

## *ADAM, EVE AND THE GOSPEL*

### *Tradition -- Tradition*

Many members of the Church have been taught or teach the idea that Adam and Eve knew and understood the Gospel and the 'plan of salvation' before they made the choice to partake of the 'forbidden fruit' that caused, or at least began the process called the fall. This notion has been presented to the members of the Church from print to pulpit in such a way that the black and white pages of scripture are no longer valid, seen or even heard in the ears of the mind because of tradition. This is true to such an extent that arguments will ensue about why scripture is wrong and tradition and opinion is more correct.

### *Plainness?*

There are multiple reasons that this concept of Adam and Eve knowing the Gospel before the fall has expanded over time. The main reason and purpose of this perpetuation is to satisfy or rationalize the traditional belief that God gave Adam and Eve *two conflicting commandments*. These commandments are: (1) 'don't partake of the fruit from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, and (2) have children. The dilemma that fuels the tradition is: If there were two conflicting commandments then one must address the fairness of God to force a fall by a "set up" or a catch 22 scenario of being condemned if you do and condemned if you don't. In a normal interpretation of the love of God, one would think that He (God) would not place Adam and Eve in a position that they are *forced to disobey* and reap an unjust or unfair punishment. One must question if the nature of God is such to force a condemned choice of which justice will demand a spiritual and temporal life? It seems contrary to the nature of a loving God to force an individual to transgress a commandment. Some teachers have explained this primordial predicament by suggesting that the first parents chose the lesser of two evils, or the better of two lifestyles. However, we must remember these potential parents didn't yet have a knowledge of good and evil, hence, a 'transgression' rather than sin. Were these a trick commandments? Because of this dilemma the conclusion has been made that Adam, and especially Eve partook of the fruit in order to have children. Interpretation would then follow this errant thought that Eve, because of knowledge, inspiration and motherly emotions, partook of the fruit and convinced her husband to eat the forbidden meal in order to kick-start the plan of salvation. (This is commonly taught in our classes and discussions.) Therefore, some conclude that with the knowledge of the plan of salvation Eve choose the 'only way' to keep the supposed commandment to have posterity. The problem with this thinking is that it is not scripturally correct or true. The phrase of partaking of the fruit being the 'only way' is in the context of becoming like God and receiving a knowledge of Good and Evil, not that of having posterity or being obedient to greater commandments.

### *Metaphor or Reality*

Question: Is it a *doctrine* that Eve understood the gospel before the fall? No. Is it a *policy*? Not so again. Is it a traditional opinion? Yes. There are those who will proclaim that the story of Adam and Eve and the details of their experiences before the fall are just metaphors, similes and symbols. If symbol or metaphor is not founded on a historical reality, then every interpretation would be

perfectly correct and every conclusion completely wrong. If it is all symbol one would have to conclude that God has not told the truth in the scriptures, or purposely hidden the meaning of scriptures in symbolic shadows and codes so that the unprepared reader would be led astray or unable to understand truths. Who then, would we have to question, or who would have the right to declare the meaning of the metaphor or symbol? Surely the causal reader of the scriptures would not have the education to make the correct interpretation of scripture if this primordial event was just metaphorical. The cliché would then be true that states: ‘that a man cannot teach unless he has been trained for the ministry.’

Since the same account of Adam and Eve is found in all the Standard Works the conclusion should be made that the events in the Garden of Eden before the fall and the life experience of the first parents after the fall are true and correct as found in the scriptures; hence the phrase, “In the mouth of two or three witnesses.” God has not lied in the scriptures nor is He trying to hide the meaning of the scriptures. Intellectuals that claim that the only way to understand the scriptural accounts of the fall is by the use of symbol and metaphor, must believe themselves qualified to explain what God could not. They must believe then that God has chosen to hide eternal truths from the general reader as their ego seeks to find a place and purpose to be recognized. Nephi seems to believe something different about God’s word:

*3 For my soul delighteth in plainness; for after this manner doth the Lord God work among the children of men. For the Lord God giveth light unto the understanding; for he speaketh unto men according to their language, unto their understanding. (2 Nephi 31:3)*

A look at the scriptures is the only way to see the difference between scripture and tradition. The scriptures present and define truth despite the cry of symbol or metaphor, opinion or tradition. Foremost, the scriptural standard should be able to speak for itself without need of an interpreter or relying on a lexicon of symbol.

