

# FROM EDEN TO EXALTATION

## THE COVENANTS OF THE FATHERS

Bruce H. Porter

### INTRODUCTION

I was only eleven years old, and even now remember the perfumed smell of the rich cedar smoke as it drifted through the small and seemingly circular room of the log hogan. It was January, the Navajo reservation was cold and uninviting, yet, the warmth of the hogan was enticing after walking nearly a quarter of a mile from the truck. In the semi darkness of the fire it seemed like a dream as I stood with the silent members of the Navajo family. I watched in the heat of the haze filled room as the local shaman or "medicine man" squatted close to the open flame. The colored sand slipped through his fingers, and as if by magic formed an intricate circular design on the earthen floor. This sobering experience made a lasting impression in my mind as I was told when we left the home that the sand painting represented the world, light and darkness, male and female, and the creative forces used in their formation. I will never forget the reverie like feeling as I stepped out of the "white man's" world into an alien environment filled with myth and ritual.

Years later as an undergraduate, I began to realize that certain motifs continue to surface in the sea of cultural myth.<sup>1</sup> The most common "myth" in all societies

---

<sup>1</sup> A definition of the term "Myth" would be appropriate at this point. According to Mircea Eliade, *Myths, Rites, Symbols*, (New York: Harper and Row, 1975) pp. 2-7. "Myth" is not fiction or fable as the modern world understand it, but "myth" means a "true story". Myth "narrates a sacred history; it relates an event that took place in primordial time, the time of the Beginnings." Myth tells the "real story" of "that which really happened." Thus the term "MYTH" in this paper will imply and be defined as the "true story" of God's activities in the creation of the earth and mankind.

recapitulates elements of the cosmic creation (i.e., the cosmogonic myth) and the formation of mankind by the gods.<sup>2</sup> This cosmogonic myth serves a single ritual purpose, to connect the two realities of heaven and earth. The process of bringing the visible and invisible worlds into a relationship with each other may be "accomplished through the metaphor, symbol, and allegory" of the creation.<sup>3</sup> Knowing that the scriptures contain three accounts of the creation; (Genesis, Moses and Abraham, and not forgetting the fourth version in the Temple) I began to ask those terrible questions: Why the creation of the earth and mankind? What makes this concept so important to a people or culture? Why does it show up so often? What is the relationship between God, the cosmos and mankind? These questions are not original, the nostalgia for our beginning lies within every person, religion, or culture. Myth, in a ritual setting, addresses the origins of humanity. It describes the "Golden Age" without death and sin, followed by the introduction of mortality. History is no more than a record of mankind's attempt to find and acquire the glorious pristine era of the past.

Barbara Sproul (non L.D.S.) in her informative and superb work, *Primal Myths*, begins her introduction with these insightful words:

---

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., pp. 6-7. Eliade lists five functions of creation myths: "(1) constitutes the History of the Acts of the first parents; (2) This History is considered to be absolutely TRUE and SACRED (because it is concerned with realities). (3) that myth is always related to a "creation," it tells how something came into existence; (4) that by knowing the myth one knows the "origin" of things and hence can control and manipulate them at will...this knowledge that one experiences is done ritually by recounting the myth or by performing the ritual; (5) that in one way or another one "lives the myth, in the sense that one is seized by the sacred, exalting power of the events recollected or re-enacted." Barbara C. Sproul in *Primal Myths, Creating the World* (New York: Harper and Row, 1979) p. 2, echo Eliade's words regarding the creation myths: "Without it" (creation myths) "we cannot determine what things are, what to do with them, or how to be in relation to them. The fundamental structures of understanding that myths provide, even though in part dictated by matter and instinct, are nevertheless essentially arbitrary because they describe not just the real world of fact but our perception and experience of that world." Any endowment of power from on high that would come from myth and ritual must then contain the elements of the creation and our Heavenly Father's dealings with our first parents. This, in order that we might better understand our role in creation, and have better control of our salvation while here on earth. Johns Pedersen in his article "Wisdom and Immortality" in *Wisdom in Israel and in the Ancient Near East*, Ed. M. Noth and D. W. Thomas, Sup. Vetus Testamentum Vol III (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1955) pp. 243-244, states that these myths about the creation are "not dogmas" but narratives which "describe the work of God and characterize their mutual relations... which are expressive of the relation between God and man."

<sup>3</sup> Richard Heinberg, *Memories and Visions of Paradise* (Los Angeles: Jeremy P. Tarcher Inc, 1989), p.15.

*The most profound human questions are the ones that give rise to creation myths: Who are we? Why are we here? What is the purpose of our lives and our deaths? How should we understand our place in the world, in time and space? These are central questions of value and meaning . . .*<sup>4</sup>

These questions of Sproul are the queries of righteous men that generate dispensational visions and covenants from God.<sup>5</sup> Revelations from the celestial realm to prophets on earth are given to assist mankind in understanding that "reality exists only in the realm of the sacred."<sup>6</sup> Only by learning what is "real" (only eternity is real) may we understand ourselves, and our potential in this world and worlds to come.<sup>7</sup> The answers to these questions lie in the covenants and blessings that the first man, Adam, received from his creator in primordial time. The Old Testament begins with the story of the creation. The New Testament ends with the prophecy of a new heaven and earth. This is not done out of an interest in history but because of "the theological message" the creation story conveys to Israel long after or before the actual event. This religious message can only be transmitted through the ritual covenant process established by God in the beginning, and the redemption of mankind at the

---

<sup>4</sup> Sproul, *Primal Myths*, p. 1. Sproul indicates that the issues raised by these questions are addressed most directly by the creation myths.

<sup>5</sup> Moses called upon God saying "Tell me, I pray thee, why these things are so, and by what thou madest them? Be merciful unto thy servant, O God, and tell me concerning this earth, and the inhabitants thereof, and also the heavens, and then thy servant will be content" (Moses 1:30, 36). These are the questions that led Moses into his great vision of the creation and understanding of the relationship of man with God. (See also Moses 7:29; Abraham 1:2; 1 Ne. 11:1-3). The questions from man must precede the answers from God, because the man must be prepared not only to ask the question, but prepared to be obedient to the light and truth he will receive.

<sup>6</sup> Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane* (New York: HBJ Book, 1959), pp. 28, 30. Eliade states that the "religious man's desire to live in the sacred is in fact equivalent to his desire to take up his abode in objective reality," and that understanding the nature of the "sacred reveals absolute reality and at the same time makes orientation possible." This is necessary as the orientation that takes place "founds the world" and then "fixed the limits and establishes the order of the world." See also Eliade's *Myths, Rites, Symbols*, pp. 2-10.

<sup>7</sup> Understanding reality, or the sacred can only come as we understand the creation. Myths of the creation, according to Eliade in *Myths*, p.7, are "the most general and effective means of awakening and maintaining consciousness of another world, a beyond, whether it be the divine world or the world of the Ancestors. This other world represents...the plane of absolute realities...which gives birth to the idea that something really exists, that hence there are absolute values capable of guiding man and giving a meaning to human existence."

end.<sup>8</sup> The story of the creation as contained in the Old Testament, according to Engnell, "has had from the beginning a cultic association." This indicates that the text was used in some form of ritual. Engnell concludes that a treatment of creation texts as pure literature, "with disregard of their possible ritual and cultic setting, may lead to the most fearful misinterpretations."<sup>9</sup>

Mankind is composed of the body and the spirit, the mortal and immortal. He stands on the border of earth and heaven and binds the two together. This threshold is crossed in Genesis 1:27-28 as God gives human beings the power to rule by the "exercise of reason" and agency in a world serviceable to their needs.<sup>10</sup> Isaiah speaking of the creation of the Earth writes: "He did not create it a waste, but formed it for habitation" (Isa. 45:18). This place's man with divine commission to **act in response to his relationship to God and the created environment**. These pristine covenants and blessings are enjoyed by the righteous and demanded by all people. Even to professed

---

<sup>8</sup> Jeremy Cohen, *"Be Fertile and Increase, Fill the Earth and Master It"* (London: Cornell University Press, 1989), p. 64. George Coats made the statement that "stability (and thus the power of royal man) comes only through the events God established with his people once long ago" This stability comes through the repeated acts of creation in a cultic setting which "can be accomplished only through the covenantal relationships" established with the patriarchs, quoted in Cohen pp. 47, 48. Elaine Pagels, *Adam, Eve, and the Serpent* (New York: Random House, 1988), intro. p. xx, reveals that "the biblical creation story, like the creation stories of other cultures, communicates social and religious values and presents them as if they were universally valid...Christians invoked the story of Adam and Eve to justify and establish their beliefs; how they saw their own situations, their sufferings, and their hopes mirrored in the story of the creation and the fall." Thus the Christians **projected themselves** into the story of Adam and Eve "as a way of reflecting upon such matters as sexuality, human freedom, and human nature."

<sup>9</sup> I. Engnell, "Knowledge and Life in the Creation Story" in *Supplements to Vetus Testamentum* (1955) vol. III p. 105, 106. R. T. Rundle Clark, *Myth and Symbol in Ancient Egypt* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1959), p. 264. For the Egyptians, all life was predicated on the reenactment of the events of the "First Time." The restoration of the "Golden Age" was the chief object of ritual in the Egyptian Religion. See also note #14 below.

<sup>10</sup> David Jobling, "And Have Dominion" *Journal for the Study of Judaism* (1977), vol. VIII no.1 p. 56. Also on p. 58, Jobling states "just as earthly things exist for human uses, so do heavenly things for the higher human benefit of self-realization through reason." thus there has to be power given to mankind created in the image of God and given His dominion. Cohen p. 12, states that "Gen. 1:28 places humans at the pinnacle of the world order; they are the partners of God in his ongoing work of creation. Addressing man and woman, God accordingly unleashes the powers that will ensure the survival of his creation in perpetuity, and unlike the ensuing account of human origins in Gen. 2-4, Gen. 1 thus lays the foundation for an intrinsically valuable human civilization even before people sin." This is "the dependence of the natural world upon the blessing of God"

nonbelievers, existence depends upon the consequences of cosmogonic myth, and a connection to deity.<sup>11</sup> They (the nonbelievers) denounce the existence of God yet claim "inalienable rights" (as if they were the offspring of God). Declaring that human beings are superior to all other creatures. Wrongfully reserving to themselves the right, and obligation to control and exploit less intelligent forms of life and even the planet itself.<sup>12</sup>

The prophets have sought for and obtained the knowledge to answer the questions of Barbara Sproul: Who are we? Why are we here? and What our potential is after this life. They have also received the covenants and authority to make the blessings given "in the beginning" last for eternity.<sup>13</sup> Accordingly it is to the inspired words of the prophets we must turn in order to understand why the *creation myth* thrives in virtually all cultures.<sup>14</sup> Abraham was one such prophet who continued to search for

---

<sup>11</sup> Pagels, *Adam* intro. p. xix, feels that the story of the creation and God's relationship with the first humans became "a primary means for revealing and defending basic attitudes and values." The influence upon western culture religious and irreligious was a surprise to Pagels as to "how complex and extensive its effect has been." She continues, "Many people who have-intellectually, at least discarded the creation story as a mere folk tale nevertheless find themselves engaged with its moral implications concerning procreation, animals, work, marriage, and the human striving to 'subdue' the earth and 'have dominion' over all its creatures."

<sup>12</sup> Sproul, *Primal Myths* p. 1. See also James Barr, "Man and Nature--The Ecological Controversy and the Old Testament" *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library* (1972) 55:1, p. 9-32. Barr makes the statement that "The biblical religion...set man over nature and gave him authority indeed encouragement, to govern and control it..." (p. 11). Jobling p. 59, conveys the idea that "all things have been made subject to us--earth and water and air and stars--and that all things exist for our sake and are ordained to be subject to us."

<sup>13</sup> John Van Seters, *Abraham in History and Tradition* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1975), p. 311. It is to the unbreakable promises made to the patriarchs that Israel in desperation would later turn. "Abraham becomes the focus of corporate identity and the lifeline of their hope and destiny." See also *Genesis Rabbah*, hereafter cited as G.R., ed. Jacob Neusner, Parashah 14:6, The rabbis infer that Abraham was to restore the blessings that were lost by the fall of Adam.

<sup>14</sup> William E. Phipps, *Genesis and Gender* (New York: Praeger Pub. 1989), introduction pp. xii-xiii, states that "Myths thrust persons beyond abstract concepts and scientific analysis and enable them to obtain a synoptic vision on matters of fundamental importance." Phipps continues that these creation myths "are their vehicle for transcending mundane reality and envisioning what is at least as true as descriptive accounts of nature...and convey perspectives on the Eternal's interaction with the temporal scene." Engnell, pp. 103-119, gives an excellent discussion on the creation text within the Old Testament. Engnell makes clear that his idea of this story "in Gen. 1 has had from the beginning a cultic association--in a form about which we know nothing." He feels that the narrative in Genesis about the creation and the beginning of the human race in the image and likeness of God was used in 'some type of kingship ritual.' Cohen p. 45, implies that the ancient Biblical religion continued to link

light and knowledge. With revealed ordinances, truth and understanding, he became the grand archetype, and the "Father of the Faithful."

