a number of ways besides Eden and pleasure, one of which is *seeing or knowing through the door of direct communication with God, or in other words revelation, the way to a continuation of lives, or posterity*. This is the existence that God provides in the Garden of Eden, a way to progress by receiving continual revelation and by obedience to that revelation, and in doing so to find pleasure, live in increasing joy, and remain in God's presence,

which can allow nothing in it that is unclean. Again, none of God's children sent to this earth, save Christ only, are able to progress by revelation and obedience alone, and so Adam and Eve fall as any other of God's imperfect children would have fallen in the Garden of Eden.

The second word also describes a process of coming to know God and receiving joy and a continuation of lives, or posterity, but it is more involved and sorrowful. One way of understanding this pictographic word is as *seeing and knowing God through a winding and sorrowful journey home, and through this journey being connected or sealed, with a continuation of lives, or posterity.*

As mentioned previously, this understanding can be overlaid by the fact that this word may also be understood as the combination of the core components of two shorter words—translated into English as *tree* (or wood or board) and *son*. Thus, this sorrowful journey with its gaining of knowledge and its ultimate objective of joy in continuation of seed is tied to and dependent upon the sorrow and sacrifice of the Son of God as revealed by the Son on the cross.

It is in the necessity of taking the journey described by the second word as opposed to that described by the first word, as a result of the Fall, that the sacrifice and suffering of Christ become necessary. He, who alone, is able fully to live the law of obedience and progress without suffering to the Father, is the One who bears the full weight of the sorrowful journey of life for all God's children including the pains, death, and sins of all, and through this becomes the only way back into the presence of the Father with the blessings of immortality and, through repentance, salvation and eternal lives.

Pictographically, the second word can represent the sacrifice of Christ and its fruits, as the second symbol in this word often represents a winding path up the side of a mountain with a low beginning and an ending ascension, as Christ descends below all things, ascends Golgotha bearing the cross to His voluntary death, and finally ascends

home in His unique resurrection and judgment as He raises up His own body and ascends to the Father without intermediary, securing His seed, which is all those who believe in His name, repent, and follow Him.

*...Behold, I say unto you, that when his soul has been made an offering for sin he shall see his seed...* Mosiah 15:10

Another complementary layer in understanding the second word again involves men and women in their highest and only lasting purposes as fathers and mothers, extending to those who not having the opportunity for parenthood in this life sacrifice self in service to and love for God and others, and in this way become types of Christ through emulation of His sacrifice.

In all this there is a great unification and melding of purpose and role in refining sorrow and in the great objective of working to save seed. Returning to the two pictographic words, the meaning and path described by the first is always available, and is the ultimate objective of the instruction, experience, and refinement involved in the path described by the second—receiving and following revelation and commandment, to the end of a fullness of joy and exaltation.

*Abraham received all things, whatsoever he received, by revelation and commandment, by my word, saith the Lord, and hath entered into his exaltation and sitteth upon his throne.* Doctrine and Covenants 132:29

It is through the path of sorrow, repentance, and increasing faith that God's children are purged from their dross and at many points and in many ways can come to understand the first word as descriptive of the better path, and that substitute salvation and gods all lead to continuing sorrow, and that salvation can be received only from and through Christ.

At this point the woman is first called Eve. Eve is the female form of the

word translated as *life*, as Adam says she is the *mother of all living*. This is in contrast to Adam, which may be understood as *earth* or *dirt*, and which has within it a shorter word translated as *blood*. The combination of these elements is important as man and woman together create life in its mortal form, or life sustained by blood and spirit rather than spirit alone.

The Lord then makes garments or coats of skins for Adam and Eve and clothes them. The Hebrew word translated here as *garments* or *coats* is the same one used for the coat of many colours that Jacob makes for Joseph, the garments made for Aaron and his sons to wear in their priestly work, and in other cases where the wearer is of royal lineage or possesses the priesthood.

## תַּיִתּוּ

One way of understanding the pictographic Hebrew word translated as *coat* or *garment* is simply sequentially to list common descriptors of the five characters that make up the word as follows: *receive mark*, *seed connects to mark*, or *receive Christ*, *seed connects to Christ*. This suggests covenant receiving based on the mark, or cross, or Christ, and that posterity is linked to Christ as well through the same covenant. The coat or garment, taken from the sacrificial animal, represents the covenant with Christ to receive salvation and eternal lives, Priesthood and eternal seed, given to Adam and Eve and renewed from time to time and known as the Abrahamic covenant.

The act of clothing involves a Hebrew word that is interpreted as *to clothe and cover* but is derived from a root verb that communicates virtually the opposite—meaning to wither, dry up, or put to shame. Symbolically and literally the act of providing *coats of skins* to clothe Adam and Eve necessarily involves the exposing and death of the sacrificial animal, representing Christ. The skins become a physical covering but also represent a spiritual covering or forgiveness of sins and a covenant of salvation during the remainder of their mortal lives as

a result of the infinite and eternal sacrifice of Christ.



A parent root in this word translated as *clothe* is the house followed by the two teeth, which can be visualized as *house consumed* or *dried up* or *put to shame*. This parent root is pronounced as *bash* and is the semitic root for words such as *bashful*. With the addition of the first character, the shepherd's staff, the word may be understood as *shepherd's* or *lamb's house consumed* or *dried up* or *put to shame*, or it may be understood as *wrapping a consumed house*. When a lamb is sacrificed, the lamb's house, or skin, is literally removed, exposing the unclothed lamb, leaving it to wither, dry up, and be put to shame. In its death, exposure, and shame, the lamb transfers its life, or covering in the form of the skin, coat, or garment to the one offering sacrifice. This is done in symbolism of the sacrifice of Christ who in preparation for His crucifixion has His raiment removed and is placed on the cross without covering, as that garment is offered to those He saves.

*For the dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet.*

*I may tell all my bones: they look and stare upon me.*

*They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.*

Psalm 22:16-17



The Hebrew word translated as *light* is a homophone to the word translated as *skin* with only the beginning vowel like character being different and the final two letters identical. The coat of skins may be exchanged for another covering after mortality, a robe of light and glory according to faithfulness and by the grace of God.

At this point, with much of the symbolism of this chapter covered, I will return to the question the Lord asks Adam in verse 11:

*Who told thee that thou wast naked?*

The Lord does not ask Adam why he is naked or condemn Adam and Eve for being naked. It is their own recognition, and according to some accounts it is the serpent, or Satan, that leads them to understand their condition of nakedness as being something to hide. Does the Lord find fault with their nakedness? To this point the Lord associates with Adam and Eve in their condition of nakedness without it being an issue. In Hebrew the word translated as *naked* may also be understood as *ragged, poorly dressed, or poor*, and the meaning of this word is much broader than mere physical nakedness. The Lord knows they are naked. Their condition of nakedness is obvious, and in their state of innocence being otherwise would be unnatural. The Lord is their loving Creator, with one understanding of the verb *to create* being *to fatten*. It is the Lord's great desire and purpose to add to or fatten them, or to clothe them in every way, not just physically but spiritually, taking them from their current state of relative overall nakedness along a path to completion.

*For behold, this is my work and my glory—to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man.* Moses 1:39

It is not the Lord's desire or in His nature to deal with any of His creations with condemnation for their incompleteness. Should this be something that we do to each other or have to receive from each other? And, when this condemnation occurs, how should we best deal with it? Through the recognition and condemnation of nakedness in a broad sense, judgment is introduced into the world. Evil, or *man watching*, is introduced into the world as a contrast with good, and judgment and the evil of watchfulness immediately affect how Adam and Eve live and continue to affect how their posterity lives.

Why do Adam and Eve cover themselves with aprons of fig leaves, and why and how does their posterity continue to do so, and with what effects?

One way of looking at the Lord's question with editorial license is: *Who told thee that thou was incomplete or lacking or weak? Because I didn't. And, if thy focus is to be on covering thy incomplete and weak condition and hiding behind this delusional covering, how can thou come unto me in thy weakness, so that I can make weak things become strong unto thee?* (See Ether 12:27 for reference.)

Communicating to someone that they are naked or lacking or weak, in condemnation or derision rather than seeing, knowing, and interacting with them with love is what the Lord teaches not to do in the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5:22 as he says, *but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.* This kind of judgment and the natural reaction to this judgment that occurs as people hide by making for themselves aprons of fig leaves oppose the progression that comes through embracing truth, including honesty in self-awareness and self-portrayal. Can progression in health, for example, occur if a person keeps hidden from their doctor their disease and affliction, or is it better to be completely self-aware and transparent in order to receive help?

Aprons of fig leaves are sewn together with whatever individual fig leaves work best for an individual within their culture, including attire, grooming, educational attainment, position, status, wealth, the demonstration of works, signaling through culturally validated speech, or in any other way that is effective. Jesus calls these things out regularly among the honored, privileged, and powerful, as for example, in Matthew 23, in which He describes the many ways in which the scribes and Pharisees promote themselves and enjoy the honors of men and privileges of the institutions.