To begin, a look at the assumed two conflicting commandments should be discussed using the Standard Works, and letting them speak for themselves.

### ***Two Conflicting Commandments?***

The first time the commandment to ‘multiply and replenish the earth’ is introduced is found in Genesis 9:7 (also JST Gen. 9:14) following the flood as Noah becomes the second Adam in a new world. Many members of the Church have assumed that at the time of the creation of Adam there was a commandment to have posterity which conflicted with the command not to eat the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. When the scriptures discuss the creation of the biological and animal life within the creation context and chapter, the creation of Adam is introduced. As an aspect of their creation Adam and Eve are “BLESSED” with potentials to be realized only after the fall.

*28 And I, God, blessed them, and said unto them: Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. (Moses 2:28)*

As part of the creation of man the character and ability of the first parents are bestowed upon them as a potential that lies within them. It is translated correctly as a “blessing” that they (as an aspect and potential of their creation) *will be* ‘fruitful, *will be able* subdue the earth and *will have* the position and intellectual ability to have dominion’ over every living thing on the earth. In The Book of Abraham it is discussed using different words that should not be ignored. This concept of a “blessing” is put into a aspect of mankind’s creation. Again, in the context of creation Abraham’s corresponding verse makes it easier to understand this creative blessing as it reads:

28 And the Gods said: *We will bless them.* And the Gods said: *We will cause them* to be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it, and to have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. (Abraham 4:28)

Abraham explains that the blessing of Adam and Eve with the future potential to reproduce is seen as the Gods say, “*we will cause them*” — not by command or force, but creating within them the ability and potential to have posterity. This could be accomplished by the emotional, biological and physiological creation of Adam and Eve which might include their eventual natural desires that will “cause” them to be reproductive. With the creation as explained in scriptures and the ‘blessing’ and ‘causing’ mankind to have the potential for procreation, the scripture account records that: “And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed” (Genesis 2:25; Moses 3:25). This verse explains that Adam and Eve, even though they had the potential, did not have the mental sexuality to have children. The physical potential is one thing and the sexuality hormones and knowledge to have children is another. The scripture records this lack of mental sexuality in the words that “they were both naked and not ashamed.” Just as a child has the potential to have posterity the sexuality is not there. It was Satan that told them they were naked. Without partaking of the forbidden fruit, Adam and Eve while in the Garden of Eden, would have lived forever without children because they knew nothing about them, had no desire for them, nor would they understand that it would be necessary to partake of the fruit in order to have children.

22 And now, behold, if Adam had not transgressed he would not have fallen, but he would have remained in the garden of Eden. And all things which were created must have remained in the same state in which they were after they were created; and they must have remained forever, and had no end.

23 And they would have had no children; wherefore they would have remained in a state of innocence, having no joy, for they knew no misery; doing no good, for they knew no sin. (2 Nephi 2:22-23)

It should be noticed that ***Adam and Eve***, without partaking of the fruit, “would have had no children” and “*remained in a state of innocence.*” The word “wherefore” means “because” in this context, meaning “***they*** would have had no children ‘because ***they*** would have remained in a state of innocence.” The “innocence” is the sexuality that is lacking in the first parents, not the potential to have children. These verses in 2 Nephi explain that they would have known nothing about children or the necessity of eating fruit from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil to have children. Eve’s desire for posterity was not the catalyst for partaking the fruit of the fall. Adam and Eve claimed the same that Lehi explains. Adam and Eve both declare, that ‘were it not for our transgression’ they would have never known anything about the Gospel or having children.

10 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.*

11 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 5:10-11)

The important concept to glean from this first discussion is that the commandment to Adam and Eve to have posterity does not exist within the scriptural text. The passage about posterity is in the context of creation and inherent created abilities. And in the case of Adam and Eve, the potential blessing of these attributes can only be realized *after* the fall. These ‘blessings’ pronounced in Moses 2:28 at the creation of Adam and Eve and the ‘causing’ them to have the potential seen in Abraham 4:28 are not fulfilled until after the fall, indicating that they were potential blessings not commands as is commonly thought. In Moses Chapter Five the realization of these potential abilities given Adam and Eve at the time of their creation is seen.