## ELEMENTS OF THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT

In the opening lines of the Book of Abraham the patriarch reveals the desires of his heart and those blessings and covenants which are most sacred and significant to him. The prophet indicates that these "rights" were given to the first man in primordial time. Thus coming from God, the blessings that originate "in the beginning" will assist in understanding our purpose in creation, and our relation with an Eternal Father.<sup>15</sup> This testament and testimony of Abraham involves the priesthood and the endowment from on high which the patriarch receives and records for the benefit of his posterity (Abr. 2:31). It reads:

*And finding there was greater happiness and peace and rest for me, I sought for the blessings of the fathers, and the right whereunto I should be ordained to administer the same; having been myself a follower of righteousness, desiring also to be one who possessed great knowledge, and to be a greater follower of righteousness and to possess a greater knowledge, and to be a father of many nations, a prince of peace, and desiring to receive instructions, and to keep the commandments of God, I became a rightful heir, a High Priest, holding the right belonging to the fathers. It was conferred upon me from the fathers; it came down from the fathers, from the beginning of time, yea even from the beginning, or before the foundations of the earth*

---

"creation and the motif of enthronement" as seen in its sabbatical and festival liturgy, as "God blesses those just created in his own image with fertility and dominion," may "betray a Near Eastern liturgical context by hinting at the royal investiture of the first human beings."

<sup>15</sup> Eliade, in *Myths*, pp.2-10, states that our world exists and that we are what we are because of the events that took place in "mythical times" or the time of the first parents. A knowledge of these "myths" or traditions provide mankind with "an explanation of the World and his own mode of being in the world, but above all because, by recollecting the myths, by reenacting them, he is able to repeat what the Gods, the Heroes, or the Ancestors did *ab origine*." This is done writes Eliade, that man may "relearn...that the world, man, and life have a supernatural origin and history, and that this history is significant, precious, and exemplary." Pedersen, p. 243, 244, agrees with Eliade, and Sproul in his statement that "myths are not dogmas but narratives which describe the work of gods and characterize their mutual relations and their relation to creation." Pedersen continues: "Thus these myths are expressive of the flickering relation between God and man. Man is related to the gods, a relation which appears in his wisdom. This is especially evident in the great man, the king...The kinship" (of man and God) "would be complete if man were also given immortality. He has been close to immortality, but still, he did not obtain it, and if he did so, he would no longer be human."

*to the present time, even the right of the firstborn, on the first man, who is Adam, our first father, through the fathers unto me. I sought for mine appointment unto the Priesthood according to the appointment of God unto the fathers concerning the seed (Abr. 1:2-4).*

In this preface to Abraham's endowment, statements are made that indicate he is seeking for himself "the blessings of the fathers." Equally important he desires the authority to "administer" those same blessings to others. This endowed gift does not come to an individual by lineage alone nor are they simply spontaneous. These favors, writes Rowley "must be renewed by each generation of those that inherit it."<sup>16</sup> By his "righteousness" and his desire to "possess a greater knowledge," Abraham receives this authority in his ordination to the priesthood as he becomes a "high priest." This will allow him to secure these ordinances and covenant blessings of the priesthood, and as a patriarch entitle him to endow the same blessings and ordinances to his family. These "blessings" included, in Abraham's words, becoming a "father of many nations" a "prince of peace" and a "rightful heir." Abraham reveals that these covenants actually existed prior to him, and were in fact provided originally for his father and progenitor Adam, the first grand patriarch.<sup>17</sup> The primordial nature of this blessing should be kept in mind with any discussion of the "Abrahamic Covenant" in order to appreciate the

---

<sup>16</sup> H. H. Rowley, *The Biblical Doctrine of Election* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1950), p. 34. Cohen, p. 225, makes the statement that Gen. 1:28 "signifies election and the assurance of salvation when Christians 'have been perfected as heirs of the Lord's covenant,' the conferral of whose rewards depend upon compliance with its demands." Thus the covenant blessings are repeated and renewed with each succeeding generation.

<sup>17</sup> This notion is not exclusive to the L.D.S. community. Cohen p.12, cites the comments of Welhausen and Elliger calling Gen. 1:28 the "initial covenant" and the "Goal of creation". This "initial covenant" with Adam provides the "substantive and terminological basis for God's subsequential pact (covenant) with Noah" and other patriarchs (p. 47). Cohen, quoting Augustine, (p.267) states that the covenantal promise was conveyed in the primordial blessing. Rupert of Deutz, (Cohen p.267) comments "It is evident that all the saints and elect, who by the grace of Christ are now called, justified, and glorified in various deserved ways...are of that blessing with which God blessed the first humans before their sin." John Goldingay "The Patriarchs in Scripture and History" in *Essays on the Patriarchal Narratives*, Edited by A. R. Millard and D. J. Wiseman (Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 1980), p. 18, states that "The theme of God's blessing, which is of central importance in Genesis 12-50, is in fact resumed from Genesis 1-11, where it already plays a key role...Genesis 1:1- 2:3 relates a series of divine commands through which the world's creation comes about, leading to a double climax (or a climax and coda) in 1:26-31 and 2:1-3. He, God, blesses man and speaks of his being fruitful and filling the land (1:28), thus itemizing the blessing in a way which anticipates the patriarchal narrative."

scriptural perception of God's relationship with mankind. Understanding that Abraham's blessing did not originate with him, we should be able to trace this covenant pattern to generations earlier than himself.<sup>18</sup> A knowledge of the covenants God made with our initial progenitor and subsequent patriarchs should give an enlightened discernment about our Father in Heaven's purposes, works and dealings, with His children who are created in His image and likeness. Before the covenant elements of Adam are discussed let us review the Abrahamic Covenant and those blessings we should be so familiar with.

LaSor states in his *Old Testament Survey* that "the call and blessing of Abraham represents a radical new development."<sup>19</sup> To those familiar with modern revelation and scripture realize that the blessings referred to did not originate with Abraham, but are given to Adam and Eve at the time of their creation. LaSor also feels (a little more close to the mark) that with this blessing of Abraham "God acts in history to begin a series of events that will heal the breach that sin has placed between Him and His world."<sup>20</sup> The covenant blessing not only heals the "breach of sin" through repentance and obedience, but may also exalt mankind to the status of Heavenly Parent.

There are three principal components that emerge from scripture in the covenant pattern of Abraham. They are: first, seed or posterity; second, land or inheritance; and third, priesthood or dominion.<sup>21</sup> The three ingredients are seen in the blessing of Abraham below.<sup>22</sup>

---

<sup>18</sup> Albrecht Alt, *Essays on Old Testament History and Religion* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1966), pp. 65-66, speaking of this covenant states that the "cultic and mythological elements" of the blessing of Abraham give the "impression of great antiquity." He continues in reference to the Abrahamic covenant passages stating that "a distinct and independent saga almost undoubtedly lies behind this passage...it would seem to be a genuinely ancient passage, standing first in the series of revelations by the God of the Fathers."

<sup>19</sup> William Sanford LaSor, David Allan Hubbard, and Frederic Wm. Bush, *Old Testament Survey* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1982), p. 88. To secular scholarship these blessings are a new development. However, Abraham records these blessings came from Adam, and are not a new or "radical" change. Many L.D.S. scholars too have failed to recognize the connection between the blessings of Abraham and Adam. see note # 17 above.

<sup>20</sup> LaSor, p. 88. Cohen, p.47, asserts that the covenants of Adam, Noah, Abraham, and Moses each "demarcates a new phase in the movement from creation (or the fall) toward redemption."

<sup>21</sup> Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine* (Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1966) p. 13. The explanation of the Abrahamic Covenant is the bestowal of the "priesthood," to have "eternal increase" and an "eternal inheritance."

<sup>22</sup> Traditional scholarship has only considered two (that of posterity and inheritance) to have been the key elements of the Abrahamic Covenant pattern. See Claus Westermann, *The Promises to the*



*...and the Lord appeared unto me, and said unto me: Arise, and take Lot with thee; for I have purposed to take thee away out of Haran, and to make of thee a minister to bear my name in a strange land which I will give unto thy seed after thee for an everlasting possession, when they hearken to my voice . . . 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 thy 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 (Abr. 2:6-11).*

These verses clearly indicate that the three blessings of seed, inheritance, and priesthood are the fundamental features in the covenant promises that God made with Abraham. Verse eleven reveals that "all the families of the earth will be blessed" by virtue of the priesthood, which priesthood the posterity of Abraham shall bear. The record explains the blessings that will be conferred upon the families of the earth are in the ordinances of the Gospel, or the blessings of salvation, and eternal life. We can

---

*Fathers*, trans. David E. Green, (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1976), pp. 2-30. Westermann quotes Noth, von Rad, and Alt, all dealing with the two factors of inheritance and posterity as the major elements of the covenant formula. Van Seters p. 269, recognizes the "two promise themes of numerous progeny and land" and submitting that the other aspects of the Abrahamic blessing (great name, and families of the earth blessed) are part of the two aforementioned blessings. Van Seters, p. 282 Gives the pattern in the blessing of Abraham contained in Genesis 15, and 17 as: "(1) A theophany with a divine promise stated in general terms. 15:1; 17:1-2. (2) Abraham's reaction in the one instance by an act of obeisance, 17:3 in the other by complaint, 15:2-3. In this he must prove his obedience. (3) The promise of an heir with numerous progeny, 15:4-5 or numerous progeny alone 17:4-6. (4) The covenant (berit) with Abraham and his descendants, 15:7-18 and 17:4-8. (5) The promise of land to Abraham and his descendants, 15:7 and 18; 17:8." Numbers 3,4, and 5 of the pattern are central to what Van Seters calls (p.288) a "threefold promise: numerous progeny, the land of Canaan, and the promise to be Israel's God." Thus posterity and inheritance is easily seen, the covenant (berit) is for the descendants to be Gods people and Yahweh to be Abraham's God. Inherent within this blessing is priesthood function and obligation. See also Alt, pp. 62-64.

conclude from this text of Abraham that the phrase "shall all the families of the earth be blessed" has direct reference to the priesthood and ordinances. These ordinances Abraham and his posterity received and shall bear to all the families of the earth.<sup>23</sup> As that phrase appears elsewhere in scripture we may assume and safely interpret that it has reference to the priesthood as in the circumstance of Gen. 12:3.

These same blessings or covenant elements are seen not only in the history of Abraham as told in the Pearl of Great Price but also in the Old Testament. Each component of this pattern will briefly be discussed as they relate to the Patriarch Abraham.

### SEED or POSTERITY

In Genesis we read of the Lord's promise to Abraham to make of him a "great nation" (Gen. 12:2). Chapter Fifteen of the same book reveals Abraham's concern with the fulfillment of the previous prophecy as he declares to God that "to me thou hast given no seed" (vs. 3). The Lord responds by asking him to look "toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him (Abram) so shall thy seed be" (Gen. 15:5; see also Abr. 3:14, Gen. 12:16; and 17:6). This promise of seed and posterity is clearly seen at the time that Abram receives his new name.

*And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly. And Abram fell on his face: and God talked with him, saying, as for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations. Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee. And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, (Gen. 17:2-6; see also Abr. 3:14).*

Becoming the seed of Abraham by adoption is a concept all are familiar with and it need not be discussed here.<sup>24</sup> It must be remembered that to the faithful, those

---

<sup>23</sup> Bruce R. McConkie, *The Millennial Messiah* (Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book, 1982), pp. 260-265. McConkie makes the statement that "All the families of the earth, Jew and Gentile alike -- whether composed of blood descendants or adopted son-- shall receive the blessings of the gospel only when it is taken to them by Abraham's seed. His seed are the ministers of Christ; they hold the holy Priesthood; they have received the divine commission to preach the gospel in all the world and to every creature. And what are the blessings they offer mankind? They are salvation and eternal life" (p.263).

<sup>24</sup> Rowley, p. 140, states that "Gentiles who accept the covenant may possess the heritage, since

elected to serve--the literal or adopted seed--belong the blessings of father Abraham.<sup>25</sup> Herein lies one of the integral elements of the covenant and blessing that God made with Abraham and his righteous descendants, that of becoming a "father of many nations" (See Gen. 22:17; 26:4,24; 28:3; 35:11).<sup>26</sup>

## LAND or INHERITANCE

Subsequent to the guarantee of descendants an intrinsic question and blessing must follow: Where will they live? To Abraham the Lord states: "unto thy seed will I give this land" (Gen. 12:7), then again "In the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates" (Gen.15:18). The promise of an inheritance is readily recognized in the texts that deal with the blessings of Abraham. This birthright blessing given by God and established in a covenant process and procedure can be seen in Genesis 17:

*"And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein*

---

from the start it was destined for them, and it belonged to purpose of Israel's election (all the families of the earth shall be blessed) that she should mediate it to them.'

<sup>25</sup> This "election" to be or become the "seed of Abraham" is one of 'service to and for the world,' her "mission is to the nations" (Rowley, p. 43, 45, 59-60). Cohen, p. 318 makes a statement about the chosen people, "the more commandment bound an individual, the greater his or her claim to divine election." When service to mankind is withheld the "election loses it's meaning, and therefore fails" (Rowley p. 52). The blessing and claim of "divine election" and being the literal descendants of Abraham was taken seriously in the time of Christ as James Talmage explains in *Jesus the Christ* (Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret, 1986), pp. 58, 381 "In their relations with other peoples the Jews generally endeavored to maintain a haughty exclusiveness, which brought upon them Gentile ridicule. Under Mosaic law Israel had been required to keep apart from other nations; they attached supreme importance to their Abrahamic lineage as children of the covenant, 'an holy people unto the Lord,' whom He had chosen 'to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth.'" Talmage explains that "Though they were of Abrahamic lineage in the flesh, they were no heirs of Abraham in spirit or works. Our Lord's mention of His Father as distinct from their father drew forth the angry reiteration, 'Abraham is our father,' to which Jesus replied: 'If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham'" (p. 381).