Outside of the great and spacious building or inner circles of the cultures of the world where honor and privilege provide cover, aprons of

fig leaves are often used in self-promotion to enter the sought after inner circles. Aprons of fig leaves are also virtually always necessary to provide cover for those among the lower classes—those often invisible, scorned, despised, and viewed as inferior who are faced with being cast out of the synagogues or worse, who must be careful, hiding through sewing aprons of fig leaves together in other ways to survive. The difference here is that this need to hide is a need to hide from the hard and soft totalitarianism and general opposition of the culture. These people, often meek and humble, are much less likely to cover with aprons of fig leaves to hide from God as they enter into their closets to pray, and it is often among the lower classes that the Lord and His servants come with mercy and in power, as for instance when angels herald the birth of the Lord to humble shepherds.

Those who put away the cover of aprons of fig leaves among the unpopular class with boldness and disregard for any immediate consequences to themselves or who, like Moses, live in such a way as to be cast out of the upper class, are the prophets and martyrs.

In the Sermon on the Mount the Lord addresses the near universal inclination among imperfect beings to hide behind aprons of fig leaves and to use their cover for self-promotion, or merely self-preservation from fault finding by others, or for any other purposes: He commands His children to do alms and to pray and fast but not to do these things before men to be seen of them. Later in the Sermon He also commands not to judge by appearances. But, as the world is full of evil, the world is full of judgment based on appearance, and consequently there is every incentive to act for the purpose of being seen by others in a positive light, to position and to self-promote, or even just to survive at a minimal level of value within the culture. There is this constant tension—to act in a way to be seen and valued by those around us, or, alternatively, to follow Christ, doing good but not doing so to be seen of men, with the constant risk in this world of being *despised and rejected of men* (Isaiah 53:3) or at least of existing with little value and lack of

meaningful association within the cultures of the world.

This principle of covering weakness and sin is taught throughout the scriptures. As another example, in Doctrine and Covenants 121 the Lord teaches about the *rights of the priesthood* and what can lead to the loss of priesthood authority. The very first item in this list is *when we undertake to cover our sins*. (Doctrine and Covenants 121:37). In my observation, people who are without guile and pretense and freely acknowledge their sins, weaknesses, and reliance on God's grace possess spiritual power and authority from God, and those who are careful to cover their sins and put forward a carefully crafted appearance lack spirituality.

The brother of Jared journeys spiritually to the point where he is redeemed from the fall and enters into the Lord's presence. A great key to this is his recognition of the effects of the fall and of his own fallen condition:

*...Now behold, O Lord, and do not be angry with thy servant because of his weakness before thee; for we know that thou art holy and dwellest in the heavens, and that we are unworthy before thee; because of the fall our natures have become evil continually;... Ether 3:2*

It is not due to the brother of Jared's works or an appearance of righteousness that he cultivates that he is redeemed from the fall but only through the mercy of Christ, which he fully recognizes and humbly seeks. As one more example, the people of King Benjamin follow the same pattern:

*And they had viewed themselves in their own carnal state, even less than the dust of the earth. And they all cried aloud with one voice, saying: O have mercy, and apply the atoning blood of Christ that we may receive forgiveness of our sins, and our hearts may be purified; for we believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who created heaven and earth, and all things; who shall come down among the children of*

men.

*And it came to pass that after they had spoken these words the Spirit of the Lord came upon them, and they were filled with joy, having received a remission of their sins, and having peace of conscience, because of the exceeding faith which they had in Jesus Christ who should come, according to the words which king Benjamin had spoken unto them. Mosiah 4:2-3*

Seeing themselves *in their own carnal state, even less than the dust of the earth* is necessary for them to come to a *knowledge of the goodness of God* (Mosiah 4:6). They cast off their aprons of fig leaves for the blessings of true salvation.

The coats of skins that the Lord provides to Adam and Eve are in stark contrast with the aprons of fig leaves, and this contrast is similar to the later contrast between the sacrifices of Cain and Abel. As recorded in Genesis 4:3-4 Cain offers a sacrifice of the *fruit of the ground* whereas Abel offers the prescribed sacrifice of the *firstlings of his flock*. Both the aprons of fig leaves and the fruit of the ground are not revealed by God, and the aprons of fig leaves are resorted to by Adam and Eve, perhaps being suggested by the serpent, or Satan, as an easy, insufficient, and an outward, appearance-based covering of sin.

The coats of skins necessarily require sacrifice, are difficult to create, and symbolize an infinite and eternal sacrifice, and it follows that the first sacrifices may occur at this time, even before Adam and Eve are driven out of the Garden of Eden. How else does God have coats of skins with which to clothe them, except in a miraculous, painless way, which is possible, but counter to the principle of sacrifice essential to the purpose of the coats of skins? If it is the case that the first sacrifices occur at this time, do Adam and Eve witness these first sacrifices—the sacrifices of the *firstlings of his flock*? Do they begin to understand what is and will be truly required to cover not just physical, but also mental, emotional, and spiritual nakedness and to redeem from sin and

death—something that they can in no way do for themselves? Do they begin in this bittersweet way to receive the *spirit of prophecy*, which is the *testimony of Jesus* (Revelation 19:10)?

Adam and Eve put off their aprons of fig leaves for the coats of skins provided to them by the Lord as representative of true salvation. How does this symbolism and principle apply to God's children in all dispensations, including this dispensation? In Ether chapter four Moroni exhorts the Gentiles and the House of Israel to rend a *veil of unbelief* (Ether 4:15). What exactly is this *veil of unbelief*, and is it to be rent through increasing works, structure, organization, instructions and guidelines, and appearance as an attempt to achieve salvation, or is the veil of unbelief similar in principle to the apron of fig leaves? Is the veil to be rent by casting off aprons of fig leaves in pure humility and faith in Jesus Christ as the brother of Jared does, and as the people of King Benjamin and many others who *call upon the Father in my name, with a broken heart and a contrite spirit* do in receiving coats of skins as they reject aprons of fig leaves? Is the veil to be rent by rejecting aprons of fig leaves in exchange simply and fully for belief in Jesus Christ as the only way to salvation?

Can the veil of unbelief be rent in full faith and charity to the point where aprons of fig leaves become a relic of lesser times, and salvation by Christ alone is the full and only reality? And is this a core component of a celestial society where among other attributes there can exist no cover other than that provided by Christ through grace; where transparency is complete and celestial beings know as they are known?

*For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.*

1 Corinthians 13:12

In a celestial society, where people know as they are known with the humility, mutual respect and regard, and charity required to do that, there will be no calling out based on judgment of lack or deficiency or

weakness in others. Institutions outside the family will be unnecessary, leaving families and individuals to rely on Christ alone, loving God and neighbor, with nothing being added to or taken away from the pure Gospel of Jesus Christ in that celestial existence:

*Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah:*

*Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord:*

*But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.*

*And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every many his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.*

Jeremiah 31:31-34

\*\*\*\*\*

*Now this same Priesthood, which was in the beginning, shall be in the end of the world also. Moses 6:7*



Finally, Adam and Eve are driven out of the Garden of Eden. The Hebrew word translated as *drove out* includes a parent root in its first two characters, the foot or leg and the man's head, which together generally represent *walking man*. With the addition of the final character the symbols can be seen as *walking man pressing*, which indicates a walking man that is pressing down grass or other untrodden

upon nature in a new or unworn path, outside of society. This root word is the same as that which is the root of the noun translated as *stranger*, and in their driving out they become strangers from God's presence. As a consequence of eating the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and rejecting the principle of revelation, or God's association, they are disassociated from God to a degree. In temple orientation they are driven to the east, farther from God's presence outside the enclosure and protection of the Holy Place of the temple into what is called the Court of Sacrifices. Their way to the tree of life is blocked, and the tree is protected by the cherubim who are angels of God.



*And he made the mercy seat of pure gold: two cubits and a half was the length thereof, and one cubit and a half the breadth thereof.*

*And he made two cherubims of gold, beaten out of one piece made he them, on the two ends of the mercy seat;*

*One cherub on the end on this side, and another cherub on the other end on that side: out of the mercy seat made he the cherubims on the two ends thereof.*

*And the cherubims spread out their wings on high, and covered with their wings over the mercy seat, with their faces one to another; even to the mercy seatward were the faces of the cherubims. Exodus 37:6-9*

\*\*\*\*\*

*And in the most holy house he made two cherubims of image work, and overlaid them with gold.*

*And the wings of the cherubims were twenty cubits long: one wing of the one cherub was five cubits, reaching to the wall of the house: and the other wing was likewise five cubits, reaching to the wing of the other cherub.*

*And one wing of the other cherub was five cubits, reaching to the wall of the house: and the other wing was five cubits also, joining to the wing of the other cherub.*

*The wings of these cherubims spread themselves forth twenty cubits: and they stood on their feet, and their faces were inward. 2*

Chronicles 10-13

It was understood by some in ancient times that the two cherubim in the Temple of Solomon represent male and female angelic beings, welded or sealed together, facing at the same time each other and God who is between them. Whether or not this is the case, there is some interesting symbolism associated with this traditional understanding; first, the fact that there is a male angelic being and a female angelic being; second, that they are sealed together, indicating their relationship that could be marital or could be intended to be marital; and finally, that they purposefully are designed to face each other and God between them at the same time, showing a correct understanding of relationships, faith, revelation, and salvation.