### ***Blessings of Adam and Eve***

The chart below compares the potential ‘blessings’ at the creation of the man and woman, and the fulfillment of these potentials after the fall. Viewed side-by-side the reality and fulfillment of the potential blessings and abilities are easily be seen.

<b>Moses 2:28 -- At Creation</b>	<b>Moses 5:1-2 -- After Fall</b>
<p><b>28</b> And I, God, blessed them, and said unto them: Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.</p>	<p>1 And it came to pass that after I, the Lord God, had driven them out, that Adam began to till the earth, [<i>“subdue the earth”</i>] and to have <i>dominion</i> 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.                  2 And Adam knew his wife, and she bare unto him sons and daughters, and they began to <i>multiply and to replenish</i> the earth. (Moses 5:1-2)</p>

The scriptural evidence and interpretation that there are NOT two conflicting commandments, is so contrary to Mormon thought that it becomes extremely difficult for many to see through the dark glass of tradition. Tradition is stronger than doctrine and tradition will continue to claim in the classroom that there were two commandments given to Adam and Eve, with an impossibility of obedience to both at the same time. Tradition, Tradition.

This belief of two conflicting commandments leads to another tradition supposedly issued before the fall. The first is the command to have children, and the second is the conclusionary tradition that the fall of Adam was a result of understanding the Gospel plan of salvation, thus creating a purpose to fulfill the command to have posterity.

### *Adam and Eve Speak for Themselves*

Letting Adam and Eve speak for themselves in the scriptures can be uncomfortably revealing. Why did Adam partake of the fruit from the tree of knowledge of good and evil? Adam explains in scripture why he partook of the fruit and chose death and separation from God. When questioned by God, Adam states:

16 And he said: I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I beheld that I was naked, and I hid myself.

17 And I, the Lord God, said unto Adam: Who told thee thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldst not eat, if so thou shouldst surely die?

18 And the man said: *The woman thou gavest me, and commandest that she should remain with me*, she gave me of the fruit of the tree and I did eat. (Moses 4:16-18)

Adam explains that he was keeping the commandment (of which we have no previous record other than he is to ‘cleave’ to her) *to remain with his wife Eve*: “The woman thou gavest me, and *commandest that she should remain with me.*” The issue of the fall is not an ‘issue’ of children, but an *issue of eternal marriage*. It was because of the command to remain with the woman who was now going to be cast out for partaking the fruit, that Adam makes the decision to remain with Eve. The apostle Paul explains: “Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression” (1 Timothy 2:14). Adam made a conscience choice to remain with his wife and therefore, chose to die physically and spiritually, by separating himself from God. The fall did not take place because the first parents understood the Gospel, or that they wanted to have children, of which they had no concept until after the fall. Scripturally speaking the fall of Adam was a result of eternal marriage, and the reason that Eve partook... Perhaps Eve should speak for herself.

19 And I, the Lord God, said unto the woman: What is this thing which thou hast done? And the woman said: *The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.*

As Paul explains in Timothy, Eve was deceived. In Eve’s words she was ‘beguiled’, deceived, led astray or tricked. The temptation to put words in the mouth and mind of Eve is almost overwhelming as we search for reasons other than using her words. Traditional thought and teachings make us want to explain away her words. She was beguiled by the properties of the fruit, explained by the Serpent, with the promise that it would give her the knowledge of good and evil becoming as the Gods. The desires were not evil but the manipulation by the serpent was trickery. Satan beguiles by visual and mental deception, changing a point of view, looking through the wrong lens, and ultimately convincing Eve to think about the promising results of a new menu choice.

Remember in Moses 5:10-11 (above) both Adam and Eve explain that except they had partaken of the fruit they would have never known anything about the Gospel or children. Coupled with the understanding that there are *not two conflicting commandments*, and if they did not understand the Gospel Plan, would lead one to ask the question, when did Adam and Eve receive the Gospel? *If they partake of the fruit, then a Savior will be provided.*

## *Adam, Eve and the Gospel*

The opening verses of Chapter Five of Moses teach that Adam and Eve had many sons and daughters, and those sons and daughters began to divide into pairs and to have children (Moses 5:6-15).