<sup>26</sup> Cohen, p. 14 states that the blessing of offspring and land "constitute the hallmarks of promise texts in the Hebrew Bible."

*thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God" (Gen. 17:7-8).*

In a legitimate sense, to receive an inheritance a person must be or become the recognized legatee of the individual bestowing the endowment or gift. This can only be done by abiding by the covenants of the relationship established by the benefactor.<sup>27</sup> Obedient to the gospel requirements and having all things "confirmed unto Adam, by an holy ordinance" (Moses 5:58-59) the Lord declares "Behold, thou (Adam) art one in me, a son of God; and thus may all become my sons" (Moses 6:68). The endowed inheritance is given to Abraham by God, who becomes his legal benefactor. This is seen in the Lord's comment that He (the Lord) will "be a God unto thee" and to Abraham's posterity "I will be their God" (Gen. 17:8). This promise from deity establishes divine right or sanction for an individual or family to live in a designated area as a legal recipient.<sup>28</sup> In this way Abraham became what he had desired, a "rightful heir". The Lord told Abraham that he must lose his identity inasmuch that he was to leave his country and his "kindred" and go into a land where he would be a stranger (Abr. 2:3).<sup>29</sup> At the same time the Lord commands Abraham to depart from his familiar way of life, there was an assurance of a more blessed restoration of that which he was to relinquish (Abr 2:6). The promise of a new family, a new country or land, and even a great name constitutes an identity as a new nation.<sup>30</sup> Clearly this can be seen

---

<sup>27</sup> Van Seters, p. 288, indicates that the promises of land and progeny are directly related to Abraham's obedience and righteous living. This oath and covenant becomes to Abraham an "irrevocable pledge, berit 'olam to all Abraham's descendants." This is a major theme and covenant blessing throughout the *Book of Mormon*, see 1 Ne. 2:20-21; Ether 2:7-12.

<sup>28</sup> Van Seters, p. 289, states that the promise of the land in Gen. 17:1 is "in the form of a legal land grant which is made as a possession in perpetuity both to the recipient and to his descendants."

<sup>29</sup> Van Seters, p. 227-278, reveals that Abraham receives the promises because he has lost these blessings upon leaving Ur. Thus the prophet is commissioned to establish a race with religious and racial purity to give Israel legitimate claim to the land. This concept is inherent in all cultures, Douglas A. Knight, in *Tradition and Theology in the Old Testament* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1977), p. 168, says "the nature and responsibility of humanity (Gen. 1:26-27) had to be pursued by all people in all situations anew.. This was especially the case in times when radical discontinuity, triggered by historical reversals or social change, yielded a need for reassessment and redirection." This is the case of Abraham as he is commanded by God to leave his family, and land and become a pilgrim in a strange land.

<sup>30</sup> Examples of using the "name" to establish an identity as a culture or nation is seen in the Old Testament as well as the Book of Mormon. In Genesis 11:4 the people decide that they must build "a

in the promise that "I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing" (Gen. 12:1,2).<sup>31</sup>

These two blessings of posterity and land inheritance lie at the heart and foundation of every culture as they begin the process of creating a "new" people, nation and identity. Like Abraham, these elements exist in virtually every new life style or existence that humanity enters into by command and sanction of God.

## PRIESTHOOD or DOMINION

Abraham's desire to become a "father of many nations" and a "rightful heir" is apparent within the scriptural contexts that have been discussed. His desire to become a "prince of peace" portrays priesthood or dominion as the third element of the covenant formula.

The notion of the priesthood is not so readily apparent in the Old Testament. However, it does exist within the context of Abrahamic Covenant passages. As seen in the quotation of Abraham Chapter Two, it is by virtue of the priesthood that "all the families of the earth shall be blessed" with the gospel of salvation and the ordinances of eternal life.<sup>32</sup> These ordinances are administered to mankind by the righteous posterity

---

city and a tower" in order to "Make a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth." In the Book of Mormon "the people who are friendly to Nephi" give themselves a "name" which is done "according to the reigns of the kings" (Jacob 1:9, 11, 14) and were called "Nephites"

<sup>31</sup> The claim on the "land of promise" or "choice land" as an everlasting inheritance is a theme that runs throughout the Book of Mormon. An excellent example of recreating an entire nation and people can be seen in the Book of Mormon as Lehi speaks of the covenants the Lord made with him saying:

"...we have obtained a land of promise, a land which is choice above all other lands; a land which the Lord God hath covenanted with me should be a land for the inheritance of my seed. Yea, the Lord hath covenanted this land unto me, and to my children forever," (2 Ne. 1:5).

To Zoram who left his land and family the prophet Lehi bestows this blessing:

"Wherefore, because thou hast been faithful thy seed shall be blessed with his seed, that they dwell in prosperity long upon the face of this land; and nothing, save it shall be iniquity among them, shall harm or disturb their prosperity upon the face of this land forever. Wherefore, if ye shall keep the commandments of the Lord, the Lord hath consecrated this land for the security of thy seed with the seed of my son." (2 Ne. 1:31-32).

Lehi is well aware of the promises of the Lord that pertain to seed and inheritance. He had received these covenants and had been given the authority to administer the same blessings to his righteous seed, and, as in the case of Zoram, even his adopted posterity.

<sup>32</sup> Joseph F. Smith, *Gospel Doctrine* (Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book, 1986), p. 139, The priesthood of God is delegated to man "by which man can act in the earth for the salvation of the human family."

of Abraham (literal or adopted). All families of the earth are eventually blessed with the saving and exalting ordinances within the Temple. This "sealing" of families back to Adam and then to God through the Patriarchal lines and orders must be done if the creation of the earth is not to be "utterly wasted at His coming". This priesthood and it's ministry, is promised to continue in Abraham and in his righteous seed through generations yet to come. This third ingredient of the Abrahamic Covenant is confirmed in inspired Latter-day scripture; and with this revealed knowledge, the priesthood covenant becomes discernible in the traditional texts.

Abraham desired to become a "prince of peace," to take upon himself the title and responsibility given to the Great High Priest Melchizedek. In the Book of Mormon Melchizedek is "called the prince of peace, for he was the king of Salem; and he did reign under his father" (Alma 13:18). The prophet Joseph Smith in his translation of the Bible reveals again that Melchizedek was "ordained a high priest after the order of the covenant which God made with Enoch," and that because he was a priest of this order "he obtained peace in Salem, and was called the Prince of Peace" (J.S.T. Gen. 14:27, 33, 36). The hebrew word *'melech'* means "king," and *'tzadik'* is "righteousness," hence, in construct form Melchizedek or "King-of-righteousness, became a title and label of identification. Both of these terms, 'prince of peace' and 'king of righteousness,' within scriptural context, are intimately connected with the priesthood.<sup>33</sup> To become a "prince of peace" as Melchizedek and Jesus Christ are called, constitutes a blessing that Abraham sought for, and received from his fathers, even Melchizedek (J.S.T. Gen. 14:40, see also D.&C. 84:14).<sup>34</sup>

---

<sup>33</sup> Fred L. Horton Jr., *The Melchizedek Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976) p. 124, states that the words *melech tzadik* are a title, and not a name. Horton feels that the person with that title is "a revealer of the priesthood."

<sup>34</sup> Horton, p. 122, indicates that R. Samuel bar Nahman, "agree that through Melchizedek the priesthood was passed to Abraham" (G.R. 43:6). The interpretation of Gen. 14:18-20 (Horton p. 120) is to be understood as the priesthood being passed from Melchizedek to Abraham, which concept is continued in later midrash. Horton discussed the relationship between Abraham and Melchizedek (p. 17) stating that the bringing of the bread and wine to Abraham was "an action of Melchizedek and would fall into the pattern of exalting Abraham." Rabbi Ishmael says, (G.R. 46:5) "Abraham was a high priest, as it is said, 'The Lord has sworn and will not repent, 'You are a priest for ever after the manner of Melchizedek'" A discussion of the relationship between Abraham and Melchizedek can be seen in Stephen D. Ricks "The Early Ministry of Abraham" in *Studies in Scripture, Volume Two, The Pearl of Great Price* (Salt Lake City, Utah: Randall Book Co., 1985), pp. 217-219. Ricks indicates that the name of Melchizedek might have a link with Abraham's desire to be a "greater follower of Righteousness." See also John Taylor's remarks concerning Abraham, the priesthood and endowment in (JD 21:159-160). Joseph Smith stated, in *The Words of Joseph Smith*, Compiled and edited by Andrew F. Ehat and Lyndon W. Cook, (Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1981), p. 246, that the blessing Abraham "received under the hands of Melchizedek" was the "last law or a fullness of the law or priesthood which constituted him a

Abraham received the promise that not only would he be fruitful, but that "kings" would come from him, and from Sarai "kings of people shall be of her" (Gen. 17:6, 16).<sup>35</sup> To Israel (the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob) the restoration of this covenant was to be achieved at Sinai. Here the Lord covenants to make them, if faithful and obedient, a "kingdom of Priests, and an holy nation" (Ex. 19:6).

Contained within the scope of kingship is dominion, the *authority* to rule the area over which the king and queen will be the responsible sovereigns. Commanded to "walk through the land in the length of it and the breadth of it" (Gen. 13:14-16) the Lord charged Abraham to examine and inspect his responsibility. The custom of the new king traveling throughout his domain or kingdom is a familiar motif in the coronation ceremonies of the Ancient Near East.<sup>36</sup>

The authority of the king to reign is literally inherent, as he traditionally represents the Son of God on earth. He becomes the priest/king, and passing through the ordinances of "the first born," sits upon the throne by divine sanction.<sup>37</sup> The king as mediator, and "persona" of the Son of God, is responsible for the physical and the spiritual well-being of all subjects that live within the boundaries of the kingdom.<sup>38</sup> Abraham and his posterity receive promises to become kings and priests, not only in a temporal and earthly sense, but unto God. To be a "prophet, priest and king" is the

---

king and priest after the order of Melchizedek."

<sup>35</sup> Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, p. 13, "Abraham first received the gospel by baptism (which is the covenant of salvation); then he had conferred upon him the higher priesthood, and he entered into celestial marriage (which is the covenant of exaltation), gaining assurance thereby that he would have eternal increase; finally he received a promise that all of these blessings would be offered to all of his mortal posterity."

<sup>36</sup> Raphael Patai, *On Jewish Folklore* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1983), pp. 128-129. See also A.M. Hocart, *Kingship* (London: Oxford University Press, 1927), p. 71, 124. Henri Frankfort, *Kingship and the Gods* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978), p. 127, states that the Near Eastern king was required to "pass through repeated ceremonies at the various cities." This act was called in the Egyptian play of succession, "Marching through the mountains." Frankfort feels that there was a "processional march beyond the town where the performance took place up to the edge of the desert cliffs to establish dominion over the valley and the adjoining desert." See also G.R. 41:10.

<sup>37</sup> Frankfort, pp. 295-302.

<sup>38</sup> *ibid.*, p. 252. Frankfort states that the duties of the King were threefold: "the interpretation of the will of the gods; the representation of his people before the gods; and the administration of the realm." Cohen, p. 17 reflects that the terminology and ideology of Ancient Near Eastern kingship "must entail concern for the welfare of its subjects; kingship without responsibility was universally unacceptable."

role of a "patriarch" and the corresponding priesthood.<sup>39</sup> He is to rule as a king over his posterity in righteousness, caring for their temporal needs. As the "high priest" he must administer to their spiritual needs, and confirm the blessings and ordinances of salvation and exaltation.<sup>40</sup> The prophetic office of patriarch fulfills the need of continued guidance and revelation in the changing environment of his posterity. The right of "kingship" (i.e. an *endowment of power and authority*) is invested in Abraham and his posterity by virtue of the priesthood they hold. The ordinances in which they participate, make them heirs of all that God hath, thus each person becoming a "firstborn" and son or daughter unto God. This Priesthood (patriarchal) had been passed down to Abraham, "from the beginning of time, yea, even from the beginning, or before the foundation of the earth to the present time" (Abr. 1:3).<sup>41</sup> These covenants are the "rights of the firstborn," (spiritual and physical firstborn) and were given to the first man who is Adam, our first father. Describing the Patriarchal priesthood the Lord states:

*The order of this priesthood was confirmed to be handed down from father to son, and rightly belongs to the literal descendants of the chosen seed, to whom the promises were made. This order was instituted in the days of Adam, and came down by lineage (D.C. 107:40-41).*

Abraham entered into this order and received the authority to administer the blessings of this priesthood to his posterity.<sup>42</sup> Joseph Smith states that this patriarchal

---

<sup>39</sup> Joseph F. Smith, *Gospel Doctrine* p. 140, states that this priesthood is the 'authority by which God governs his people.'

<sup>40</sup> Bruce R. McConkie, *A New Witness for the Articles of Faith* (Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book, 1985), pp. 657, 658. McConkie considers this priesthood the theocratic government of God. "Under it, there is no need for a civil power on the one hand and a religious arm on the other. All the affairs of government are intertwined into one with direction coming from God himself, by revelation to those whom he commissions to represent him on earth...The theocracy of the Adamic age was patriarchal, and from Adam to Noah all the legitimate powers of government, both civil and religious, descended from father to son."