Pictographically, the root word translated as *cherubim* (plural form) includes a parent root with the man's head and the house, which is understood to represent many or great or master, as in the word *rabbi*. With the hand in the shape of a cup preceding this parent root the word may be understood as *receiving many* or *receiving masters*. The cherubim generally come in pairs, and at least in the case of those in the temple of Solomon may be male and female and are generally found at entry ways to a holier place.

The Hebrew word used to indicate that the cherubim *keep* the way of the tree of life is the same word used in the commandment to *keep* the Garden formerly given to Adam. By his Fall, Adam has, with Eve, fallen from his stewardship and role to keep the Garden of Eden, and this role is passed on to obedient, angelic servants, who again may be male and female angelic counterparts for Adam and Eve. At the same time Adam

and Eve and their righteous posterity live as strangers throughout their sojourn in the world until they are redeemed from the Fall and come again into the presence of God.

*These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.*

Hebrews 11:13

## **Genesis Four**

Before the account continues in Genesis four there is a portion that is included in Moses that is left out of Genesis that is of critical importance:

*And it came to pass that after I, the Lord God, had driven them out, that Adam began to till the earth, and to have dominion over all the beasts of the field, and to eat his bread by the sweat of his brow, as I the Lord had commanded him. And Eve, also, his wife, did labor with him.*

*And Adam knew his wife, and she bare unto him sons and daughters, and they began to multiply and to replenish the earth.*

*And from that time forth, the sons and daughters of Adam began to divide two and two in the land, and to till the land, and to tend flocks, and they also begat sons and daughters.*

*And Adam and Eve, his wife, called upon the name of the Lord, and they heard the voice of the Lord from the way toward the Garden of Eden, speaking unto them, and they saw him not; for they were shut out from his presence.*

*And he gave unto them commandments, that they should worship the Lord their God, and should offer the firstlings of their flocks, for an offering unto the Lord. And Adam was obedient unto the commandments of the Lord.*

*And after many days an angel of the Lord appeared unto Adam, saying: Why dost thou offer sacrifices unto the Lord? And Adam said unto him: I know not, save the Lord commanded me.*

*And then the angel spake, saying: This thing is a similitude of the sacrifice of the Only Begotten of the Father, which is full of grace and truth.*

*Wherefore, thou shalt do all that thou doest in the name of the Son,*

*and thou shalt repent and call upon God in the name of the Son forevermore.*

*And in that day the Holy Ghost fell upon Adam, which beareth record of the Father and the Son, saying: I am the Only Begotten of the Father from the beginning, henceforth and forever, that as thou hast fallen thou mayest be redeemed, and all mankind, even as many as will.*

*And in that day Adam blessed God and was filled, and began to prophesy concerning all the families of the earth, saying: Blessed be the name of God, for because of my 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.*

*And Adam and Eve blessed the name of God, and they made all things known unto their sons and their daughters.*

*And Satan came among them, saying: I am also a son of God; and he commanded them, saying: Believe it not; and they believed it not, and they loved Satan more than God. And men began from that time forth to be carnal, sensual, and devilish.*

*And the Lord God called upon men by the Holy Ghost everywhere and commanded them that they should repent;*

*And as many as believed in the Son, and repented of their sins, should be saved; and as many as believed not and repented not, should be damned; and the words went forth out of the mouth of God in a firm decree; wherefore they must be fulfilled.*

*And Adam and Eve, his wife, ceased not to call upon God...*  
Moses 5:1-16.

Among those points of critical importance in these verses is first that Adam and Eve sacrifice and call upon God in prayer from the beginning of their mortal life cast out from His presence. They continue to do this faithfully until they are grandparents, as is indicated in the above verses, before they receive further knowledge as to the purpose of sacrifice together with other truths taught by angels and God. From the beginning, outside of the Garden, they seek to do God's will and return back into his presence. This expressed desire is their most important objective—to enter again into God's presence, having gained knowledge and having received a body. Their second most important objective is to bless as many of their posterity as will receive it with the same blessing. They seek and work to obtain these objectives both in this life and the next through their faith in Jesus Christ and obedience to the commandments and ordinances of His Gospel. The final recorded event of Adam's life is a realization of both objectives:

*Three years previous to the death of Adam, he called Seth, Enos, Cainan, Mahalaleel, Jared, Enoch, and Methuselah, who were all high priests, with the residue of his posterity who were righteous, into the valley of Adam-ondi-Ahman, and there bestowed upon them his last blessing.*

*And the Lord appeared unto them, and they rose up and blessed Adam, and called him Michael, the prince, the archangel.*

*And the Lord administered comfort unto Adam, and said unto him: I have set thee to be at the head; a multitude of nations shall come of thee, and thou art a prince over them forever.*

*And Adam stood up in the midst of the congregation; and, notwithstanding he was bowed down with age, being full of the Holy Ghost, predicted whatsoever should befall his posterity unto the latest generation. Doctrine and Covenants 107:53-56*

Just as he does in the earlier passage when visited by the angel and when the Holy Ghost falls upon him, Adam prophesies concerning all his seed. This highlights another important component of this passage that is missing from the Genesis account. It is an example of interaction directly between God and man and also between God's servants (or angels) and man. This interaction is a common component of much of the scripture that has been taken from or modified in the accounts handed down. God and his angels do interact with mankind, and this interaction is always a characteristic of true religion. Where it is taken from the record, the doctrine, and from the exercise of whatever ecclesiastical authority is claimed, religion divorces itself from God and His will in order to follow the will, wisdom, and precepts of men. Ultimately, it is Satan, in the pattern demonstrated by the serpent in the Garden, who is always behind this process, who seeks to hijack religion, set himself up as an imposter in God's place, and promulgate lies, deception, and control. This is his modus operandi from the premortal council to the end battle of the great God in which he is defeated and cast out forever.

Among the first commandments given to man, and the first ordinance, is that of sacrifice of the firstlings of their flocks. Adam is obedient to this commandment without knowing the reason the commandment is given, and as a result of his faithfulness he is visited by an angel from God who asks him why he is offering sacrifices, and when Adam says he does not know other than that he is obeying God's commandment the angel states that this sacrifice is in *similitude of the sacrifice of the Only Begotten of the Father*. This is the great atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ who is the foundation upon which everything is created and the source of salvation.

Just as with communication between God and man, Jesus Christ and the salvation He provides through His atoning sacrifice, the foundation of all organized existence, is another component that is often missing or obscured in the scriptural accounts handed down. It is the power that

overcomes the Fall of Adam and Eve and all mankind; it is represented at the altar of the temple in the Court of Sacrifices, which provides the turning point away from darkness and back towards light and into the presence of God; and, thus, it is the only means and way to achieve the two primary objectives pursued by Adam and Eve. In its lack or obscuring in the scriptural record Satan works to set himself up as the imposter and offer a different way, or a counterfeit salvation, which in reality takes mankind further into darkness and towards destruction.

The centrality of the Son is further emphasized in the directive to do all things, including calling upon God, in the name of the Son. He is always to be the focal point due to His sinless nature and unparalleled, unconquerable, and infinite love and strength, and to His unique role as First Born, Only Begotten, Creator, and Redeemer. As recorded in John 14:6:

*Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.*

Or as recorded in the previously referenced passage in Moses:

*I am the Only Begotten of the Father from the beginning, henceforth and forever, that as thou hast fallen thou mayest be redeemed, and all mankind, even as many as will. Moses 5:9*

This charge to do all things in the name of the Son, exercising faith in Him, is also continually countered by Satan, as he teaches *I am also a Son of God*, and leads the people whenever possible not to believe in Jesus Christ, substituting himself directly or much more often, due to its ease, teaching men to set themselves or others up to receive that honor that should only be given to God. This relates directly to the first of the Ten Commandments: *Thou shalt have no other gods before me.* Exodus 20:3 This commandment prohibits anything that detracts from or is a substitute for obeying the First Great Commandment:

*Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy*

*soul, and with all thy mind.* Matthew 22:37.

Finally, in the referenced passage from Moses both Adam and Eve express gratitude for the Fall and the blessings afforded to them through the redemption provided as a result. There is no justification of sin here but merely a recognition of the fact that sinners sin, or possess a naturally sinful nature, and that imperfect people inevitably and necessarily must tread a thorny path at various points in their existence and receive salvation not through their own merits but through the merits alone of Jesus Christ. This is not a recognition applicable only to Adam and Eve, but a universal perspective recognizing that imperfect beings must always be delivered from death and hell until they receive a perfected nature through Christ, with a profound gratitude for the redemption of Jesus Christ, the only and sure way back into the presence of God in a sanctified and perfected state.