1 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.

2 And Adam knew his wife, and *she bare unto him sons and daughters, and they began to multiply and to replenish the earth.*

3 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.* (Moses 5:1-3)

These children and grand children were living, without any death, before Adam and his wife received and understood the Gospel. It appears that there may have been multiple generations on the earth before our first parents were taught the gospel by messengers from the presence of God. After Adam and Eve were cast out of the Garden and began to have children, those children began to have posterity also. The scriptures explain that Adam was obedient to the commandments that God had given him to offer sacrifice. Not knowing why he offered the sacrifice or what the sacrifice represented, Adam remained obedient and faithful, which obedience must first precede a revealed knowledge from God. Seeking for further light and truth from messengers from heaven, Adam's prayer is answered as he explains that he knows nothing of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

4 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.

5 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.

6 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.* (Moses 5:4-6)

After "many days" of obedience (multiple generations) an angel of the Lord appears to Adam to teach him the purpose of his sacrifice and explains the Gospel of Jesus Christ, that he had not yet received. Adam declares to the messenger that he has no understanding or knowledge about the meaning of sacrifice, other than his obedience to the commands of God.

The angel explains to Adam that the sacrifices that he had been commanded to offer were done so to represent the Son of God as the Gospel teaching begins.

7 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.

8 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. (Moses 5:7, 8)

The messenger explains that the sacrifice in in “similitude of the sacrifice of the Only Begotten of the Father” and that all that Adam would do should be done in ‘the name of the Son forevermore.’ The first commandment given to Adam and Eve after they receive gospel knowledge was to do all in the name of the Son forevermore’, which has never yet been rescinded. Verse Nine explains that after Adam and Eve were taught Gospel plan of salvation, the Holy Ghost fell upon Adam.

### ***Enoch and the Rest of the Story***

Between verses eight and nine there is a great amount of detail missing. However, through inspiration from the Lord, Joseph Smith restores that detail in the Pearl of Great Price for the Latter-day Saints. When Enoch begins teaching the people as recorded in his account found in the Book of Moses, he supplies the missing information in Moses 6:51-68.

To read the verses that were in consecutive order, the references would look something like this:

Moses 5:1-8; --Moses 6:51-68; --Moses 5:9 cont.

Enoch, reading or quoting from the Book of Adam, provides the missing Gospel details that falls between verses eight and nine of Moses Chapter Five. Again the scriptures themselves are best viewed to get a better understanding. These seventeen verses are quoted below so that it can be seen that Adam is taught the Gospel, is given the reason for repentance, and the command to teach his children. These verses include some key doctrines and truths that are often overlooked by many readers of the text. The purpose of this chapter is to understand that Adam is taught the Gospel after the fall.

Enoch teaches the missing detail of Chapter Five:

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

52 And he also said unto him: If thou wilt turn unto me, and hearken unto my voice, and believe, and repent of all thy transgressions, and be baptized, even in water, in the name of mine Only Begotten Son, who is full of grace and truth, which is Jesus Christ, the only name which shall be given under heaven, whereby salvation shall come unto the children of men, ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, asking all things in his name, and whatsoever ye shall ask, it shall be given you.

53 And our father Adam spake unto the Lord, and said: Why is it that men must repent and be baptized in water? And the Lord said unto Adam: Behold I have forgiven thee thy transgression in the Garden of Eden.

54 Hence came the saying abroad among the people, that the Son of God hath atoned for original guilt, wherein the sins of the parents cannot be answered upon the heads of the children, for they are whole from the foundation of the world.

55 And the Lord spake unto Adam, saying: Inasmuch as thy children are conceived in sin, even so when they begin to grow up, sin conceiveth in their hearts, and they taste the bitter, that they may know to prize the good.