<sup>41</sup> Cohen, p. 44, writes that "the ritualized enthronement of the king, often accompanied by the rites of sacred marriage, typically dominated these ancient celebrations of the new year, the king, representing the deity and modeled after the primordial man, guaranteed fertility and prosperity on a day-to-day basis."

<sup>42</sup> Joseph F. Smith, *Gospel Doctrine* p. 288, states that the "patriarchal order and authority of the home rests upon principle as well as upon the person who holds that authority." Also upon this



priesthood is to be received and understood within the temple.<sup>43</sup> The covenant blessings of this order can be received only by a *couple* entering into "this order of the priesthood, meaning the new and everlasting covenant of marriage" (D.&C. 131:2).<sup>44</sup> To have posterity without number in the order of the patriarchal priesthood as a rightful heir, are the promised blessings to the faithful "begotten sons and daughters unto God."

The blessings of posterity, land and priesthood are the inherent blessings and rights/rites of kingship. To receive an "endowment of power" from on high in effect is a coronation ceremony. Not necessarily to make one a king or queen here on the earth but a king and queen, priest and priestess to God. Adam and Eve, being the earliest to receive this endowment from deity become the primal patriarchal parents, the first king and priest, queen and priestess unto God on earth, the great and grand parents of all mankind.<sup>45</sup>

Adam and Eve are the example and archetype for all their offspring.<sup>46</sup> That which they did we must do, what they received we also must receive. The covenants that Adam and Eve entered into with God must be the same for us. Abraham declares that the covenants and blessings he sought for and received were the same given to the

---

"authority certain promises and blessings are predicated, and those who observe and respect this authority have certain claims on divine favor which they cannot have except they respect and observe the laws that God has established for the regulation and authority of the home."

<sup>43</sup> Joseph Smith lists three priesthoods in Joseph Feilding Smith's *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, (Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book, 1976), p. 323. "The 2nd Priesthood is Patriarchal authority. Go to and finish the temple, and God will fill it with power, and you will then receive more knowledge concerning this priesthood."

<sup>44</sup> Bruce R. McConkie, *A New Witness for the Articles of Faith* (Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book, 1985), pp. 312-313. "Celestial marriage is an 'order of the priesthood.' It is the patriarchal order that opens the door to a continuation of the family unit in eternity. Those who enter this order of matrimony...will have a continuation of the seeds forever and ever." McConkie gives the insight that part of the covenant of exaltation is that we "promise to magnify our callings in the priesthood...and to enter the patriarchal order" of marriage. One of the key blessings of the Abrahamic Covenant is the continuation of seeds, which can only be accomplished in the order of eternal marriage. see also James E. Talmage, *The House of the Lord* (Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book, 1968), pp. 88-89. Talmage makes the inference that eternal marriage is the "order" that will exist in the eternal worlds.

<sup>45</sup> Heinberg, p. 71, quotes A. M. Hocart stating that the "first kings and queens were, without exception, priests and priestesses."

<sup>46</sup> Jobling, p. 70 states that Adam stands "simply as a symbol for the race as a whole."

first man. In this context Abraham becomes the man Adam as all must do looking for the endowment of divine kingship and exaltation.<sup>47</sup> The coronation ceremonies through out the world are patterned after the first sovereigns given the responsibility to multiply, subdue and have dominion over the earth.<sup>48</sup> Engnell describes Adam in "royal categories" these are: 1) *divine* - because he is created in the image of God and lives because of the "breath of God," an immortal being. 2) The "*enthroning*" - of Adam as the ruler of the cosmos, given dominion over all creation. 3) Adam the *Gardener* in paradise as he is to "dress and keep" he is the responsible for the welfare of the kingdom, or world. 4) Receives the *royal robe*, the covering and clothing given by God. 5) *Partner in creation* - to give names to the animals. 6) Adam the *hieros gamos* -participates in the sacred marriage and becomes the father of the race. He is the first man who must fight with the dragon, partaking of the tree of knowledge, and losing immortality.<sup>49</sup>

## PRE-FALL BLESSINGS OF ADAM AND EVE

Chapter Two of the Book of Moses, records the creation of mankind and how they were made in God's "image" and "likeness." Created like God, in looks and in substance.<sup>50</sup> They were formed, God said "in mine own image...male and female

---

<sup>47</sup> Engnell, p. 110 lists the man Adam in four categories using his name as "(1) Humanity, (2) Ancestor, (3) Primeval Man, and (4) Primeval King."

<sup>48</sup> Cohen, p. 44 contends that Gen. 1:28 "radically transforms the Near Eastern pattern of royal investiture, as it democratically confers fertility and dominion on humanity as a corporate whole." This is done in connection with the Kingship rites as the royal marriage takes place.

<sup>49</sup> Engnell, pp. 112-113.

<sup>50</sup> J. Maxwell Miller, "In the IMAGE and LIKENESS of God," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 91:3 (1972) p. 291. Miller makes the statement that the hebrew for "image and likeness" is translated correctly. "It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the "image of God" passages are at least reminiscent of the widespread view among the peoples of the ancient Near East that man is similar to the gods with regard to his corporeal appearance." See also James Barr, "Theophany and Anthropomorphism in the Old Testament," *Vetus Testamentum* 7 (1959) 31-38. Horowitz, p. 190, mentions the irony of the Jewish tradition which "accepted the physical and spiritual resemblance of human nature with God" and then forbids iconographic anthropomorphism, "while the Christian tradition which rejected a notion of physical resemblance" encouraged are portraying Adam and Eve as in the image of God. Gen. Rab. 8.11 states that God will create man in "My image and likeness" so that he will partake of the character of the celestial beings. see also Phipps intro. p. xiv; Cohen p.35; and Miller p. 296. Pedersen, p. 239, discussing the Egyptian wisdom of Meri-ka-re, states that the Egyptians thought that the first humans were "issued from God's body as his images." Brevard S. Childs in *Old Testament Theology in a Canonical Context* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985), pp. 188-190, discusses a

created I them" (Moses 2:26-27). Before proceeding further we must review a few points of the creation so far as the man and woman are concerned. The Hebrew word for our English translation "help meet" comes from עֵזֶר כְּנֶגְדּוֹ, meaning a 'helper meet for him.' The root (נָגַד) `neged' means to be 'in front of' or 'counterpart' and connected with the preposition as it stands in scripture (כְּנֶגְדּוֹ) `kenegdo' means 'corresponding to him, equal to and adequate to himself.'<sup>51</sup> In short, it is to be worthy of each other and be a "helper meet," one who will 'match' and not to be unequal (in a greater or lesser degree) to the spouse.<sup>52</sup> Before the fall, this verse establishes an anthropology of equality and "grounds a relationship of mutuality between the sexes."<sup>53</sup> Consequently the creation of man cannot be complete until the introduction of the woman. Thus man cannot be called "man" until he has a wife.<sup>54</sup> "It is not good that man should be alone" (Gen. 2:18), so to make it "good" God created man in the image of his own body, "male and female, created he them, and blessed them, and called their name Adam" (Moses 6:9). Being created in the divine image then "characterizes and defines" humanity as a whole and not an individual sex within the offspring of God.<sup>55</sup> To be human means to be made in the "image of God" male and female, thus both sexes "must be characterized equally by the image."<sup>56</sup> Speaking of this equatable

---

number of traditions that state that after the creation of the first man, even the angels mistook Adam for God because he was so much in the "image and likeness" of his creator, see Gen. R. 8:10, also Alexander Altmann, "The Gnostic Background of the Rabbinic Adam Legends" in *The Jewish Quarterly Review*, (1944-1945), Vol. 35, p. 379-382.

<sup>51</sup> Brown, Driver, and Briggs, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1951), pp. 616-617. Hereafter cited as B.D.B..

<sup>52</sup> Hugh B. Brown, *Continuing the Quest*, (Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book, 1961), p. 10, states that the creation of woman, established her status as a "companion" here and in the eternal worlds.

<sup>53</sup> Phyllis A. Bird, "Male and Female He Created Them: Gen. 1:27b in the Context of the Priestly Account of Creation" *Harvard Theological Review* (1981) 74:2 p. 133. Bird also feels that this verse (Gen 1:27) sets a "anthropology of equality" between the man and woman and then creates a "corresponding relationship within the Godhead itself."

<sup>54</sup> Maryanne Cline Horowitz, "The Image of God in Man-Is Woman Included?" *H.T.R.* (1979) 72:3-4, p. 187.

<sup>55</sup> Bird, p. 159. See also Spencer W. Kimball, in *Ensign*, March 1976, p. 71, "'And I, God said unto mine Only Begotten, which was with me from the beginning: Let us make man [not a separate man, but a complete man, which is husband and wife] in our image, after our likeness; and it was so.' What a beautiful partnership! Adam and Eve were married for eternity by the Lord. Such a marriage extends beyond the grave."

female counterpart Adam declares: "This I know now is bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they shall be one flesh" (Moses 4:23-24).<sup>57</sup> The word "cleave" has two meanings in modern english, consolidation or separation. However, in the Hebrew (דבק) 'cleave' has the meaning of connecting together, like "bone to skin" or a "physical proximity retained" "joined together" not to be separated.<sup>58</sup> In language that we are familiar, "cleave" means the same as "sealed."<sup>59</sup> Thus a man shall leave his father and mother and be "sealed" to a wife. Only within the framework of eternal marriage, Adam and Eve sealed together (equal in the covenant blessings) can the creation of mankind be complete. Thus he "called *their* name Adam." Within Jewish tradition exists a belief that God intended human beings to live in marital union, and that a human being could be considered in "the image of God" only when united as a procreative couple.<sup>60</sup> Sequentially the Jewish marriage commemorates the first human marriage solemnized in the Garden of Eden.<sup>61</sup>

---

<sup>56</sup> Bird, p. 159. Horowitz, p. 195, makes the statement regarding this equality: "Women therefore cannot claim they are too weak, for they have full strength in their soul which, like the male's resembles God." (This would be in relation to the concept of salvation). "Equally they share the privilege of creation in God's image, and thus equally can they be virtuous and do good works, and equally can they deserve reward or punishment for their deeds."

<sup>57</sup> Pagels, in *Adam*, p. 66, quotes a coptic text called the "*Reality of the Rulers*," stating that "when Adam first recognized Eve, he saw in her not a mere marital partner but a spiritual power" that was needed for his perfection.

<sup>58</sup> B.D.B. pp. 179, 180.

<sup>59</sup> When Christ speaks of marriage he returns to the Genesis text explaining the word "cleave" in the words "joined together" and the concept of eternal marriage:

*"Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder."*

<sup>60</sup> Horowitz, p. 185. On page 189 Horowitz writes that "the dominant thread running through the Talmudic commentary was that the image of God in man is not complete until man and woman are together in the married, procreative state...through that legend, they emphasize that in the unity of man and woman there is the image of God." Genesis Rabbah 8:9, Rabbi Simlai says "To begin with man was created from the dust, and Eve was created from man. [Man without woman is dirt, woman without man has no existence.] There is no possibility for a man without a woman, nor for a woman without a man, nor for the two of them without the Presence of God."

<sup>61</sup> Horowitz, p. 183.

of God" only when united as a procreative couple.<sup>60</sup> Sequentially the Jewish marriage commemorates the first human marriage solemnized in the Garden of Eden.<sup>61</sup>

The male and female offspring of God, in a sinless and innocent state are blessed with characteristics that will make them most like their Father. This distinguishes humans as unique, as they bear the divine image and stand only slightly below God (Ps. 8:6).<sup>62</sup> Genesis 1:27, 28; (Moses 2:27, 28) ends creation and begins humanity, establishing the purpose of God's works and words. Verse 28 places mankind at the top of created order and makes them "partners of God" in His work of creation, "to carry on and complete the process His creation began."<sup>63</sup> The following verse, according to Cohen, establishes Adam and Eve as the primal king and queen, expounding that this passage is "replete with the imagery of enthronement."<sup>64</sup>

*And I, God, blessed them, and said unto them: Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it, and have*

---

<sup>60</sup> Horowitz, p. 185. On page 189 Horowitz writes that "the dominant thread running through the Talmudic commentary was that the image of God in man is not complete until man and woman are together in the married, procreative state...through that legend, they emphasize that in the unity of man and woman there is the image of God." Genesis Rabbah 8:9, Rabbi Simlai says "To begin with man was created from the dust, and Eve was created from man. [Man without woman is dirt, woman without man has no existence.] There is no possibility for a man without a woman, nor for a woman without a man, nor for the two of them without the Presence of God."

<sup>61</sup> Horowitz, p. 183.

<sup>62</sup> Cohen, p. 35.

<sup>63</sup> Cohen, intro. pages 2, and 12. He also remarks (p.64) that by receiving this blessing of verse 28 the parents of humanity must "exemplify (God in whose image they are created) by meeting the charges of Gen. 1:28." To be like god we must act like God and thus must also be given the divine powers of God.