The account in Genesis four verse one begins after Adam and Eve are cast out of the Garden of Eden, recording that *Adam knew Eve his wife*. The Hebrew verb translated as *to know* here is the same one discussed previously and indicates experiential knowledge. Used in this sense this verb, expressed in English as *to know*, is often viewed in English as a euphemism, but this characterization incorrectly implies that sexual intimacy between a man and a woman is degrading and sinful. Understanding sexual intimacy within a marital relationship between a man and a woman in terms of this word in Hebrew, and in terms of what this relationship is really intended to be, yields a very different understanding. Ideally this intimacy is part of a complete relationship in which husband and wife grow in all aspects of knowledge of each other. They grow in service towards and love for each other and their family and become one in all respects. This overall union, and the intimacy that is part of it, is an important component of a tangible bond and power that children can rely upon in their childhood and look toward as a model for their own future. Marriage between a man and a woman based upon righteous principles and upon sacrifice in similitude of the

sacrifice of the Son of God is the relationship that can best provide this influence, power, and foundation for blessing children with eternal progression. Eternal marriage, which involves righteousness and sacrifice, is God's own order and the way He Himself extends blessings to His endless seed.

The power, eternal influence, and divine order of righteous marriage is one of the major reasons that sexual sins, or sexual relations outside of a marital relationship, are so serious. Adultery is next in gravity to murder, and may be viewed as murder in a sense, not of one or more individuals through death, but of families, generations, and societies through substituting immoral influence, perversion, weakening or dissolution of family relations, and in many cases abuse, violence, and abandonment for righteous influence at the most basic and far-reaching level.

The knowledge that a man and woman develop through the righteous exercise of procreative power and all else that goes with marriage leads to the development of a greater knowledge of God as it involves sorrow, sacrifice, and love in a similar way to how God experiences these things with His children. Sexual relations outside of a marital relationship between a man and a woman do not involve the development of knowledge in this way. They are necessarily, to one degree or another, selfish, devoid of sacrifice and service, and they lead to a decline in knowledge. By definition and in practice these relations do not include the sorrow, or sacrifice, that is in similitude of the Son of God, as there are no intended, hoped for, cared for, and blessed children. These relations are damaging to family and society, leading to a decrease in knowledge of righteous principles, and to captivity and destruction. As Isaiah writes, of which sexual relations outside of marriage are one application:

*Therefore my people are gone into captivity, because they have no knowledge: Isaiah 5:13*



Pictographically, the Hebrew verb translated as *to know* is represented with an arm or hand, followed by a door, followed by an eye. The first two characters form the word translated as *hand*, and the full word can be visualized as *hand sees* or *hand knows*, which is an apt way to describe experiential knowledge, with the hand, representing practical experience, leading to knowledge, represented by the eye. Another way to understand this word as it relates to sexual knowledge is to view the hand as a male symbol, the door as a female symbol, and the eye as that knowledge that comes from the combination of these male and female symbols.



Eve bares Cain who is named as he is because the Hebrew word translated as *Cain* comes from the same root verb from which *gotten* is translated in Genesis 4:1 when Eve states:

*I have gotten a man from the Lord.*



Cain's name may be understood as *possession* or the *gain* that he gets, and this meaning becomes very applicable as an indication of Cain's primary motivation in his life and dealings with others. Pictographically, Cain's name and the verb from which it derives may be understood both in the way that corresponds with Eve's desires and with what Cain becomes. In the verb translated as *gotten* the horizon and the seed can be visualized as *seed to the horizon* or as *gathering much seed*. One difference between what Eve desires and hopes for her son and what Cain becomes lies in different definitions of *seed*. Eve is primarily focused on her children and posterity, while Cain is focused on material possessions, which may be represented by seed as grain, as Cain is a *tiller of the ground*. Another difference in the verb is with the final

character, the man with arms outstretched. Eve is focused on the Lord, and the full meaning of the verb for her may be *seed to the horizon to the Lord*. In this sense it is a visual description of the primary objective that Eve and Adam have of gathering their seed into the presence of the Lord. For Cain the man with arms outstretched may have the meaning of excitement or beholding a great sight, and the verb may be understood in terms of *excitement for or worship of much grain or possessions*.

The fact that Cain is a *tiller of the ground* may be understood differently from the understanding of tilling the ground found in chapters two and three. It may be understood as a different kind of servitude. Adam and Eve live with the reality of physical work to eat their bread and to obtain other necessities, recognizing that these things come from God. For Cain *gain* or material possession becomes his god, and as is communicated in verse twelve, *gain is a false god that shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength*; The irony here, and the truth, is that the material blessings of this earth are only blessings when sought and received righteously, whereas when they are sought for their own sake and to avoid work, sorrow, and true progression, they become enslaving, false gods, unable to provide salvation.



Eve also bares Abel whose name is commonly understood as *breath, a gentle breeze, or vanity*. The house and the shepherd's staff form a parent root, which is commonly understood as *flowing, flowing out or away, or coming to nothing*. This parent root is the ancient source translated as the English word *bowl*, a vessel from which good from the shepherd flows out. Abel's name is more complicated than Cain's. In one sense it may be viewed as a premonition of the brevity of his life and the loss of his influence and posterity in the world. From another perspective the meaning of Abel's name may indicate that Abel is the polar opposite of Cain—that he is content irrespective of possessions,

or one able to live in peace with others. He is a shepherd from whose house or bowl good flows from the Lord.



In verses three and four Cain and Abel both bring offerings unto the Lord *in the process of time*. The Hebrew word translated as *process* combines the horizon with the winding road and can be visualized as the *endpoint or destination of the winding road*.



The Hebrew word translated as *time* here is more literally translated as *days*, the plural of the word translated as *day*, מַיּוֹם, appearing in the Genesis chapter one account of the creation, which can be seen as *throwing a line on the water*, as at the end of the day the sun reflects on a line on the surface of the Mediterranean or other body of water from the sun at the horizon in the West to an observer in the East. The combination of these two words, combining the winding path to the horizon with the throwing down of the line of the sun's reflection, creates a beautiful image of the cycle of light and darkness and the continuance of creative periods in mortal life, a continually renewing opportunity to receive light or revelation.



The Hebrew word translated as *offering* pictographically starts with the symbol of water, followed by the seed or sprout, the fence or wall, and the man with arms outstretched. The symbol of water often represents blood, and so the parent root comprised of the water and the seed or sprout can be visualized as *continuing or flowing water or blood*. This parent root is the ancient source for the word *moon*, as the moon affects the tide or flowing of water, and for words like *menstruation*, which involves the flow of blood. As the symbol of the fence or wall may also be understood as a structure in general, the word can be

visualized as *blood continuing or flowing on the altar of the Lord*. The *offering* is always tied to looking continually to the Son and His sacrifice and the salvation He offers.

Abel's offering is made according to the pattern prescribed by the Lord in His commandment to Adam regarding sacrifice: *the firstlings of his flocks, and the fat thereof*. Alternatively, Cain offers from the fruits of his labors in the field. Regarding these two offerings Paul writes:

*By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh.* Hebrews 11:4

Joseph Smith elaborates on the difference between these offerings and on the difference with which God regards them:

*By faith in this atonement or plan of redemption, Abel offered to God a sacrifice that was accepted, which was the firstlings of the flock. Cain offered of the fruit of the ground, and was not accepted, because he could not do it in faith, he could have no faith, or could not exercise faith contrary to the plan of heaven. It must be shedding the blood of the Only Begotten to atone for man; for this was the plan of redemption; and without the shedding of blood was no remission; and as the sacrifice was instituted for a type, by which man was to discern the great Sacrifice which God had prepared; to offer a sacrifice contrary to that, no faith could be exercised, because redemption was not purchased in that way, nor the power of atonement instituted after that order; consequently Cain could have no faith; and whatsoever is not of faith, is sin. But Abel offered an acceptable sacrifice, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God Himself testifying of his gifts. Certainly, the shedding of the blood of a beast could be beneficial to no man, except it was done in imitation, or as a type, or explanation of what was to be offered through the gift of God Himself; and this performance done with an eye looking forward in faith on the power of that great Sacrifice for a remission of sins.* Teachings of the

Prophet Joseph Smith, p.58

Moses 5:18 records that it is Satan who commands Cain to make an offering unto the Lord,

*And Cain loved Satan more than God. And Satan commanded him, saying: Make an offering unto the Lord.*

One way to understand Satan's motivation for doing this is in terms of Satan's role as adversary, imposter, and promoter of an alternative plan to that of God's plan. Just as God provides many types of the sacrifice of His Son, such as Abraham and Isaac, so Satan appears to do the same to spread his lies and promote his plan, and the offering Satan commands is in reality in Satan's similitude. Satan's commandment to Cain is similar to that of the serpent tempting Eve and Adam with the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil to promote an alternative plan. It is also similar to the suggestion from the serpent for Adam and Eve to make aprons with which to cover themselves in contrast with the coats of skins that the Lord provides for them. Satan always works to promote his same core plan in opposition to God's plan.

