

Ir-ot-04
“Because of My Transgressions My Eyes are Opened
(Moses 4, 5, 6)
By Lenet Hadley Read

(This material is not meant to replace the Gospel Doctrine Manual, but to give inspirational background)

I. To fully understand the story of Adam and Eve, we must recognize that this powerful event has three levels of meaning. These three levels are:

A. The real events of the historical Adam and Eve, who opened mortality to us.

1. We need to understand that **Adam and Eve were noble souls, foreordained to open the way for us through mortality to Eternal Life.**

2. Whatever Adam did, it was not a sin, but a “transgression.” (See Dallin Oaks quote, p. 15-16 of GD manual.)

3. Joseph Fielding Smith emphasized that Adam and Eve could not be guilty of any moral sin, as many assume, pointing out *they were married* and husband and wife. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, 1:114-15.)

4. Joseph Fielding Smith also said, “Now this is the way I interpret that: The Lord said to Adam, here is the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. If you want to stay here, then you cannot eat of that fruit. If you want to stay here, then I forbid you to eat it. But you may act for yourself, and you may eat of it if you want to. And if you eat it, you will die.” (“Fall ---Atonement--- Resurrection--- Sacrament,” in Church Educational System, *Charge to Religious Educators*, 124.)

5. Thus, **Adam & Eve chose to eat, knowing they would fall, or become mortal, but eventually would receive greater blessings in the end.**

B. The **second level of meaning** is that Adam and Eve also served as representatives of *us, as individuals and as mankind*, who would *all* sin, all being deceived by Satan at some time.

1. *The name Adam means “many” or “mankind.”* Understanding this level of meaning **helps us understand God’s anger at sin in the story, [for God’s anger is confusing if Adam and Eve acted wisely and did not truly sin]. But all of us, through our own sins, alienate ourselves from God and require a Redeemer, as did Adam himself, to be able to return into God’s presence.**

C. The **third level of meaning** is **that Adam also represented Jesus Christ as a future Bridegroom who would take upon himself His bride's guilt in order to redeem her.** (Note Paul revealed Adam is a "figure of him who was to come." See Romans 5:14.)

We miss significant meaning if we do not understand the patterns in Adam which foreshadowed Jesus Christ. Understanding this level answers many questions.

1. The Bridegroom and His bride were to be "One." To verify the Adam/Jesus connection, Paul attached to the Savior precise words from Genesis describing the oneness of Adam and Eve. "For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones....I speak concerning Christ and the church" (Ephesians 2:30-2).

2. Jehovah began through Adam to foreshadow His role as covenant maker with His people, thus as a Bridegroom. Then He continually reinforced that concept. In doing so, He revealed many significant aspects of His future work of salvation. When He came into mortality, He deliberately related many of His words and actions to His role as Bridegroom and to real wedding traditions. Many of those traditions had developed because the Israelites patterned their wedding customs after the covenant relationship they knew were offered them by Jehovah.

D. Here are fuller details of how Adam's Story taught of Christ and His people [Bride].

1. A paradise is created (Genesis 1:1-25).
2. This Paradise is gifted with tree of life and living waters (Genesis 2:9-10).
3. The Bridegroom reigns (Genesis 2:15.)
4. Bride eats forbidden fruit (Genesis 3:1-6). **Some Jewish legends say the forbidden fruit was the grape. The blood of the Savior is likened to wine. If this is so, the same fruit which cursed mankind later becomes its instrument of salvation. [Note the only fruit of which we are still commanded not to partake is the fermented juice of the grape.]**
5. The Bride must be cast out to die. Eve's yielding to the temptations of the serpent resulted in her being cast out, coming under the bondage of death, losing oneness with Adam (Moses 4:9-10). ***But when we understand that in this level of meaning, Eve represented all of God's people, it removes any reflection against women in particular!***
6. The Bridegroom's taking upon Himself Eve's sin, in order to redeem His bride, is a **witness of the future Christ, the true Bridegroom who would Himself take on our guilt in order to redeem us.**
7. A covering is provided for nakedness (Genesis 3:21). Jehovah provided coats of skin to cover the nakedness of Adam and Eve. **When He would come as Messiah in the flesh, He would provide the true covering --- the atonement.*** (The Hebrew word translated as "atonement" had meaning of "a covering.") And

it is a tradition in Jewish weddings for the bridegroom to wrap a part of his coat around his bride to cover her.

8. When Jesus returns, He will come again as a Bridegroom. He will unite Himself with His “Bride” (That is, **His faithful covenanted people.**)**

9. He will then bring them into an inheritance of a new paradise, greater than Eden. All things, such as tree of life, fountain of living waters, etc., first established in Eden, will be restored, but to far greater dimensions. (See Revelation, Ch. 21-22.) And this time it is the serpent who will be cast out.

Understanding these three levels of meaning will help us reconcile the many apparent conflicts within the story of Adam and Eve.

II. This interpretation is consistent with Hebrew writings, which often have more than one level of symbolism, as do many other forms of literature, *which style was adopted from the Bible.*

A. While it is difficult at first to grasp there is more than one level of meaning to the scriptures in the Bible, learning to read it that way will greatly enrich study of the Bible, for most of it is written in this same way.

B. The Book of Mormon is a key source for helping us to understand the Bible. See, for example, 2 Nephi 11:4. “My soul delighted in proving unto my people the truth of the coming of Christ. . . . and all things which have been given of God from the beginning of the world unto man are a typifying of him.” Also see Mosiah 3:15, “And many... types and shadows showed he unto them, concerning his coming....”. See also “Jesus Christ, Types of” in the Bible’s Topical Guide and “Jesus Christ, Types and Shadows of,” *The Encyclopedia of Mormonism.*

C. Elder Bruce R. McConkie verified that seeking the scriptures with the desire to understand those witnesses of Christ given in symbols, similitudes, or types and shadows, is a worthy search. And it is necessary for a complete understanding. “No doubt there are many events in the lives of many prophets that set those righteous persons apart as types and shadows of their Messiah. It is wholesome and proper to look for similitudes of Christ everywhere and to use them repeatedly in keeping him and his laws uppermost in our minds.” (*The Promised Messiah*, p. 453.)

*For a deeper understanding of the relationship between this covering and Christ’s Atonement, go to www.scriptureslenethread.blogspot.com, or www.lenethread.com. Click on “Christ’s Wondrous Works”, then “Proof the Bible is Not Just Myth,” then “The Terrible Cost of Christ’s Covering.”

**The concept of Jehovah/Jesus Christ as the Bridegroom, which begins in Genesis, is also used in John's Revelation at the end. In fact, because of this it can be shown that the Bible is made up as a great overarching Chiasm.

After beginning with the Bridegroom symbolism, there is a great turning point: Christ's coming, which also contains heavy references to Him as the Bridegroom. This then became the X, which reversed the destiny of mankind. [For our destiny was truly reversed because of The Cross]. The ending of the Bible uses the same imagery as its beginning, with all its future aspects paralleling the beginning, and being highly magnified. These are the elements of a true chiasm.

The presence of this great overarching pattern testifies that the Bible truly was written through the Spirit, otherwise it could not have been created as a whole Chiasm. For brief details go to my Old Testament Lesson # 1 on this website, or for more details go to www.scriptureslenethread.blogspot.com , to "Christ's Wondrous Works," to "Proof that the Bible is Not Just Myth," and then to "The Amazing Unity of the Bible."