<sup>64</sup> Cohen, p. 64. The relationship between the coronation or enthronement motifs with the consecration of priests and the sacred marriage is illustrated in Geo Widengren's "Heavenly Enthronement and Baptism" in *Studies in the History of Religions: "Religions in Antiquity"* vol 14, ed. Jacob Neusner (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1970), pp. 551-582. The ritual of marriage is in essence a reenactment of the creation and the enthronement of the first parents of mankind. This endowment of power or marriage is to receive the blessings that will reverse the fall of Adam and Eve, and to bring back immortality and eternal life. See also Heinberg, p. 109-111, 115-129.

*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).*

This "blessing," and it is just that, not necessarily a commandment in this state, guarantees divine providence and an enduring relationship between God and the recipients of any age.<sup>65</sup> The verse conveys sacred blessing and also denotes God's entry into an exclusive covenantal relationship" with the patriarchs and the promised posterity.<sup>66</sup> This verse marks the blessing of righteous humanity "par excellence."<sup>67</sup>

In this *pre-fall* condition "God blessed them" and "said unto them" (ויברך אִם אלהים ויאמר להם אלהים) not separately or individually, but together as one entity. Each promised blessing in this sinless paradisiacal existence is given to the man and the woman together as they "share equally in the various aspects of the divine charge."<sup>68</sup> Under the conditions of equal creation and equal responsibility the man and woman become, as Adam declares, "one flesh." Companionship and the sharing of work, "mutual attraction and commitment in a bond superseding all other human bonds" conveys the purpose of "the intended partnership" for which Adam was created male and female.<sup>69</sup> This verse implies, and some scholars agree that the "motif of a divinely sponsored wedding is lurking

---

<sup>65</sup> Cohen, pp. 65, 51, States that "while the verbs are expressed as imperatives, they are not so much commands as authorizations by which the people are empowered, to believe and act toward the future." If this statement is true then there would have been no "conflicting commandment" in the garden, posterity and sexuality does not become an issue until mortality presents a reason to maintain your immortality through posterity.

<sup>66</sup> Cohen, p. 39.

<sup>67</sup> Cohen, p. 33, Upon this verse, Cohen believes, hinge all covenantal relationships with mankind and God. It is, according to Cohen "a formularized guarantee of divine protection, divine election and the divine covenant...of those who would ultimately enjoy the future redemption."

<sup>68</sup> Cohen, p. 13.

<sup>69</sup> Bird, p. 158. This marriage or partnership, according to Bird, addresses the question of equality and status. "The intended partnership implies a partnership of equals, characterized by mutuality of attraction, support and commitment. That the story is told from the point of view of the man and is thus clearly androcentric in construction, does not alter the basic tone of the account as a tone of mutuality and equality."

in the background of Gen. 1:28.<sup>70</sup> The verse quoted above (Gen. 1:28; Moses 2:28) constitutes a blessing and scriptural remanent of the ordinance of eternal marriage pronounced on the first couple.<sup>71</sup> The heavenly blessing of Genesis 1:28 rests "upon the male and female who are like one," sealed together in righteousness.<sup>72</sup>

## PRE-FALL BLESSINGS OF POSTERITY

Adam and Eve were "blessed" with the health and power required to procreate. They are told that this power would be used to multiply and have *posterity*

---

<sup>70</sup> Cohen, p. 14. Charles W. Penrose, *Mormon Doctrine, Plain and Simple*, (Salt Lake City: Juvenile Instructor Office, 1888), p. 49, "The first marriage recorded in scripture was the union of immortals. The curse of death had not been pronounced when the ceremony was solemnized. There was no sin then, and therefore there was no death. The man and woman became one as eternal beings, and dominion was given to them over all earthly things together."

<sup>71</sup> It appears from the research done on this verse (Gen. 1:28, or Moses 2:28, "And God blessed them, and said unto them be fruitful...") that it is a benediction or blessing, and scriptural remnant of the divine ordinance of marriage. Thus it is a blessing and ordinance not only for this life but for eternity. What has been previously perceived as a command, in actuality, is a "blessing" with implied direction to have posterity in respect to the blessing. *Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer*, trans. Gerald Friedlander, (New York: Sepher-Hermon Press, 1981), pp. 88-89 also speaks of this wedding of Adam and Eve. Cohen, p. 109, states: "Gen. 1:28 brings this portrait of the primordial wedding feast to its climax...God and his angels extend themselves to the first parents in the ultimate expression of gratuitous kindness--ministering to their subordinates as bridesmaids and groomsmen. The ceremony does not conclude until God himself raises the cup of blessing and pronounces the nuptial benedictions" (Gen. 1:28). Harold B. Lee, in Roy Doxey, *The Latter-day Prophets and the Doctrine and Covenants*, (Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book, 1965), vol. 4, pp.427, 428. states that "undoubtedly" Gen. 1:28 in conjunction with Gen. 2:18, 22-24; are the "vows of the first marriage upon this earth" Joseph Smith, in *The Personal Writings of Joseph Smith*, Compiled and Edited by Dean C. Jessee, (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1984), pp. 92, 132. The prophet remarks in a marriage ceremony that "marriage was an institution of heaven instituted in the Garden of Eden." Following the ceremony he pronounced them Husband and Wife and "in the name of God" blessed them with the "blessings that the Lord conferred upon Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden" in Gen. 1:28. See also page 132, where the blessings of "Abraham Isaac and Jacob" are given to the married couple. Also, Ezra Taft Benson, *The Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson*, (Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1988), pp. 534, 537.

<sup>72</sup> Cohen, p. 207.

heavenly blessing of Genesis 1:28 rests "upon the male and female who are like one," sealed together in righteousness.<sup>72</sup>

## PRE-FALL BLESSINGS OF POSTERITY

Adam and Eve were "blessed" with the health and power required to procreate. They are told that this power would be used to multiply and have *posterity* enough to fill the earth. The capacity of procreation, along with dominion and inheritance, some what defines the purpose for which God's offspring consists of male and female.<sup>73</sup> The resemblance between this covenant blessing and its relationship to the promise of posterity made to Abraham is obvious. Contained within them (the man and woman) lies the power to beget, to bear offspring with "seed in themselves, after their own kind." Procreation is a godly quality and blessing, and must be held sacred.<sup>74</sup> This power may be used to create a "divine" or "devilish" quality based on the

---

until God himself raises the cup of blessing and pronounces the nuptial benedictions" (Gen. 1:28).

Harold B. Lee, in Roy Doxey, *The Latter-day Prophets and the Doctrine and Covenants*, (Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book, 1965), vol. 4, pp.427, 428. states that "undoubtedly" Gen. 1:28 in conjunction with Gen. 2:18, 22-24; are the "vows of the first marriage upon this earth" Joseph Smith, in *The Personal Writings of Joseph Smith*, Compiled and Edited by Dean C. Jessee, (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1984), pp. 92, 132.

The prophet remarks in a marriage ceremony that "marriage was an institution of heaven instituted in the Garden of Eden." Following the ceremony he pronounced them Husband and Wife and "in the name of God" blessed them with the "blessings that the Lord conferred upon Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden" in Gen. 1:28. See also page 132, where the blessings of "Abraham Isaac and Jacob" are given to the married couple. Also, Ezra Taft Benson, *The Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson*, (Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1988), pp. 534, 537.

<sup>72</sup> Cohen, p. 207.

<sup>73</sup> Cohen, p. 309-310, also states that "God created the world expressly for the purpose of human procreation." see also Raphael Patai, *Sex and Family in the Bible and the Middle East* (Garden City, N.Y., 1959), p. 72, where he states that the blessing of posterity occurs in Genesis "with an insistent and unrelenting monotony that could stem only from the conviction that numerous progeny is the highest of all human aspirations."

<sup>74</sup> Procreation, writes Cohen, p. 312, "exemplified not only human piety but also the mysterious and harmonious perfection of the deity; by complying with the divine mandate, a human couple replicated and effected the integration of the godhead, facilitating their own admission into the realm of the supernal as well." This "primordial blessing" of procreation is connected to our human condition and when "humans heed the instruction to be fertile and increase, they manifest their creation in the image of God. And when all those destined for human life have been born, the final redemption will ensue" (Cohen, p.242-243).



correct or incorrect attitudes, circumstances and use.<sup>75</sup> The Law of Chastity or Virtue is an eternal law given for our temporal and spiritual benefit and glory. The power to multiply and fill the earth are endowed attributes and abilities which the children of an Eternal Father receive in order to perpetuate the glory of God. "Which glory" the scripture states "shall be a fullness and a continuation of the seeds forever and ever" (D.& C. 132:19). Scriptural and prophetic testimony support the centrality of procreation as a major theme of primeval history. This blessing of power to have posterity, leads into the subsequent blessing of inheritance that "the earth might answer the end of its creation; and that it might be filled with the measure of man, according to his creation before the world was made" (D.& C. 49:16-17).<sup>76</sup>

### PRE-FALL INHERITANCE

Together Adam and Eve were "blessed" to subdue the earth, and to bring it under their subjection. The Oxford English Dictionary (O.E.D.) lists five definitions of the word 'subdue.' All refer to the concept 'to obtain control' of someone or something. In regard to subduing the land, it is to 'bring under cultivation' or make it 'belong to' the one who will cultivate or subdue it. The hebrew word means to "render productive" which according to Cohen means the "subdued earth is a land that will serve it's master productively."<sup>77</sup> The pattern of ancient and sacral kingship conveys the idea that a "primeval feature in this mythic-ritual pattern is that the king is gardener" in the primordial world or garden.<sup>78</sup> Contained within this definition of "subdue" is the ability to create, and receive an inheritance of land for the promised posterity.<sup>79</sup> In a

---

<sup>75</sup> In reference to the creation of Adam and Eve, Bird, pp. 158-159, states: "Sexual distinction cannot be limited to a biological definition of origin or function," that is within a pre-fall context. "Sexuality" (in mortality) "is a social endowment essential to community and to personal fulfillment, but as such is also subject to perversion and abuse."

<sup>76</sup> Jobling, p. 52, quotes Philo: "God made ready for him beforehand all things in the world." Jobling also uses the phrase "Anthropocentric teleology" which means that everything was prepared for human well being and use.

<sup>77</sup> Cohen, p. 17.

<sup>78</sup> Engnell, pp.112-113, states that this idea was anciently "symbolized cultically in the temple groves and the waters of life." Today, modern temples retain the similar symbols in the temple grounds or gardens, with fountains and reflecting pools.

<sup>79</sup> Brown, p. 174, Concerning the verse (Moses 2:28) Brown makes the comment that, "Only as we subdue the earth in the finest sense of that term, will we be entitled to inherit it...And so I'm suggesting that perhaps subduing the earth has something to do with inheriting the earth."

pre-earth state the Gods counsel among themselves about the promised inheritance: "We will go down, for there is space there, and we will take of these materials, and we will make an earth whereon these (spirit children) may dwell" (Abr. 3:24,26). The earth exists as the created inheritance given from God to his progeny. A place that we might prove ourselves within our stewardship and be found worthy of the similar but eternal gift of the earth in it's celestial glory. Adam and Eve are told to "go to" and take care of their inheritance, to "dress and keep" the new world in which they had been placed. The notion of "subdue" implies not only inheritance but also responsibility for the proper use and control of the newly endowed gift. The blessings of a dependable and ordering life can only become a reality if "righteousness is practiced by the historical agent of the order, namely the king."<sup>80</sup> Election to this position of stewardship and covenant blessing belong together. Thus "loyalty to covenant was essential to the continuance of the election, and loyalty to the covenant required obedience to the will of God."<sup>81</sup> In this new creation, Adam, the primeval king was the "only one with the ability to be at home in any part of the world."<sup>82</sup> As the first father in this new world, Adam must also have the power and authority to administer to his posterity, the ordinances of salvation and eternal life. This logically leads to the blessing of priesthood.

### PRE-FALL PRIESTHOOD

The third blessing given to both Adam and Eve is that of "*dominion* over every living thing . . . that moveth upon the earth" (Moses 2:28). This dominion places mankind just slightly below God and the heavenly world (Psm. 8). Yet the same blessing exalts mankind above all other life on this earth.<sup>83</sup> With this authority and responsibility the man and woman are to bless and protect all life in their stewardship, and their environment. According to the Midrash Tanhuma God clearly stipulated to Adam that "if you are meritorious, I shall make you king over the creatures of the lower

---

<sup>80</sup> Walter Brueggman, "Kingship and Chaos" in *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, (1971) vol. 33, p. 323.

<sup>81</sup> Rowley, p. 68.

<sup>82</sup> Jobling, p. 67. see also Cohen, pp. 1, 2.

<sup>83</sup> Cohen, pp. 85, 63-64. Jobling p. 50, states that the human "Possess far reaching power over nature, yet nothing like the total rule the text suggests." Only with the priesthood (the authority and power to act in God's name) does man obtain the power and control that "the text suggests."

world just as I am king over the upper world."<sup>84</sup> The dominion conferred on the man and woman in Gen. 1:28 is "covenantal" in nature and "constituted a gift and a reward" that is "conditional upon human loyalty and upon compliance with the divine will."<sup>85</sup> This dominion then places man and woman between earth and heaven with the ability to cast their lot in one direction or the other. By this power and authority all the families that live upon the earth, will eventually receive the blessings of salvation and eternal life.

The Prophet Joseph Smith more than hinted at the meaning of the word "dominion" and it's relationship to priesthood in the context of this blessing of Adam and Eve.