At the foundation of Satan's plan, of his motivations, actions, and adversarial position is his opposition to obedience and sacrifice, which are foundational elements of faith, evident in the experience of Adam and Eve in the garden as first principles. Christ is the great exemplar of these two principles, and Satan the great opposer of these principles from the beginning:

*And I, the Lord God, spake unto Moses, saying: That Satan, whom thou has commanded in the name of mine Only Begotten, is the same which was from the beginning, and he came before me, saying— Behold, here am I, send me, I will be thy son, and I will redeem all mankind, that one soul shall not be lost, and surely I will do it; wherefore give me thine honor.*

*But, behold, my Beloved Son, which was my Beloved and Chosen*

*from the beginning, said unto me—Father, thy will be done, and the glory be thine forever.*

*Wherefore, because that Satan rebelled against me, and sought to destroy the agency of man, which I, the Lord God, had given him, and also, that I should give unto him mine own power; by the power of mine Only Begotten, I caused that he should be cast down;*

*And he became Satan, yea, even the devil, the father of all lies, to deceive and to blind men, and to lead them captive at his will, even as many as would not hearken unto my voice. Moses 4:1-4*

In this passage it is clear that Satan is disobedient in promoting a plan other than the Father's, unlike Christ who seeks the Father's will. In addition, Satan offers no real sacrifice but rather demands the Father's sacrifice of His honor as compared with Christ who offers an infinite sacrifice and gives all glory to the Father. In the case of Satan commanding Cain to make an offering, opposition to these two components of faith is similarly at the foundation:

First, the manner of offering inspired by Satan involves complete opposition to the principle of obedience. It is an affront and mockery of the Atonement as it is done in a manner that is not prescribed and that does not involve the symbolic elements of the sacrifice of the Son of God. As Joseph Smith teaches, it is *contrary to the plan of heaven*.

Second, it is counter to the principle of sacrifice. To sacrifice the firstling of a flock is truly a sacrifice, as the flock is finite in number, the slain animal is missed, and the sacrifice involves blood, pain, and death. Offering up some fruit or vegetables, particularly in a time and place when harvests are bountiful and people few, requires a token sacrifice if any, and in the case of Cain, similar to that of Satan, he expects more than he offers. For Cain and for Satan, an offering is a painless transaction rather than a true sacrifice, and it is done for the purpose of getting gain.

These two general principles of obedience and sacrifice are foundational from the beginning, and are universal, key indications of an individual's character and development. They are also principles that exist together: An individual cannot be obedient without sacrifice; and similarly, an individual cannot truly sacrifice without obedience. The existence and strength of these principles in an individual, a family, or society, determine where they stand in the pattern illustrated previously in terms of heaven, sunshine patriots, mob, and perdition, as is illustrated in the ancient temple pattern. Sanctified beings who are worthy of inhabiting heaven are necessarily obedient and willing to sacrifice all things to honor their covenants, work righteousness, and bless others. The further away from possessing this worthiness someone is, the more they rebel and are unable to sacrifice.

*The ax is laid at the root of the trees; and every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit shall be hewn down and cast into the fire. I, the Lord, have spoken it.*

*Verily I say unto you, all among them who know their hearts are honest, and are broken, and their spirits contrite, and are willing to observe their covenants by sacrifice—yea, every sacrifice which I, the Lord, shall command—they are accepted of me.*

*For I, the Lord, will cause them to bring forth as a very fruitful tree which is planted in a goodly land, by a pure stream, that yieldeth much precious fruit. Doctrine and Covenants 97:7-9*

Cain continues as a type of and follower of Satan in a number of ways as the account continues. To begin, God respects Abel's offering, but He does not respect the offering of Cain, and in reaction Cain is wroth, which in Hebrew can include being hot, furious, angry, kindled with rage, incensed, and to burn with anger.



The parent root in the pictographic Hebrew word translated as *wroth*

includes the wall or fence and the man's head and can be visualized as *outside man*. The *outside man* is without shelter and is subject to being burned by the sun, becoming red and hot. This word also presages Cain's fate as being cast into the land of Nod and into perdition as a spiritual *outside man*, subject to conditions of chaos and darkness unsheltered by God's grace and salvation.

The Lord questions Cain's reaction and states the simple truth that if Cain does well, or is obedient and willing to sacrifice, he will be blessed as is promised in the above verses and throughout God's dealings with man.



The Hebrew word translated as being *accepted* begins with the two teeth, followed by the bull's head, followed by the cross or mark. The bull's head and mark form a parent root that can be seen as an ox *moving toward the mark* in the act of plowing a straight line. Preceded by the two teeth, the full word may be understood as *consuming the ox moving toward the mark*. The ox often symbolizes God, and so the word may be understood as *consuming God moving toward the mark*, which provides a meaningful illustration of true acceptance, which is being accepted through faith in or consuming Jesus Christ, who is *God moving toward the mark or cross*, or acceptance through faith in Christ and grace from Him rather than acceptance through following false gods and through reliance on justification through works, which is *of debt*.

*For if Abraham were justified by the law of works, he hath to glory in himself; but not of God.*

*For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.*

*Now to him who is justified by the law of works, is the reward reckoned, not of grace, but of debt.*

*But to him that seeketh not to be justified by the law of works, but believeth on him who justifieth not the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. JST Romans 4:2-5*

Christ speaks of true acceptance in these exact terms in His beautiful discourse in John 6.

*Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.*

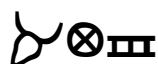
*Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day.*

*For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.*

*He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him.*

*As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.*

*This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever. John 6:53-58*



In contrast if Cain does not do well *sin lieth at the door*. The Hebrew word translated as *sin* involves condition, direction, and ultimate destination as much as it involves an immediate sinful action. It may be understood as *to miss the path, go the wrong direction, and miss the ultimate goal*. Pictographically it includes a parent root comprised of the fence or wall followed by the basket, which can be visualized as the *perimeter of the basket*, illustrating measurement, or also as *outside the basket*, as the fence or wall also carries the meaning of *outside*. This parent root is followed by the bull's head, and the full word may be

understood as *missing the mark or missing God by some measurement*, or also as *outside of the basket of God*, or being outside of God's grace.



The Hebrew word translated as *lieth*, begins with the parent root of the man's head and the house or tent. This parent root may be understood as *head of the house* or *master* and is found in words like *rabbi*. Followed by the winding path, the word can be visualized as *mastered by the winding path* or *master the winding path*. This forms a compelling image of sin, in which sin personified goes toward and camps out with greater influence in the path of an individual who is not exercising faith in progressing towards God, but who instead is traveling an alternate, winding path, being mastered by that path or attempting to master it, which is impossible, but which those, like Satan and Cain, inhabiting outer darkness, attempt to do. The more an individual sins the more sin gains power, or mastery, to influence, captivate, and destroy.



This phrase ends with the door or opening. One way of understanding this word is as a choice. Doors or passageways or transitions lead to or can open up towards different subsequent paths. The first symbol of this word is the *mouth* or *opening*. Going through this opening a person can go either towards the *mark* or towards the *wall* or *outside*.

The phrase at the end of verse seven is constructed curiously as follows: *And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him*. The Moses account provides more clarity on the meaning of this phrase as recorded in Moses 5:23, which is quoted in full for context:

*If thou doest well, thou shalt be accepted. And if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door, and Satan desireth to have thee; and except thou*

*shalt hearken unto my commandments, I will deliver thee up, and it shall be unto thee according to his desire. And thou shalt rule over him;*

The phrase as it is recorded here regarding desire and rule is similar in construction to the language God uses in Genesis 3:16 when speaking to Eve: *and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee*. It suggests a comparison between Cain and Satan on the one hand and Adam and Eve on the other hand, relying upon the metaphor of the marriage relationship for both parallels and contrasts.

In the case of Adam and Eve, and of righteous marriage in general, there exists a natural and covenant binding, based upon attraction, love, service, and sacrifice, and the desire felt is in this context, to be wholly joined and one. Ruling, as previously discussed, ideally means that the husband acts as a keeper and a servant, to provide, protect, and to sacrifice everything including his own life if necessary for the good and protection of his wife and family.

Following the parallelism at work in the two phrases, Satan parallels Eve's role, and Cain parallels the role of Adam. Obviously, as with comparisons and metaphors in general, this one is limited, as Satan is male, and is known among other names as the father of lies. Nevertheless, there is insight to be found in the comparison and parallel. Satan does desire Cain to be involved with him and promulgate his lies and works--he cannot spread the seed of evil without a man. Satan holds the rites, knowledge, and covenants of evil, and is, in effect, the evil temple with all that can be received and accomplished therein, and with the ultimate purpose of captivity and destruction—the opposite of salvation, which is found in God's temple. Satan offers the rites, knowledge, and covenants of evil to Cain, as a parallel to Eve offering the fruit to Adam. Cain is Satan's first *high priest* or *Master Mahan*, which may be understood as *master of destruction*, and he is initiated in knowledge and covenants in order to perform his role and spread evil in the world. Cain and Satan associate in this way

to spread evil, as in contrast Adam and Eve partake of the fruit, repent and choose God, and come together to have seed to multiply and replenish the earth for God's purposes of righteousness and progression.