56 And it is given unto them to know good from evil; wherefore they are agents unto themselves, and I have given unto you another law and commandment. (Moses 6:51-56)

Adam, learning about Christ, the Gospel, agency, the knowledge of good and evil, and the need for repentance, is twice commanded to teach his posterity i.e., those that have already been born and those yet to be born. The declared command is: ‘teach the Gospel freely to his children.’

57 Wherefore *teach it unto your children*, that all men, everywhere, must repent, or they can in nowise inherit the kingdom of God, for no unclean thing can dwell there, or dwell in his presence; for, in the language of Adam, Man of Holiness is his name, and the name of his Only Begotten is the Son of Man, even Jesus Christ, a righteous Judge, who shall come in the meridian of time.

58 *Therefore I give unto you a commandment, to teach these things freely unto your children*, saying:

59 That by reason of transgression cometh the fall, which fall bringeth death, and inasmuch as ye were born into the world by water, and blood, and the spirit, which I have made, and so became of dust a living soul, even so ye must be born again into the kingdom of heaven, of water, and of the Spirit, and be cleansed by blood, even the blood of mine Only Begotten; that ye might be sanctified from all sin, and enjoy the words of eternal life in this world, and eternal life in the world to come, even immortal glory;

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

61 Therefore it is given to abide in you; the record of heaven; the Comforter; the peaceable things of immortal glory; the truth of all things; that which quickeneth all things, which maketh alive all things; that which knoweth all things, and hath all power according to wisdom, mercy, truth, justice, and judgment.

62 And now, behold, I say unto you: This is the plan of salvation unto all men, through the blood of mine Only Begotten, who shall come in the meridian of time.

63 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 6:57-63)

With the command to Adam to teach the Gospel and “the plan of salvation” to his children, Adam is taught that all things bear record of Jesus Christ, and he is carried away and baptized by water, fire, and the Holy Ghost being told that he holds the Priesthood authority of the Son of God.

64 And it came to pass, when the Lord had spoken with Adam, our father, that Adam cried unto the Lord, and he was caught away by the Spirit of the Lord, and was carried down into the water, and was laid under the water, and was brought forth out of the water.

65 And thus he was baptized, and the Spirit of God descended upon him, and thus he was born of the Spirit, and became quickened in the inner man.

66 And he heard a voice out of heaven, saying: Thou art baptized with fire, and with the Holy Ghost. This is the record of the Father, and the Son, from henceforth and forever;

67 And thou art after the order of him who was without beginning of days or end of years, from all eternity to all eternity.

68 Behold, thou art one in me, a son of God; and thus may all become my sons. Amen. (Moses 6:64-68)

These last four verses contain the details that are presented in an abridged format in Moses Chapter Five:

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 (Moses 5:9).

## *The Sent Ones*

Chapter Six of Moses details the instruction from the Lord that is presented by the angel that taught Adam and Eve the Gospel. There are other scriptures that teach the same about the ministering angels that teach Adam and his posterity. These verses in Alma presented below also explain that Adam and Eve did not receive the Gospel until after the fall, as well as teach that it was messengers from God that instructed them: These are often called the 'three sent ones' in ancient Christian traditions.

26 And now behold, if it were possible that our first parents could have gone forth and partaken of the tree of life they would have been forever miserable, having no preparatory state; and thus the plan of redemption would have been frustrated, and the word of God would have been void, taking none effect.

27 But behold, it was not so; but it was appointed unto men that they must die; and after death, they must come to judgment, even that same judgment of which we have spoken, which is the end.

28 And after God had appointed that these things should come unto man, behold, then *he saw that it was expedient that man should know concerning the things whereof he had appointed unto them;*

[After death and separation from God came unto the man Adam, God saw it was “expedient” to teach Adam the plans of salvation]

29 *Therefore he sent angels to converse with them, who caused men to behold of his glory.*

30 And they began from that time forth to call on his name; therefore God conversed with men, and made known unto them the plan of redemption, which had been prepared from the foundation of the world; and this he made known unto them according to their faith and repentance and their holy works.