*The Priesthood was first given to Adam; he obtained the First Presidency, and held the keys of it from generation to generation. He obtained it in the Creation, before the world was formed, as in Genesis 1:26, 27, 28. He had dominion given him over every living creature. He is Michael the Archangel, spoken of in the Scriptures. Then to Noah, who is Gabriel: he stands next in authority to Adam in the Priesthood; he was called of God to this office, and was the father of all living in this day, and to him was given the dominion. These men held keys first on earth, and then in heaven.*<sup>86</sup>

The relationship of dominion and priesthood is also apparent in scripture and definition. In the O.E.D. the words "dominion" and "dominate" have the basic connotation of: 'authority to rule or control.' The Latin root of the word dominion is intimately connected to the term "god" and His right to rule all creation. According to Bird, "dominion" describes a "royal function or prerogative" as it is used in the context of Genesis 1.<sup>87</sup> This authority can be exercised only in the 'domain' or stewardship of which the sovereigns are responsible. Dominion or priesthood becomes intimately

---

<sup>84</sup> Midrash Tanhuma, 4:55b. See also Cohen, p. 101. Bird, p. 154, feels that "dominion" describes the relationship of Adam to the other creatures. "Its concern is order and status..its message of human superiority and sovereignty over the creatures appears independently in the creation hymn, Ps. 8."

<sup>85</sup> Cohen, p. 228.

<sup>86</sup> Smith, *Teachings*, p. 157.

<sup>87</sup> Bird, p. 154.

connected with kingship and the individual's right to rule by virtue of relationship, worthiness and inheritance.<sup>88</sup> By the authority of the priest/king and efficacy of this position, the sovereign receives dominion or priesthood responsibility. This he must use for the spiritual and temporal well being of his subjects or posterity under his charge as the patriarch or prophet, priest, and king. By virtue of this "dominion" or priesthood there exists a natural and divine relationship between God, the authorized offspring and the rest of mankind.<sup>89</sup> Adam, placed in this position between the divine world and the rest of creation, has the power to act on earth in behalf of Deity in a key administrative and monarchic function.<sup>90</sup> Dominion must become, and belong to the "permanent structure of the world" else the purpose of the earth would be `utterly wasted.<sup>91</sup> The sentiment expressed by the verb "dominion" is "distinctively royal" and therefore "linked to the idea of exaltation."<sup>92</sup> Adam and Eve together are the legitimate sovereigns in this new kingdom, and consequently both receive this priesthood, (the patriarchal) as "God blessed *them*" to have dominion. It must be remembered, we are dealing with a pre-fall environment, and a condition of eternal marriage. In this "order of the priesthood" both man and woman have authoritative dominion or priesthood, and may exercise this power within their stewardship.

---

<sup>88</sup> Cohen, p. 23 states that the blessing of dominion "emphatically highlights the Godliness of the man and woman" and implies that those created in his image and blessed with fertility and dominion "betray a Near Eastern liturgical context by hinting at the royal investiture" and "enthronement of the first parents" (p. 45, 99). Man does not have unlimited power over creation for the "exercise of dominion ..rests conditionally upon human compliance with the divine will" (Cohen, pp. 16-17). Thus when this dominion is exercised unrighteously the blessing is rescinded by God, and man is left unto himself.

<sup>89</sup> David Clines, *The Theme of the Pentateuch*, JSOT Supplement Series 10 (1978) p. 29, "The promise has three elements: posterity, divine-human relationship, and land." The divine-human relationship is the power and authority of God to act in his behalf as the one given the "dominion" and responsibility to bless all life.

<sup>90</sup> Jobling, p. 56 states that "such rule (dominion) in the world must be related to the supreme rule of God." Cohen, on p. 72-74 states the portrayal of dominion is an "administrative responsibility of management on behalf of a superior officer." Cohen explains, (p.119) that the dominion intended for humans corresponds to the "future rule of Israel over heavenly and earthly realms."

<sup>91</sup> Jobling, p. 51.

<sup>92</sup> Bird, p. 154. Also Cohen, p. 18 quotes Walter Z. Immerli stating that "human dominion must be exerted for the sake of a higher nonhuman objective." Dominion interpreted by Odil Hannes Steck is the "framework of rule for the benefit of the whole."

The blessings that Adam and Eve received in the garden are potentially inherent in the progeny of God.<sup>93</sup> The two are blessed to become as much like God as possible in this pre-fall existence. *They* possess the health and power to have posterity like their Heavenly Parents, and to inherit the new world which was created for them. Finally, *they* have the priesthood or authority to act in God's behalf as legal heirs and birthright son and daughter. Together the two are endowed with power from their Father, and in His name exercise righteous dominion over all that lives in the given inheritance and creation. The verse with which this section began, (Gen. 1:28) entails divine commitment and human responsibility. It set the pattern and dictated the role of human beings within creation. By obedience to the divine blessings of Genesis 1:28 mankind may be entitled to the reward of salvation and exaltation.<sup>94</sup>

### POST-FALL BLESSINGS

The promises made to Abraham (posterity, inheritance, and priesthood) are easily seen in the blessing that Adam and Eve received in the garden as God placed them in the new world. However, after partaking of the "forbidden fruit" the man and woman enter the world of mortality, separation from deity, and to a degree separated from each other.<sup>95</sup> The marriage of the first parents in Eden reflect the appropriate relationship that a sealed couple must have with God. The traditional conflict of the Eden story has been between the forbidden fruit and the command to have posterity. However, when the texts are read, it can be seen that Adam's greatest fear, --greater than death and being separated from the presence of God-- was to be left a lone man in the Garden of Eden. In Moses 4:18 Adam is questioned as to why he partook of the fruit. He responds that: "The woman thou gavest me, and *commanded that she should remain with me*, she gave me of the fruit." This verse implies, with previous verses, that she had partaken and would be cast out leaving him alone in the garden. The scriptural issue in Eden is one of Eternal Marriage, one where Adam understood that the two

---

<sup>93</sup> Cohen, p. 70, states that God grants the first parents the divine like qualities, 'creating them in his own image and according them dominion.'

<sup>94</sup> Cohen, p. 105.

<sup>95</sup> Bird, p. 158, makes the statement: "Here the consequence of sin, disturbs the "original intended relationship between God and creation" as well as the "original intended relationship between the man and the woman." Cohen, p. 246, implies that when the first parents rebelled they "undermined their own spiritual abilities." Pagels, in *Adam*, p. 142, states that the "spiritual death is a matter of choice" it is voluntary, therefore our actions become a factor in judgement.

were to be one flesh, and what God had joined together Adam was not at liberty to put asunder. Adam knew that the blessings of Gen. 1:28 could only be fully realized in the covenant relationship of eternal marriage. The major concern then, in the partaking of the forbidden fruit by Adam, seems to be one of eternal marriage. Celestial marriage is a requirement for exaltation, not posterity. Only in choosing to remain with his eternal partner may Adam and Eve be blessed with posterity in this world and in eternity. When the relationship between humanity and God is undermined, (the partaking of the fruit) the man and woman forfeit the tranquility of Eden, and "their paradisiacal residence" and flawless relationship, in the presence of Deity.<sup>96</sup> Adam chose, knowing no other way, to leave this incorruptible inheritance and those godlike blessings that were equally bestowed upon him and his wife.<sup>97</sup> With this choice comes the sacrifice of the former blessings that must now be earned by willful, intelligent obedience now with the promise of increased glory and fulfillment. Having received the gospel, realizing their potential and recognizing their purpose, the inspired mother of all living said: "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).

The covenant blessings received before the "fall" continue in mortality though slightly altered. In the temporal world sacrifices and obligations are now divided between the man and woman.<sup>98</sup> This separation of responsibility must take place in order that each *individual* (the man, and the woman) may work out their own salvation "in fear and trembling" (Mor. 9:27) to "see if they will do all things whatsoever the Lord their God shall command them" (Abr. 3:25). These powers and blessings given in Genesis 1, are divided in order that the individual may "define an exclusive relationship" between him/her self and God.<sup>99</sup> As they work out their *individual* salvation they must also work toward *combined* exaltation.<sup>100</sup> Toward each other, united in faith and purpose

---

<sup>96</sup> Cohen, p. 59.

<sup>97</sup> Cohen, p. 103, Because of the fall "Adam forfeited" the blessings that contributed to his natural order and the responsiveness of nature to provide his needs and desires. The man and woman are now subject to the power of the temporal environment in which they must be "driven."

<sup>98</sup> Midrashic traditions interpret the "punishments" of Gen. 3 bearing directly on the components of Gen. 1:28, the understood blessings of "bearing of children and the control of the natural environment" quoted in Cohen, p. 101, 63, 87.

<sup>99</sup> Cohen, p. 66. See also Pagels, *Adam*, p. 137, as she feels that the division of responsibilities are natural and necessary in this temporal world.

as they have been "joined together" (or sealed) becoming "one flesh."<sup>101</sup> In marriage the law of consecration speaks loudest as couple must learn to be "equal in earthly things" that they 'may be equal in obtaining the bonds of heavenly things' (D.& C. 78:5).

Because Moses 2:28 preceeds the fall, it contains the blessings of the righteous couple and not the blessings of the individual. The sacrifice and separation of the pre-fall blessings are seen as the change from immortality to mortality transpires. Estranged now, from incorruptibility, and the perfect and equal companionship of each other that existed in the pre-fall glory, the Creator addresses Adam and Eve:

*Unto the woman, I, the Lord God, said: I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception. In sorrow thou shalt bring forth children, and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. And unto Adam, I, the Lord God, Said: Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the fruit of the tree of which I commanded thee, saying--Thou shalt not eat of it, cursed shall be the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life (Moses 4:22-23).*

Contained within these few verses, the blessings (posterity, inheritance and priesthood) given to Adam and Eve earlier, are now observed in a slightly different format. The man and woman in a temporal and yet matrimonial condition must learn to rely on and assist each other in fulfilling the covenant blessings and responsibilities.<sup>102</sup>

---

<sup>100</sup> Brown, p. 11, states "The Lord endowed you women with many gifts and graces, capacities and capabilities, of a quality that he did not grant to men, and these will strengthen the partnership, as they minister to and increase the intellectual and spiritual stamina of men...The Lord's special bequests and endowments to men and women separately can only be fully realized when they are combined, added upon, and enjoyed jointly. The gifts and graces of each must supplement and complement the other, if they are to be fully realized."

<sup>101</sup> Childs, p. 192, states that the scripture witness "equality, even identity, in a unified role within the kingdom of God...Together in their unity they constitute true humanity."

<sup>102</sup> Brown, p. 6, speaks of the relationship and dependency between a husband and wife: "When we think of the respective roles of men and women, we remember the Lord said, '...Neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man...' (1 Cor.11:11). 'So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them'—not him alone, 'and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion...' (Gen. 1:27-28)."

"The dominion, then, is to be a joint dominion, and the command to multiply and replenish the earth is necessarily a joint injunction. When the Lord made provision (after the fall) for men to have the priesthood and gave the sacred honor and glory of motherhood to women, he divided not only the responsibilities but the blessings of life equally between men and women. Both priesthood and

To achieve the fullness of these opportunities, they must become unified in righteousness and grow into "one flesh." They must assist each other to achieve complete obedience in the marriage blessing and covenant of Moses 2:28.<sup>103</sup> Accordingly they prepare themselves and each other for the culmination of the inherent blessings belonging to the offspring of God.<sup>104</sup>

Because the consummation of these blessings contain within them exaltation, Satan will stop at nothing to frustrate the plans and covenants that God has made or will make with a man and woman in "this order of the priesthood."<sup>105</sup> Consequently a savior is "prepared from before the foundation of the world" (Moses 5:57) and God intercedes in behalf of his offspring and states: "I will put enmity between thee (Satan) and the woman, between thy seed and her seed" (Moses 4:21).<sup>106</sup> This is not just a foreshadowing of the coming of the Savior, but also a natural enmity or hatred within mankind toward evil. When coupled with the ability to recognize right from wrong this "enmity" gives to mankind the power to do good or evil. The use of this "free agency" to chose and then execute in the presence of good and evil, has the potential to exalt or damn the man or woman in their quest for eternal life (See 2 Ne. 2:26-29). Therefore, this life becomes the perfect probationary state to prove ourselves worthy of the divine blessings. These blessings of posterity, inheritance and priesthood in a post fall existence will be reviewed briefly. This discussion is not intended to be comprehensive, but only to reveal some relationships of the foregoing blessings (Gen. 1:28, or Moses 2:28) with those responsibilities given to the offspring of God after the fall (Moses 4:22-25).

---

motherhood, if they are to be honored and magnified, must bear the hallmark of service--service sanctified and glorified by love. Hence, neither the man nor the woman should envy the role of the other, but recognize it as a counterpart and complement of their own role. We must go forward hand in hand and heart to heart as we face the challenging but glorious responsibilities of life."

<sup>103</sup> Childs, p. 192, states: "God chose to create two different forms of humanity for different functions within his creation." These differences allow the full development of the unified couple.

<sup>104</sup> Brown, p. 10-11, makes the statement that exaltation is a "joint and progressive undertaking."

<sup>105</sup> These same blessings of posterity, inheritance, and priesthood are the elements of the eternal world that Satan forever lost. He does not and never will have the power of pro-creation, the inheritance that could have been his is forever gone, and the dominion and power that belongs to the righteous, Satan may only, as Pharaoh did, 'feign claim the rights of the priesthood' (Abraham 1:26).