The Book of Moses at this point includes more information that is critical to understanding the account. Moses 5:24-26 reads:

*For from this time forth thou shalt be the father of his lies; thou shalt be called Perdition; for thou wast also before the world.*

*And it shall be said in time to come—That these abominations were had from Cain; for he rejected the greater counsel which was had from God; and this is a cursing which I will put upon thee, except thou repent.*

*And Cain was wroth, and listened not any more to the voice of the Lord, neither to Abel, his brother, who walked in holiness before the Lord.*

The fact that Cain is the father of Satan's lies conforms well to the parallelism. In addition, Cain is called Perdition, which may be understood as *lost*, and refers not only to his current condition but also to his direction away from God into darkness and his complete unwillingness to turn towards and return to God. Cain rejects the principle of revelation (or in other words *the greater counsel which was had from God*), and it is interesting to consider that Adam and Eve's transgression is also a sin against the principle of revelation, and that sin in general is missing the mark of hearkening to and abiding by God's will.

Any similarity between these two early sins, however, is very limited. Cain sins not due to a condition of weakness accompanied by a willingness to repent, such as is the case with Adam and Eve, but instead Cain sins due to rebellion and unwillingness to repent, in the manner and after the pattern of Satan. He is truly Perdition personified,

or a being like Satan, who completely rejects God, and in that rejection inhabits and is filled with darkness.

Continuing the account, Moses 5:27-31 reads:

*And Adam and his wife mourned before the Lord, because of Cain and his brethren.*

*And it came to pass that Cain took one of his brothers' daughters to wife, and they loved Satan more than God.*

*And Satan said unto Cain: Swear unto me by thy throat, and if thou tell it thou shalt die; and swear thy brethren by their heads, and by the living God, that they tell it not; for if they tell it, they shall surely die; and this that thy father may not know it; and this day I will deliver thy brother Abel into thine hands.*

*And Satan sware unto Cain that he would do according to his commands. And all these things were done in secret.*

*And Cain said: Truly I am Mahan, the master of this great secret, that I may murder and get gain. Wherefore Cain was called Master Mahan, and he gloried in his wickedness.*

These verses contain important components of evil and crucial details of the account. Cain and his wife love Satan more than God, and they are willing to do his works. His commitment is so strong that Cain is willing to enter into a covenant with Satan involving a penalty of death for disclosure. He also binds many of his brethren with a similar covenant and thus forms a combination of secrecy and works of darkness. It is interesting that Satan swears that he will do according to Cain's commands, which fulfills the word of God, saying that Cain would rule over Satan. The elements of rebellion, secrecy, combination, and murder are at the core of evil at this time and are always involved whenever evil is reinstated and spread.

Cain murders Abel in order to obtain his flocks, demonstrating that the

meaning of his name fits well. He acts based upon a desire to possess that which is not his, and together with a rejection of revelation, this sin of acting to obtain and possess that which is not right is an important key to understanding sin, human nature, and progression in general. Together these two core sins parallel in a polar opposite manner the principles of obedience and sacrifice, as rebellion is another way of describing rejection of revelation and of obedience, and the sin of possession is a rejection of sacrifice.

Doctrine and Covenants 49:20 underscores the core, pervasive nature of the sin of possession in general evil:

*But it is not given that one man should possess that which is above another, wherefore the world lieth in sin.*

This sin of possession does not pertain exclusively to material possessions. An individual can possess honor and power unrighteously, and while possession is not in itself sin, the attachment to and importance placed upon possession in a way that is counter to love of God and of neighbor always is. Abraham, for example, is a wealthy man, but does not sin in his possessions because he serves God and his neighbor, consecrating his possessions to that service. For this reason, I will speak in terms of the sin of possession as distinguished from the condition of possessing.

The sin of possession leads to fear as a consequence of considering potential lack or loss of possession; it involves loss of agency and increased bondage as desire and faith are misplaced upon false gods, and all that which is transitory, unfounded, and captivating; it often involves control, force, and violence in order to obtain and maintain possessions in competition with others; and through fear, loss of agency, idolatry, bondage, control, force, and violence the sin of possession reduces true faith in Jesus Christ. The sin of possession and resultant actions lead to a multitude of other sins. Eliminating desires to possess unrighteously and resultant actions leads to

freedom, true faith in Jesus Christ, progression, and knowledge of God.

The Lord teaches:

*For whosoever will save his life, must be willing to lose it for my sake; and whosoever will be willing to lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it. JST Luke 9:24*

Joseph Smith teaches:

*Let us here observe, that a religion that does not require the sacrifice of all things never has power sufficient to produce the faith necessary unto life and salvation; for, from the first existence of man, the faith necessary unto the enjoyment of life and salvation never could be obtained without the sacrifice of all earthly things. Lectures on Faith 6:5*

The story of Job is a wonderful illustration of how fully transcending attachment to possession leads to freedom, true faith in Jesus Christ, progression, and knowledge of God. Job has virtually everything taken from him: material possessions, family members, health, and friendship. In the end he is left with his faith in and a sure knowledge of God:

*For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth:*

*And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God:*

*Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me. Job 19:25-27.*

With everything of a finite nature gone Job expresses pure faith in the Lord:

*Thou he slay me, yet will I trust in him; but I will maintain mine own ways before him. Job 13:15*

Even the contemplation of God taking his life does not factor into Job's faith in God, and, implicitly, in his understanding of God's character. He maintains his trust in God due to his understanding of God's character, and he maintains his own integrity before God, two keys to faith as found in the lectures on faith and through their inverses in Mormon 9:20. According to the Lectures on Faith, after *First, the idea that he actually exists*, the two things *necessary in order that any rational and intelligent being may exercise faith in God unto life and salvation are:*

*a correct idea of his character, perfections, and attributes.*

*and an actual knowledge that the course of life which he is pursuing is according to his will.* Lectures on Faith 3:2-5

Mormon 9:20 states these keys in terms of their absence and the resulting cessation of miracles in faith's absence:

*And the reason why he ceaseth to do miracles among the children of men is because that they dwindle in unbelief, and depart from the right way, and know not the God in whom they should trust.*

In the final chapter of the Book of Job possessions are returned to Job as he gains back family members, friends, money, and other material possessions; however, Job is certainly at a point in his existence when environment, circumstances, and possessions have little if any hold on him. There is a sense in this last chapter of Job that he exists in a different reality than those who surround him as he is not in the least bound by the things of this world. Like Abraham who has great possessions, Job fully consecrates himself to the Lord and the living of the Two Great Commandments. He has a sure knowledge of God and walks with Him.

The prophet Alma provides another example of transcending possessions. At one point he is the chief political, military, and religious leader all at the same time. In this position he is a righteous man. At this point he shows his righteousness in, among other things, his

willingness to sacrifice everything to pursue God's will in preaching the Gospel. Just a short time after laying down his political and military power Alma is in circumstances without succor or friendship, returning by the Lord's command to a land where he has been rejected. Upon his return the following occurs:

*And as he entered the city he was an hungered, and he said to a man: Will ye give to an humble servant of God something to eat? Alma 8:19*

He does not announce himself in terms of former accomplishments or position; he does not even announce himself as high priest, which is the position he retains. He is merely a humble servant with no need to stake out a position of honor or power and no attachment to material possessions.

The greatest example of transcendence over possession is Jesus Christ. As one example, He completely rejects the honors of men and teaches others to do likewise:

*I receive not honour from men.*

*But I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you.*

*I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive.*

*How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only? John 5:41-44*

Jesus teaches that desire for and possession of the honors of men is, in effect (almost in mathematical terms), inversely proportional to belief in and love of God. Someone seeking with all his heart for the honors of men has absolutely no room in his heart for God and cannot possibly exercise true faith in Him. Jesus on the other hand is completely liberated and full of knowledge and power because he is not weighed down or hindered by desire for the honors of men or by the sin of possession in general in any form and to any degree. He is so

completely full of goodness and love that the honors of men are meaningless to him and have no room in his heart, and this is the case with His relationship with all sin, and with Satan. As he says:

*...for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me.* John 14:30

He is completely free to progress from grace to grace and receive that which is of true worth and all that the Father has in only three decades of mortality. As Jesus says in the beginning,

*Father, thy will be done, and the glory be thine forever.* Moses 4:2.

In this statement He expresses complete commitment to the principles of obedience and sacrifice in contrast with Satan who expresses complete adherence to rebellion and possession.

The sin of possession always accompanies rebellion from God just as in contrast sacrifice always accompanies obedience to God. Satan and Cain are the first and prototypical examples of rebellion and the sin of possession, and they form a culture built upon these principles that spreads out and through deception, fear, control, and violence forms a system of bondage, suffering, and destruction.