31 Wherefore, he gave commandments unto men, they having first transgressed the first commandments as to things which were temporal, and becoming as Gods, knowing good from evil, placing themselves in a state to act, or being placed in a state to act according to their wills and pleasures, whether to do evil or to do good—

32 *Therefore God gave unto them commandments, **after** having made known unto them the plan of redemption, that they should not do evil, the penalty thereof being a second death, which was an everlasting death as to things pertaining unto righteousness; for on such the plan of redemption could have no power, for the works of justice could not be destroyed, according to the supreme goodness of God. (Alma 12:26-32)*

In Moses it teaches the same as Alma, that angels were sent to teach Adam and Eve the Gospel by stating that: “And thus the Gospel began to be preached, from the beginning, being declared by holy angels” (Moses 5:58). The angel who comes to Adam ‘after many days’ of offering sacrifice and asks why, came from the presence of God, and taught the first parents so that they could teach their family.

## *The posterity of Adam and Eve*

It should be remembered that when Adam and Eve received the Gospel, they already had children, grandchildren and perhaps even great-grandchildren alive on the earth. The Doctrine and

Covenants teach that *the posterity of Adam could not die until they received the Gospel*. These verses explain that it was after the fall that the Gospel is taught, and can be seen in the scriptural context:

40 Wherefore, it came to pass that the devil tempted Adam, and he partook of the forbidden fruit and transgressed the commandment, wherein he became subject to the will of the devil, because *he yielded unto temptation*.

41 Wherefore, I, the Lord God, caused that he should be cast out from the Garden of Eden, *from my presence*, because of his transgression, wherein he became spiritually dead, which is the first death, even that same death which is the last death, which is spiritual, which shall be pronounced upon the wicked when I shall say: Depart, ye cursed.

42 But, behold, I say unto you that *I, the Lord God, gave unto Adam and unto his seed, that they should not die as to the temporal death, until I, the Lord God, should send forth angels to declare unto them repentance and redemption, through faith on the name of mine Only Begotten Son.* (D&C 29:40-42)

It is clear from scripture that Adam and Eve did not receive or understand the plan of salvation or the Gospel of Jesus Christ before they were driven from the Garden of Eden. These verses in the Doctrine and Covenants explain that death could not come to Adam and his living posterity until they received the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and could have the opportunity to accept or reject the plan of salvation by their now informed choice and agency.

No doubt there was more information and detail given to Adam and Eve than the little amount that is recorded in the scriptures. Adam and his wife Eve, excited that they now have received and participated in the Gospel plan, both explain the benefits of the fall in obtaining this knowledge and understanding. First, Adam expresses his joy and then Eve ‘hearing’ her husband does the same.

10 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.

11 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 5:10-11)

When the first parents learned of the plan of salvation, they were given a commandment; to “teach it unto their children” and to “teach it freely to your children” (Moses 6:57-58) by the messenger. It seems that Adam and Eve were immediately obedient to the command they had received to teach the Gospel to their children, as the scripture records: “And Adam and Eve blessed the name of God, and they made all things known unto their sons and their daughters” (Moses 5:12).

Joseph Smith teaches “In relation to the kingdom of God, the devil always sets up his kingdom at the very same time in opposition to God.”<sup>1</sup> Thus, as Adam teaches his posterity about the Only Begotten of the Father who is the Son of God and Savior, Satan and his ministers are there to teach of another ‘son of God’ that they (the posterity of Adam and Eve) can actually see. Satan appears

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<sup>1</sup> Smith, Joseph Fielding, *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, TPJS p. 365.

in all his glory and appears as an angel of light (2 Nephi 9:9) declaring to be a son of God also, one that they can actually see, unlike the one their father has taught them about.

13 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.

14 And the Lord God called upon men by the Holy Ghost everywhere and commanded them that they should repent;

15 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. (Moses 5:12-15)

Notice in verse thirteen that the posterity of Adam didn't believe in his teachings but rather "believed it not" and they "loved Satan more than God." Satan had a great success among all the posterity of Adam and Eve except for the first parents themselves. It must be understood that when Adam received the gospel (vs. 6-12) Satan was not yet at work among the sons and daughters of Adam and Eve. This must be true because there is no salvation without the gospel and no need for the influence of opposition. Without Gospel knowledge there is nothing to sin against (2 Nephi 9:25-26; Mosiah 15:24; Alma 42:21). Adam and Eve, learning of the Gospel, makes "all these things known unto [their] sons and daughters." Only when the gospel and the ordinances are given to the family of Adam does Satan need to establish his counterfeit doctrines and priesthoods. Once the posterity of Adam are taught of the Son of God and understand the Gospel, does the ability for sin exist, as verse thirteen states that once they received the Gospel that "men began *from that time forth* to be carnal, sensual and devilish." The last two verses explain that it would be the Holy Ghost that inspires mankind to repent in the future for as "many as believed in the Son and repented of their sins, should be saved" was the "decree" that "went forth unto the children of men."