<sup>106</sup> Pagels, *Adam*, p. 128, recognizes that the scriptures reveal that "only Christ's supernatural power can undo...what Adam's supernatural power once effected." Doxey, vol. 4, p. 427, Harold B. Lee states that the "purpose of the atonement was to restore that which was lost by the fall."



## POST-FALL BLESSINGS OF POSTERITY

In the pre-fall state man and woman are "blessed" to be fruitful and to multiply upon the earth. From the beginning mankind was created to embody God's image and have the potential and power to transmit that image and blessing from one generation to the next.<sup>107</sup> After the fall the major part of the responsibility to bear children into this world falls upon the woman. Because of this obligation the woman became known as Eve, now to be the "mother of all living" (Moses 4:26).<sup>108</sup> As the Lord responds to the action of the woman in partaking of the "forbidden" fruit, He explains the sacrifice and blessing that will assist in achieving her full potential with a worthy helpmate: "*In sorrow thou shalt bring forth children*" (Moses 4:22). This procreation with God will be performed in "sorrow," or in the hebrew (עצבון) `itstabown.' The definition according to the B.D.B. should mean to "labor, work or toil in pain".<sup>109</sup> This does not have a restricted reference to the "labor" of childbirth, but implies a lifetime of painful work in the bearing and nurturing of their posterity. What mother does not throughout her life, work for and feel, every pain, frustration, and need, of her children. This pre-fall blessing given to Adam and Eve becomes a primary obligation of the woman in a world governed by nature's laws. This blessing and responsibility can only be accomplished with the aid and support of her husband. The bearing and nurturing of children will not be easy in this existence, nor is it meant to be. By Adam and Eve's inspired choice this life became a probationary state. Our temporal existence is governed by the degenerate time of nature, as we try and survive through tribulations, tests and trials hoping for a long life, but eventually surrendering to the supreme sacrifice of death. However, the pain, the sorrow, and the sacrifice one must go through exists for the good and growth of an individual in a natural and mortal world preparing for the eternities.

## POST-FALL BLESSINGS OF INHERITANCE

---

<sup>107</sup> Cohen, pp. 77, 111.

<sup>108</sup> Each existence that an individual enters into will require a new name. Scripture indicates that before the fall Adam's helpmate was called "woman" because she was taken out of man (Moses 3:23) after the fall she was called "Eve" because she became "the mother of all living" (Moses 4:26).

<sup>109</sup> B.D.B. pp. 780-781.

Before they were driven from their garden of delights, the man and woman were "blessed" to "subdue" the earth and together create an inheritance. In mortality the man Adam acquires the obligation to provide for and sustain their offspring. To Adam alone, God gives the charge to "subdue the earth."

*...cursed shall be the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life. Thorns also, and thistles shall it bring forth to thee, and thou shalt eat the herb of the field. By the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, until thou shalt return unto the ground --for thou shalt surely die-- for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou wast, and unto dust shalt thou return" (Moses 4:23-25).*

Like Eve, the same word "sorrow" with the same meaning, to 'labor, work or toil in pain' defines the equal and similar sacrifice of the first mortal man. Also in pain the man must labor to sustain the life of his posterity just as the woman must do to give life to the spiritual progeny of God.

The sacrifice is not greater for one than the other. In the image of God, "male and female" are they created, equal to each other in creation, in blessing in potential and in "sorrow."<sup>110</sup> The scripture uses the same word in the case of Eve and Adam to imply the same level of responsibility. The man must labor all his days "in sorrow" to create an inheritance while providing food, clothing and shelter for his family. The assignment will be accomplished knowing that the only release from his obligation will be a return to the dust in death.

## POST-FALL PRIESTHOOD

Dominion and priesthood are tantamount and interchangeable within the scriptural context discussed of Gen.1:27-28. In the garden of Eden the man and woman were blessed to have "dominion" over every living thing upon the earth. This would suggest that before the fall Adam and Eve as "one flesh" (in the presence of Deity and in a sinless and incorruptible state) held equally, the authority of God. Man, male and female created in the divine image were by virtue of this priesthood or dominion, God's "agents and representatives." They are given sufficient "honor and

---

<sup>110</sup> Pagels, *Adam*, p. 134, states that the transgression of Eve "brought suffering upon women as Adam's transgression "brought suffering upon men." Pagels remarks that when Adam sinned, "all nature was changed for the worse" which Augustine is quoted saying that every man experiences pain, frustration, and hardship in his labor, as every woman does in hers: the miseries of human nature now beset both sexes "from infancy to the grave."

glory and the divine powers of authority" to bless all that lives upon the earth.<sup>111</sup> Together they would bear this priesthood and exercise perfect and righteous dominion acting as one, each being the flawless and immortal "help mate" for the other.

As the Lord explains the sacrifices (or perhaps blessings) that will be involved because of the choices made, the issue of priesthood is addressed: "*and thy desires shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee*" (Moses 4:22). The obligation and blessing of any covenant, always has the implied restriction, "in righteousness."<sup>112</sup> The division of authority or separation of dominion can easily be seen in these few lines that are often glossed over, or used as an argument for discontent within a marriage. Just as there had been a separation of posterity and inheritance responsibilities, so also there exists a division of priesthood obligation.<sup>113</sup> The translated word 'desires' comes from the hebrew root (שׁוּק) 'shen, vav, koph' or '*shoke*.' Generally, it has been presupposed that the word "desires" has a single reference to the physical attraction and need of the female to be supported by the male. However, the B.D.B. adds the rudimentary meaning of "shank, leg or thigh" from which comes the semitic definition to "hold up or sustain".<sup>114</sup> This interpretation adds new significance to the phrase "thy desires shall be to thy husband." The woman's responsibility in a temporal world, (having entered into the patriarchal priesthood which she jointly holds) is to "sustain" her husband and be a "support and strength." The word "desires" then is not one of submission but of strength and power the female may give her spouse in mortality. The Dominion or priesthood that had been given to "*them*" before the fall is not lost, however, the responsibilities are divided. The woman Eve, will now sustain and help the man "rule" or administer (in righteousness) the blessings and ordinances of the priesthood for their family, as he and she, functions in the patriarchal order.<sup>115</sup> The change and sacrifice

---

<sup>111</sup> Norman Snaith, "Expository Times" Oct. 74, Vol. LXXXVI no. 1, p. 24.

<sup>112</sup> Cohen, p. 100, "God linked his grant of dominion (priesthood) in Gen. 1:28 to the good and obedient behavior of its human recipients." Any blessing from God has the restriction and implication that the blessing will only be meted out because of the righteousness of the recipient. see also Cohen, p. 225, where he makes the statement that "Gen. 1:28 signifies election and the assurance of salvation," however, he continues "the conferral of whose rewards depends upon compliance with its demands."

<sup>113</sup> Spencer W. Kimball, in *Ensign*, March, 1976, p. 72, states: "I have a question about the word *rule*. It gives the wrong impression. I would prefer to use the word *preside* because that's what he does. A righteous husband presides over his wife and family."

<sup>114</sup> B.D.B. p. 1003.

<sup>115</sup> It is this concept of eternal marriage and earthly priesthood responsibility that Paul had in mind as he told the saints in Ephesians 5:22-33:

*"Wives, submit (support) yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the*

effects both; complete obedience can only be achieved in the obligations that each have by laboring together as husband and wife. For Eve, the loss of administrative dominion or authority with her spouse, as she had been blessed in the garden, becomes her priesthood sacrifice.<sup>116</sup> She must now support and sustain her husband, not to be superior or subservient but as councilor and helpmate.<sup>117</sup> The separation takes place in order that both may operate effectively and righteously in the callings and patriarchal functions of the priesthood order of marriage. The common and united goal of both the husband and wife should be the immortality and eternal life of themselves, each other, and their posterity. These ordinances and blessings are administered to their children by the powers and responsibilities of the patriarchal priesthood which the sealed couple hold.<sup>118</sup> Adam also forfeits the combined pre-fall blessing, as his sacrifice

---

*husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. so ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church...For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery (ordinance)...Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband."*

In view of the priesthood dominion and the division of responsibility after the fall, these passages of Paul are rendered more acceptable and understandable.

<sup>116</sup> Paul in 1st Timothy 2:11-15 refers to the division of responsibility that took place at the time of the fall (i.e. priesthood, and posterity).

<sup>117</sup> Joseph F. Smith, p. 290, states that the patriarchal order within the home is the "basis of all successful government in church or state." Continuing on this subject President Smith said "In selecting men to occupy responsible positions in the Church, it not infrequently happens that a useful and competent man is barred from consideration because of the want or fitness in the wife, and though a wife may not always bar a husband's opportunities, she may, nevertheless, prove a great hindrance to him in the discharge of the duties that belong to his office. If our sisters could only realize how helpful they might be to their husbands who hold responsible positions in the Church." This thought must be kept in mind to understand the Pauline teachings that women should be 'subordinate,' or 'submissive' to the husbands rule. Paul is teaching from the framework of eternal marriage and the patriarchal order in a temporal existence. This doctrine is interpreted by Pagels in *Gospels*, p. 65 that "no woman shall be allowed to become a priest" to administer outside of the family unit.

<sup>118</sup> Joseph F. Smith, p. 291, indicates that the power of this priesthood is to have "certain rights and authority within his family, comparable to those of the bishop with relation to the ward."

compares to Eve's. He must try to rule in righteousness without the equal, and unified decision of his counterpart and companion that existed in the garden. With the division of priesthood duties the Lord warns mankind of the pitfall of "unrighteous dominion" (D.&C. 121:39).<sup>119</sup> In the context of a marriage (an order of the priesthood) "unrighteous dominion" by the husband or wife, would be to "exercise control or dominion or compulsion" (D.&C. 121:36-37) over the family or spouse without the sustaining *priesthood* council and support of the marriage partner.<sup>120</sup>

The responsibilities differ, but the growth opportunities of pain, work, sorrow, trials, tribulations, frustrations, and need for support, remain the same. Likewise the joys, happiness, the pleasures, and love are to be shared with an eternal help mate and companion.<sup>121</sup> God has been and always will be just and loving, and He "esteemeth all flesh as one." The blessings or sacrifices of Adam and Eve in a temporal world do not give station or rank, only responsibility. In this life men and women are given the faculties and powers to match the blessings that will allow their character to develop the attributes of Godliness as they learn to become "one flesh." The sacrifice, by law can only be equal, one cannot be blessed more than the other, potential in eternity will not be any greater for man than for woman.<sup>122</sup> The physical differences between men and women, their abilities, inadequacies, and sexuality exist as an institution of nature and not as a punishment of sin.<sup>123</sup> Spiritually, there exists no distinction of male or female

---

Patriarchal leadership is the "privilege to stand as the head of his household, and to perform the ordinances pertaining to his family."

<sup>119</sup> Cohen, p. 58, states that "the motif of dominion" which Cohen relates to the "conferral and or the abuse of power, is a prominent concern of scripture from the creation."

<sup>120</sup> This problem is recognized as "male domination" an issue and problem that Pagels, *Adam*, p. 133, acknowledges existed in early christian writings.

<sup>121</sup> Childs, p. 194, states that in marriage, lies the "structuring of human life in the form of male and female with the potential of greatest joy or deepest grief."

<sup>122</sup> Childs, p. 191-192. Childs states that the "judgment on the woman parallels that of the man for whose sake the ground is cursed."

<sup>123</sup> Death came about because of the partaking of the fruit which changed the physical makeup of the primordial man, this was a natural consequence of the consumption of the fruit. Spiritual death, or the separation from God occurs because of disobedience. The pain suffering, sorrow and even death are a product and blessing of this temporal world, and not a punishment for sin. Pagels, *Adam*, p. 137, 138-140, infers that what is understood as the sentence of death in Genesis 3:19 may not be a curse at all in a natural world but a blessing showing the mercy of God. The "sorrow" is to last "till thou return unto the ground" for 'from the earth you were taken, and to the earth you must return.' This verse establishes a natural order for nature in a temporal world. Physical death merely offers us the necessary

in the celestial blessings that are promised. The potential remains the same if they are sealed, or as the scriptures state, "cleave" unto each another. The growth possibilities are limitless in matrimony, as they learn to love each other unconditionally at all times and in all things. This godlike attribute of charity may best be learned in a marriage relationship; not to thinking of yourself first, but to giving yourself for the benefit of the united "one flesh." Salvation in any degree is individual, based on obedience and faithfulness. However, Exaltation in the highest degree, comes only to the righteous pair who are sealed into "the image and likeness of God" (D.&C. 131:2; 132:4-6).

Following the expulsion from the paradisiacal existence these inherent blessings are divided in order that the man and woman might prove their faithfulness and obedience to God. Each element of the divine formula becomes a divine responsibility, given to the one best adapted to accomplish (with the help of their mate) the assigned obligation. The division of these Godlike qualities are for the benefit and growth of God's children in a carnal and mortal situation. Each of us (male and female) are given traits and attributes that will best be suited to allow us (the children of Adam) to reach our full potential of exaltation.<sup>124</sup> If this were not so, God would be partial, unfair and unjust in his commandments and requirements for celestial glory.