In contrast, full commitment to obedience and sacrifice leads to continuing revelation and complete consecration, involving love for God and neighbor and a Zion culture described well in 4 Nephi 1:2-3 and 15-17:

*And it came to pass in the thirty and sixth year, the people were all converted unto the Lord, upon all the face of the land, both Nephites and Lamanites, and there were no contentions and disputations among them, and every man did deal justly one with another.*

*And they had all things common among them; therefore there were not rich and poor, bond and free, but they were all made free, and partakers of the heavenly gift.*

*And it came to pass that there was no contention in the land, because of the love of God which did dwell in the hearts of the people.*

*And there were no envyings, nor strifes, nor tumults, nor whoredoms, nor lyings, nor murders, nor any manner of lasciviousness; and surely there could not be a happier people among all the people who had been created by the hand of God.*

*There were no robbers, nor murderers, neither were there Lamanites, nor any manner of –ites; but they were in one, the children of Christ and heirs to the kingdom of God.*

These opposite cultures at their extreme become heaven and perdition, completely incompatible with and alien to each other.



In verse eight Cain rises up and slays Abel. The Hebrew verb translated into English as *to slay* includes a parent root with the man's head followed by the leg or foot. This can be visualized as *man's foot* or *to trample*. The word has an r and a g sound and is the ancient root for the word *rug*, which a man tramples with his feet.

After slaying his brother Abel, Cain is questioned by the Lord in verse nine: *Where is Abel thy brother?* Cain responds first with a lie, stating that he does not know where his brother is. He then expresses his character in terms of a question to which he knows the answer and which is antithetical to a familiar and sanctioned role: *am I my brother's keeper?* Cain is not a keeper in the sense God commands Adam to be a keeper in the beginning in the Garden of Eden, and which principle Adam certainly teaches all his children as being among the most importance principles and commandments received from God. Cain is not a good Samaritan. He is not a good shepherd, and in adding the murder of his brother to his rebellion he shows himself to be completely opposed to the Two Great Commandments: He rejects and hates God and hates and murders his brother. Cain's murder of Abel may be

viewed as a sacrifice, but in a way that is a complete contrast with true sacrifice. Cain sacrifices in rebellion to God and in allegiance to Satan; his sacrifice is to get gain rather than sacrifice of something of value; and it is in similitude of Satan's works rather than of the sacrifice of the Son of God.

In verse ten God asks:

*What hast thou done? The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground.*

The literary and symbolic significance of the Hebrew language used here is beautiful and instructive: The word translated as *blood* in Hebrew is tied to the ground, earth, and land, in that it is a parent root in one of the words translated as these words. It is also a parent root in the word translated as *Adam* who comes from the dust of the ground. In addition, this parent root as a verb may be understood as *to be or make silent, or to be destroyed*. So, although Cain has silenced and destroyed his brother as far as mortality goes and returned him to the ground from whence he came, his silenced voice is heard clearly by God with whom Abel walks in his shortened mortal life. The apostle Paul refers to this literary form in Hebrews 11:4, in which he writes:

*By faith Abel offered unto god a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh.*

Abel is the first in a long line of those holy men and prophets silenced and destroyed physically whose silenced voices cry from the ground and are heard by God who acts with justice on their behalf:

*That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar. Matthew 23:35*

With this murder and exchange, in verse eleven God curses Cain.

Previous to this time God has only cursed the earth for Adam's sake and the serpent, or Satan. This is the first time a mortal man is cursed by God, and the curse is tied to the earth, which itself has been cursed to bring forth thorns and weeds. With Cain's cursing, the cursing of the earth worsens to another level for him, as it not only continues to bring forth thorns and weeds for him, but will also *not henceforth yield unto thee her strength*;

The consequence of this sin is ironically the opposite of the worldly possessions Cain seeks, which from now on are not in his power to gain. Additionally, this sin and what leads up to it are a demonstration of Satan's deception: Satan teaches Cain the great secret that he can murder and get gain; however the gain is short lived, and the sin of murder in reality leads to incalculable loss rather than gain. Also, of symbolic and ironic importance is the fact that the word in Hebrew translated as *to till* is the same word translated as *to work*, or *to serve*; it is the same word used in the original commandment given to Adam to tend and to keep the Garden. Cain is now neither a keeper nor a servant in any way, even for his own benefit.

Cain is now a *fugitive and a vagabond*, which are very similar words having similar meanings in Hebrew:



The word translated as *fugitive* may be understood as *to quiver, totter, shake, reel, stagger, wander, tremble, and to be tossed about and around*. Pictographically it can be visualized as *to continue to be watchful*. This may be understood both in terms of watchfulness to protect oneself from danger and destruction as Cain removes himself from God's watchfulness and salvation and relies on himself and Satan instead, as an *outside man*. It may also involve continuing to watch and accuse others, or in other words, to be part of the evil that may be understood pictographically as *man watching*.



The word translated as *vagabond* has similar meanings, and in addition involves grief, lamentation, and to be an object of compassion; it also may be understood as *to wander aimlessly*. Pictographically, these two characters, the seed and the door, form a parent root, which is often understood as *continuing back and forth*, as the door continues in its motion back and forth, or as in the nod of a head, which comes from this Hebrew word that begins with an n sound and ends with a d sound.



Cain exclaims: *My punishment is greater than I can bear*, which is full of irony in Hebrew. The word translated as *punishment* may be understood as just that, but in addition it may be understood as *perversity, depravity, iniquity, and to be bent, twisted, and distorted*. Cain, therefore, cries out against God, or looks outside of himself to blame anyone other than himself, in anger against what in reality is within or part of himself. In other words, other ways this phrase may be understood are: *My perversity* or *My iniquity* or *My distortion is greater than I can bear*. As is the case with all the wicked, he sees with a twisted, distorted perception because he truly cannot bear to own up to his own twisted, destructive nature and feel guilt. The cognitive dissonance is too much, and he must place blame and responsibility outside of himself and become a confirmed and absolute enemy of God.

Pictographically, this word translated as *punishment* is composed of the eye, followed by the tent pole, followed by the seed. One way of understanding this is as *watching tied to continuation* or *watching in perpetuity*. Joseph Smith describes hell, or *the punishment of the wicked*, as follows:

*There is no pain so awful as that of suspense. This is the punishment of the wicked; their doubt, anxiety and suspense cause weeping,*

*wailing and gnashing of teeth.* TPJS 288

This is a state that can be viewed as continual watching, outside of God's grace and salvation, where the sin and the punishment are identical. The wicked harden their hearts against God, rejecting Him and moving away from the light and salvation He offers. Christ is the only source of light and salvation, and any alternative is darkness. He will strive with man, continually offering light and salvation, and suffering causes many in darkness to soften their hearts, exercise faith in Christ, and come back to Him, but those who go so far down the path of darkness to deny the Holy Ghost suffer an unfathomable, complete darkness of their own choosing.



Cain laments the fact that he is cursed and cut off and that he is to be a wanderer and fugitive. He will be *hid* from the face of the Lord. The word translated as *hid* includes a parent root composed of the mark and the man's head, often understood as the *mark of man* or the border of land marked by a man. This parent root is the origin of the English word *tour*. The thorn often represents a shield or barrier as shepherds build barriers from thorns to protect their flocks. Combined these symbols may be understood as a *barrier or separation of the touring of man or separation of walking man*.

Cain also claims that *every one that findeth me shall slay me*. One possibility for Cain's fear that whoever finds him will slay him is because of the oaths of secrecy to which he is subject. It is possible that the details of his murder of Abel are not kept secret but are well known, exposing him to retribution from others of the secret combination. This possibility is further supported several verses after this with the account of Lamech, which is detailed more extensively in the Book of Moses than it is in Genesis as follows:

*And Lamech said unto his wives, Adah and Zillah: Hear my voice, ye*

*wives of Lamech, hearken unto my speech; for I have slain a man to my wounding, and a young man to my hurt.*

*If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold, truly Lamech shall be seventy and seven fold;*

*For Lamech having entered into a covenant with Satan, after the manner of Cain, wherein he became Master Mahan, master of that great secret which was administered unto Cain by Satan; and Irad, the son of Enoch, having known their secret, began to reveal it unto the sons of Adam;*

*Wherefore Lamech, being angry, slew him, not like unto Cain, his brother Abel, for the sake of getting gain, but he slew him for the oath's sake.*

*For, from the days of Cain, there was a secret combination, and their works were in the dark, and they knew every man his brother.*

*Wherefore the Lord cursed Lamech, and his house, and all them that had covenanted with Satan; for they kept not the commandments of God, and it displeased God, and he ministered not unto them, and their works were abominations, and began to spread among all the sons of men. And it was among the sons of men.*

*And among the daughters of men these things were not spoken, because that Lamech had spoken the secret unto his wives, and they rebelled against him, and declared these things abroad, and had not compassion;*

*Wherefore Lamech was despised, and cast out, and came not among the sons of men, lest he should die.*

*And thus the works of darkness began to prevail among all the sons of men. Moses 5:47-55*