### ***Cain, The Firstborn in the Gospel Centered Home***

The first few generations of Adam's posterity rejected the Gospel, nevertheless, Adam and Eve continued to have hope in the children that will yet be born now that they have received the Gospel and understand the plan of salvation.

16 And Adam and Eve, his wife, ceased not to call upon God. And Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bare Cain, and said: I have gotten a man from the Lord; *wherefore he may not reject his words*. But behold, Cain hearkened not, saying: Who is the Lord that I should know him?

17 And she again conceived and bare his brother Abel. And Abel hearkened unto the voice of the Lord. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. (Moses 5:16-17)

The Book of Moses records that Cain was the first male child born to Adam and Eve *after they had received the Gospel* and plan of salvation. Eve excited that she now had a child and declared that 'he would not reject the words of the Lord' like her children born before they received the Gospel. She now had a posterity that would become a new patriarch lineage for her posterity. Cain was going to be taught the Gospel from his youth, attend primary, young men's, Sunday School, and even Seminary. Because of agency "Cain hearkened not" and questioned 'who is the Lord that I should know him?' As the text continues; the time to choose a new patriarch arrives and Cain's

priesthood activity was less than righteous and his younger brother Abel, also born after Adam and Eve receive the gospel, was chosen to become Cain's priesthood leader as well as all the posterity of his parents throughout time.

The scriptures clearly teach that there were not two conflicting commandments, but that the potential ability was given to the first parents at the time of their creation. The scriptures also make sure that it is understood by the reader, that Adam and Eve had no gospel understanding until after the fall. As Moses 5:12-13 explains: to know the gospel is to know good from evil, which Adam and Eve could not know until after they partook of the forbidden fruit. Adam and Eve did not understand the plan of salvation in the Garden of Eden, and Adam himself explains that he partook because of the command to remain with Eve (eternal marriage) and not because he or she knew a better way or understood the gospel. We have learned that there is no need for the Gospel until there is a fall — 'if they partake then a Savior will be provided'. Only after the fall of Adam would there be a need for a plan of salvation, a need for redemption from sin and death, as a sacrifice would be provided by a loving God. (See Mormon. 9:12-13)

The concepts that are generally taught are: 1) that Adam and Eve received from the Lord two conflicting commandments, and 2) that they, or at least Eve, understood the Gospel plan in the Garden and partook because she understood the necessity of death to keep the commandment to have posterity is pure tradition rather than scriptural truth. The need to seek a reason to rationalize the supposed two conflicting commandments need not exist according to scripture. There were not commandments given from God that would place man in a position that he would be forced to sin or transgress reaping a physical and spiritual death to be obedient. If so, man's agency would have been compromised and therefore the punishment, would be unjust. Nor did Eve, according to scripture, understand the gospel plan.

### ***Exegetical or Eisegetical Conclusions***

Let the scriptures speak for themselves as well as the characters in the scriptural plot. When we try to explain what God really meant or should have said, we foolishly try to 'steady the ark' ignoring the word as God saw fit to provide. Apostasy can only arise when eisegetical commentary ensues. There are two ways to use scripture: 1) exegetical and 2) eisegetical. The "eisegetical" use of scripture is when one tries to use the scriptures to support or express the opinions, ideas, or biases of an interpreter, rather than the meaning of the text. Exegetical scriptural use is gleaning what the scripture is actually saying rather than creating implications to support a theory or false pretext.

The heavens will open wide when the scriptures are allowed to speak for themselves. The scriptures are living, for every age, and every person, and the scriptures are the best commentary on the scriptures.