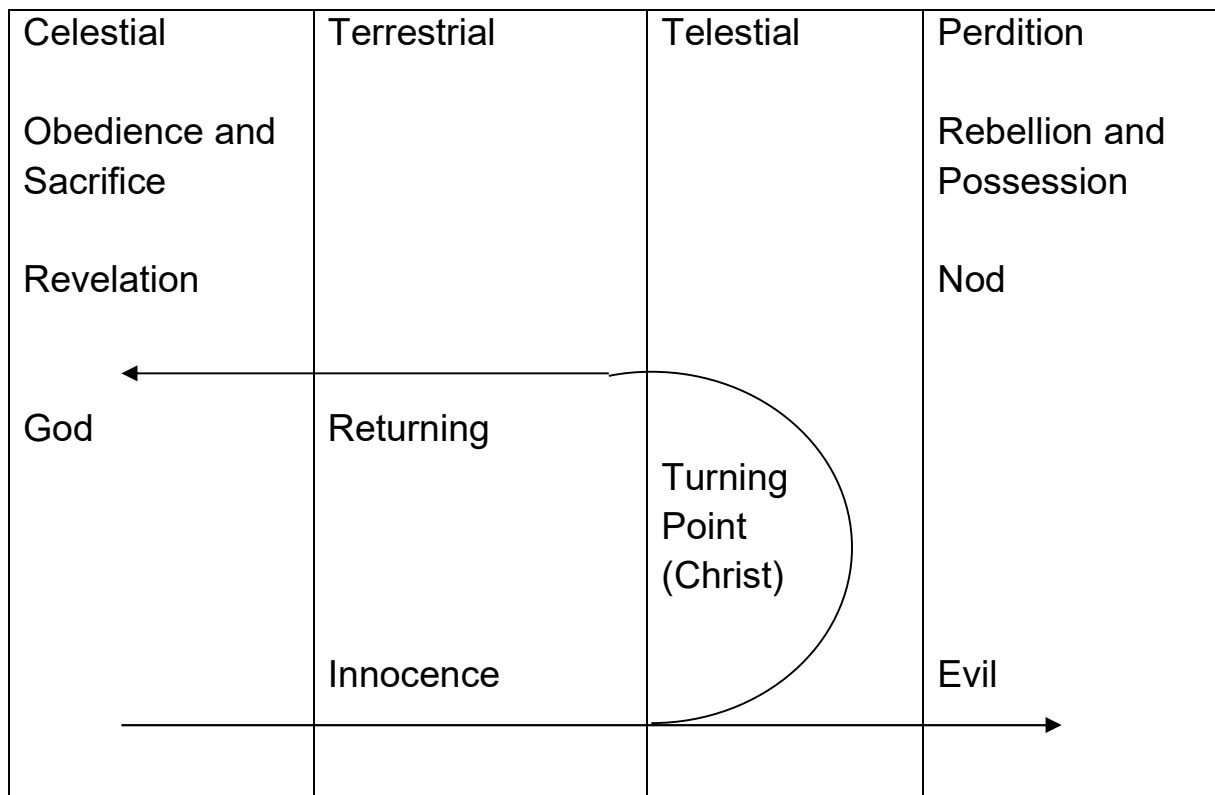
Lamech has the same problem that Cain has. He is in fear for his life, and in his case this fear is clearly due to the fact that he has broken his

oath of secrecy. Again, Cain may fear for his life for the same reason. It is also interesting that Lamech covenants directly with Satan just as Cain does, and that the covenanting with Satan spreads so widely and quickly. Satan is doing all he can to promote his plan and demonstrate that it is the right plan, but as he is the father of lies, the contradictions abound. One obvious contradiction is that murder to get gain is such a central component of a supposed plan for the salvation of all. Satan's plan is, instead, a plan of destruction. Like Cain, Satan cannot bear his punishment, sees with a completely twisted perspective, and blames anyone except himself.



Returning to verse 16 of Genesis four, Cain goes *out from the presence of the Lord* and dwells in the *land of Nod*. The word translated as *Nod* is from the same root word translated in verses 12 and 14 as *vagabond*. Pictographically, this word can be visualized as *seed connected to the door*. Continuance as an individual and the prospects of future posterity have no place within the house but are instead in a no man's land represented by the door, which is not truly a dwelling place but instead is a passageway.

Cain wanders aimlessly in a land of wandering, east of Eden. In temple orientation wandering to the east of Eden is to wander away from God, not only outside of the temple enclosure itself, but even outside of the court of sacrifices, rather than turning at the altar and returning westward toward God. The following diagram changes some terms and adds some different detail to the one presented earlier and shows further perspective on the temple pattern upon which the ancient temple and tabernacle of Moses are constructed. Again, there are many ways to look at this pattern and the relationships between different principles contained in the diagram because it represents the universal temple pattern that encompasses all truth.



An important contrast, one part of which is mentioned in Genesis 4:17, is between the two Enochs and the two Cities of Enoch. The first Enoch is the son of Cain, and Cain builds a city that he names with Enoch's name. The second Enoch comes centuries later through the lineage of Seth, and this second Enoch also builds a city that is called by his name. The word Enoch in Hebrew may be understood as *dedicated* and comes from a verb that may be understood as *to dedicate, train, inaugurate, and initiate*. This is the same root word found in the word Hanukkah, which is a Jewish holiday that commemorates the temple rededication at the time of the Maccabean Revolt against the Greeks under Antiochus IV. Pictographically this

word begins with a parent root that can be visualized as *wall continues* or *camp*, as a large camp is composed of many tents forming a circular enclosure to provide protection for a nomadic community. With the addition of the tent pole and the hand in the shape of a cup, the word can be seen as *the camp connected or secured to receiving*, as the people of God come together unitedly to request and receive His blessings. The tent poles secure the camp, just as tent poles secure the Tabernacle of Moses, and the name *Enoch* is tied to the temple in all its purposes of blessing the camp of God's people.

The first Enoch is trained, initiated in, and dedicated to the ways of his father Cain, certainly including initiation into and dedication to secret combinations and the works of evil, to rebellion and the sin of possession. The city is a center and stronghold for these things and a false or counterfeit temple.



Verse 17 is the first instance that the word city is used in the Old Testament, and this word is clearly linked to two words previously discussed: naked and subtil, as they contain a similar root. The significance here is very instructive. Cain and his son Enoch and those who are involved in the same covenants and works of darkness are dedicated to and combined in getting gain at the expense of others, even to the extent of murder, and their city, their stronghold and the seat of their power is a domain through which getting gain at the expense of others can occur. For them, and in their city, possession is everything. This city is the opposite of the Garden of Eden, a place of innocence and peace, and worldly cities in general have this potential, to facilitate sin and oppression at the expense of the innocent and sanctified.

The term secret combinations describes organizations of a criminal nature and at the extreme, covenant relationship with Satan, but the term can broadly describe all those relationships and activities in a

culture in which self-interest controls. Doctrine and Covenants section 89, for instance, refers to *evils and designs which do and will exist in the hearts of conspiring men*, and these evils and designs are not necessarily criminal with respect to applicable laws, but can simply involve the subordination of the good of others to the maximization of profit, which is rampant in any worldly culture where the love of money and possession is everything.

The second Enoch is the complete opposite of the first Enoch, and the second City of Enoch, built several centuries later, is the complete opposite of the first City of Enoch with instructive contrasts. In contrast with the first city already discussed, the second city is a city where those who are pure in heart can find refuge and protection against evil—not to be sacrificed for the gain of others (contrasting the principle of righteous sacrifice with the opposite principle of the sin of possession); it is a city with people who are dedicated to righteousness and initiated in the ways of God, His ordinances, and His temple (contrasting obedience with rebellion); and it is a city that is finally lifted up to dwell with God, due to the righteousness of its inhabitants rather than being the prototypical earthly institution as is the case with the first City of Enoch.

Chapter four concludes with two verses that are tragic as well as hopeful for the future:

*And Adam knew his wife again; and she bare a son, and called his name Seth: For God, said she, hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew.*

*And to Seth, to him also there was born a son; and he called his name Enos: then began men to call upon the name of the Lord.*

The Fall occurs quickly and devastatingly. The fact that the Book of Moses indicates that numerous children are born to Adam and Eve before Cain and Abel and that these children love Satan more than God despite the teachings of Adam and Eve, together with the fact that Cain

marries the daughter of one of his older brothers and sisters indicates that Adam and Eve are of at least grandparent age (130 years) and surrounded by rebellious, wicked posterity at the point that Seth is born. Regarding the state of wickedness in the earth and the effect it has on Adam and Eve Moses 5:27 reads:

*And Adam and his wife mourned before the Lord, because of Cain and his brethren.*

In these tragic circumstances Eve continues to hope and yearn for a righteous posterity, and Adam and Eve cease not to call upon God, not just for many days but for many years.



In Hebrew Seth may be understood as *compensation*. Pictographically, this name can be seen as *consuming the target or mark*, which is the opposite of the understanding of sin as *missing the mark*. Seth is a righteous man and a blessing, and indeed compensation, to his parents. Doctrine and Covenants 107:43 reads:

*Because he (Seth) was a perfect man, and his likeness was the express likeness of his father, insomuch that he seemed to be like unto his father in all things, and could be distinguished from him only by his age.*

Seth is welcome compensation, and the above verse indicates what a blessing he is to his parents, even to the extent that Adam and Seth are one of numerous types of the Father and the Son in the scriptures.