The revelation of the gospel stimulates the mind to seek for that which had been lost (immortality, and the presence of God) and refresh our memories of that which was desired (to become like God). These innate desires can only be fulfilled by the power of the atonement, the "infinite and eternal sacrifice" (Alma 34:10) of the Son of God. This Atonement "overpowereth" the demands of justice that we "might be cleansed by blood, even the blood of mine Only Begotten" (Moses 6:59). This cleansing is necessary that mankind "might be sanctified from all sin" (Moses 6:59), and by exercising "faith unto repentance" (Alma 34:15) "enjoy the words of eternal life in this world, and eternal life in the world to come, even immortal glory" (Moses 6:59). The resurrection and atonement of Christ combined with true faith and repentance will 'bring to pass immortality and eternal life' (Moses 1:39). Mankind is promised and seeking as the offspring of God the restoration of these two elements of divine life.<sup>125</sup>

---

transition to immortality and eternal life, 'so that this corruption can put on incorruption, and this mortal put on immortality' (I Cor. 15:53)."

<sup>124</sup> Cohen, p. 226, states that there are two reasons that man may have this dominion: "Either power proceeded from the divine image, which endowed humans with their distinctive rational and spiritual faculties...or humans might use their power to nurture their still unrealized likeness to the deity, or possibly both." The implication of this statement is that mankind has dominion (priesthood) given to him because he is the offspring of God, and with that priesthood mankind can become even more like God than they realize.

<sup>125</sup> Without an atonement all mankind "must unavoidably perish" (Alma 34:9). "Corruption

Cohen, paraphrasing Pseudo-Barnabas states that "God had conferred dominion on his son, who transmitted it to human beings for the sake of their spiritual perfection."<sup>126</sup> The promises, and blessings that have been discussed affecting Abraham are partially achieved in a gospel setting. The fullness of the blessings of the atonement are realized in the priesthood ordinances that are embraced within the House of God.<sup>127</sup> The specific ordinances of the temple cannot be discussed here, however, latter-day scripture will shed light on the sacred and exalting promises of the Abrahamic Covenant.

## BLESSINGS OF EXALTATION

The blessings of posterity, inheritance, and priesthood, have been discussed in relation to Abraham as the father of the covenant. Likewise, these covenants were seen in relation to the pre-fall and post-fall conditions of mankind. As the decedents of Adam and Eve in a temporal world, we do not enjoy the fullness "power that God intended" his offspring to have, a "power that God will restore only with the final redemption" and exaltation.<sup>128</sup> These blessings that have been discussed are the intrinsic features of exaltation in the highest degree of the celestial kingdom. No doubt the full potential of these rights were discussed in the pre-earth council with our Father in Heaven, as the plan of immortality and eternal life was revealed. Each feature of the covenant will now be dealt with in the context of exaltation.

---

could not put on incorruption." The reverse of the atonement is seen in 2 Ne. 9:7-9; and Alma 42:11-15.

<sup>126</sup> Cohen, p. 226.

<sup>127</sup> Joseph Smith stated: "the object of gathering the people of God in any age of the world. . . was to build unto the Lord a house whereby He could reveal unto His people the ordinances of His house and the glories of His kingdom, and teach the people the way of salvation; for there are certain ordinances and principles that, when they are taught and practiced, must be done in a place or house built for that purpose." T.P.J.S. pp. 307-8. Only in the Temple can the restoration of "that which was lost" or the "fullness of the priesthood" (D.&C 124:28) be received. Therein can "the keys of the holy priesthood" be given to mankind that they "may receive honor and glory" (D.&C. 124:34).

<sup>128</sup> Cohen, p. 229.

## THE PATRIARCHAL PRIESTHOOD

To better understand the covenant patterns of exaltation priesthood must be explored first. In the pre-fall garden of Eden the man and woman were together blessed to have dominion. The authority of the priesthood was given to "them" to be used for the benefit and blessing of all that lives upon the earth. In this pure, innocent and sinless state, living in the presence of God, they could accomplish all that was required in complete righteousness. In this existence the exercise of unrighteous dominion could not be, for the man and woman were true helpmates to each other, governing together without sin, selfishness or pride. In the pre-fall state, the couple were "one flesh" equal to, and equally concerned, for the other.

After the fall the separation of priesthood responsibility takes place. The man must "rule" or administer in a temporal and telestial existence. This will be done as a patriarch over his family as the man and woman unite into "that order of the priesthood."<sup>129</sup> In this world the "natural man" becomes carnal sensual and devilish and an enemy to God (Mosiah 3:19, Moses 5:13). The Prophet Joseph Smith understood and warns that we (the natural man) will try to "cover our sins, or to gratify our pride," and "our vain ambition" by our priesthood position and responsibilities (D.&C. 121:36-37).<sup>130</sup> The acceptance of the gospel opens the door to learning the plans and purposes of the Lord. Membership in the Church of Jesus Christ should unite again the man and woman with the renewed knowledge and understanding of eternal concepts and principles. With this intelligence they can grow together and learn to fulfill their separate but complementary and sustaining roles. These obligations were given to our first parents, for their benefit and exaltation, as they were driven from the garden and enter the world in which we live.

---

<sup>129</sup> Talmage, *House of the Lord* p. 79, "it is a precept of the Church that women of the Church share the authority of the Priesthood with their husbands, *actual or prospective*; and therefore women, whether taking the endowment for themselves or for the dead, are not ordained to specific rank in the Priesthood...The married state is regarded as sacred, sanctified, and holy in all temple procedure; and within the House of the Lord the woman is the equal and the help-meet of the man."

<sup>130</sup> Pagels, *Adam*, p. 137, states that this division of dominion responsibilities between the husband and wife forms a "part of the order of nature" and are according to Julian (quoted in Pagels) "an institution of nature, not a punishment for sin." Pagels concludes that "male domination, like labor pain, while originating in God's 'good' creation, may become, through sin, both painful and oppressive." Brevard Childs, p. 192, links the "ideology of a male dominated society" with the "mores of a fallen society."



The blessing of exaltation can only be received with the restoration of equal obligation and priesthood authority. Brevard Childs declares that "the crucial issue of understanding and interpreting the nature of the various functions of male and female requires all the knowledge and wisdom of the entire theological enterprise."<sup>131</sup> In other words: to fully understand the nature and function of the man and woman a person must have a knowledge of the plan of salvation and exaltation. Only then may one appreciate that Adam and Eve can only be exalted as a couple and not individually.<sup>132</sup> The Lord declares in the Doctrine and Covenants:

*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 (D. & C. 131:1-4).*<sup>133</sup>

This "order of priesthood" is the patriarchal order of eternal marriage.<sup>134</sup> A man and woman must enter into "this order" to obtain exaltation, for "neither is the man without the woman neither the woman without the man, *in the Lord*" (1 Cor. 11:11).<sup>135</sup>

---

<sup>131</sup> Childs, p. 192.

<sup>132</sup> Brown, p. 10-11, discusses the blessings of the temple and the married couple: "Jointly earned, the blessings will be equally shared. While the ordinances of the temple are distinctly of priesthood character, still worthy women have access to all of them. The highest blessing of the temple are conferred only upon man and wife together." Cohen, p. 80, states that "The Jewish man without wife and children numbers among those banned from the heavenly congregation."

<sup>133</sup> Talmage, in *The house of the Lord*, p. 88, comments on this verse stating that "this system of holy matrimony, involving covenants for both time and eternity, is known distinctively as *Celestial Marriage*, and is understood to be the order of marriage that exists in the celestial worlds."

<sup>134</sup> McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, p. 559. McConkie states that the "most important part of the patriarchal order is preserved for worthy members of the Church. Those married in the temple in the new and everlasting covenant of marriage become inheritors of all the blessings of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and all the patriarchs and thereby enter into the patriarchal order. If the participating parties abide in the eternal marriage covenant, they shall reap the full blessings of patriarchal heirship in eternity where the patriarchal order will be the order of government and rule."

<sup>135</sup> Horowitz, p. 186, The notion of the "unity of man and woman as the image of God led the rabbis to consider men and women fully human and in God's Blessing when they were united as husband and wife." Talmage, in *The House of the Lord*, p. 79, discusses the concept of Temple Marriage: "In the privileges and blessings of that holy place, the utterance of Paul is regarded as

In the garden the command was uttered for a man to "leave his father and mother and cleave (be sealed) unto his wife" (Moses 3:24). In "eternal" marriage the twain become "one flesh," united in priesthood, and in purpose, in equity, and in exaltation. The benediction of "temple marriage" is to receive the blessing that Adam and Eve received in Genesis 1:28.<sup>136</sup> The same blessing that Abraham sought for and obtained even the "appointment of God unto the fathers concerning the seed" (Abr. 1:4).

Like Gen. 1:28, or Moses 2:28, the Doctrine and Covenants reveals the blessings of the sealed couple in exaltation:

*And again, verily I say unto you, if a man marry a wife by my word, which is my law, and by the new and everlasting covenant, and it is sealed unto THEM by the Holy Spirit of promise, by him who is anointed, unto whom I have appointed this power and the keys of this priesthood; and it shall be said unto THEM--Ye shall come forth in the first resurrection...and shall inherit thrones, kingdoms, principalities, and powers, dominions, all heights and depths...Then shall THEY be gods because THEY have all power (D. & C. 132:19-20).*

The above verse explains that to "them" power, dominions and exaltation will come. The "them" referred to is the man and woman who enter into "this order of the priesthood, meaning the new and everlasting covenant of marriage." "They" will be Gods and have the continuation of seed as promised to the exalted couple. "They" will be blessed, like Adam and Eve were in the beginning, for "God blessed them and said unto them."<sup>137</sup> The exalted couple will be endowed by God to be "fruitful, multiply and fill"

---

a scriptural decree in full force and effect: "Neither is the man without the woman...in the Lord."

<sup>136</sup> The blessings or "covenants of the fathers" are received in the ordinance temple marriage. President Benson makes the statement pertaining to this ordinance: "You will be asked to kneel at the altar opposite your companion. You will be given instructions, and a *benediction* will be pronounced upon you. Then you will be sealed together as husband and wife for time and all eternity. You are given the *same promise that Adam, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob received*...Temple marriage is a gospel ordinance for exaltation" (C.R. Apr. 79, 33). McConkie, *Art. of Faith*, pp. 312-313, states that those who participate in this ordinance become "heirs of the promises made to the fathers, the promises made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob."

<sup>137</sup> Brown, p. 5, speaking to the Relief Society refers to this verse and states "I ask you please to note that the pronoun in this section is plural all the way through that '...they shall pass by the angels and the gods...to their exaltation and glory...'." Brown implies that the two, husband and wife will act as one entity in the ascension into the celestial worlds.

worlds without number with offspring. The two will receive the fullness of the blessings of priesthood, inheritance, and posterity. "They" will:

*"...inherit thrones, kingdoms, principalities, and powers, dominions, all heights, and depths...Then shall they be gods because they have no end; therefore shall they be from everlasting to everlasting, because they continue; then shall they be above all, because all things are subject unto them. Then shall they be gods, because they have all power, and the angels are subject unto them" (D.&C. 132:19, 20).*

The restoration of equivalent priesthood authority as given to Adam and Eve before the fall will be restored equally and fully to the exalted husband and wife. The priesthood --as we know it-- is defined as the power and authority to act for and in behalf of God on this earth. In the exalted state or existence this is no longer true. They together are God, and the "power" of dominion is theirs, self contained within the deity that they are. By this divine power they control, rule, and govern all "kingdoms, principalities, all heights and depths." They are a power and source of light and life because "they have all power." They have received a "fullness of truth and light" and are "glorified in truth and knoweth all things" (D.& C. 93:28). The exalted couple become 'possessors of all things; for all things are subject unto them,' "both in heaven and on the earth, the life and the light, the Spirit and the power" (D.& C. 50:27). With this power, God (the exalted husband and wife) may then endow Their spiritual offspring with Their divine power, (earthly priesthood) as Their posterity prove themselves worthy to act for and in behalf of the Father and Mother in Heaven.

We understand as Latter-day Saints that there are "three heavens or degrees" in the celestial glory (D.&C. 131:1). If a person will inherit the highest degree he or she must enter into the priesthood order and covenant of marriage. Accordingly it may be said that a man cannot be exalted without a wife at his side. Likewise a woman may not inherit the highest degree without being sealed to a worthy helpmate or male companion equal to her. As mentioned above salvation in any degree including the celestial kingdom becomes an individual process. Exaltation in the highest degree of the celestial kingdom can ONLY be given to the righteous pair. God then cannot be one person but two, an exalted man and woman "sealed by the holy spirit of promise."<sup>138</sup> They become "one flesh" united in exaltation, male and female in the

---

<sup>138</sup> Elaine Pagels, *The Gnostic Gospels* (New York: Random House, 1979), pp. 49-50. Discussing gnostic sources, Pagels states that one group of believers conceived God as a "divine Father and Mother." She continues that "other texts indicate that their authors" also believed in the exalted couple "since the Genesis account goes on to say that humanity was created 'male and female.' This the

image and likeness of God. One cannot become exalted alone, it takes two in perfect divine harmony united in thought and purpose, power and dominion. "Neither is the man without the woman or the woman without the man in the Lord," specifically they cannot be without each other in exaltation.<sup>139</sup>

God created man in his "own image, in the image of God created He him, male and female created He them...and called their name Adam" (Moses 6:9).<sup>140</sup> There are two important notions exposed in this verse: the first, that man, and woman were created in the "image of God." The questions and thoughts that develop from this statement are: Is the image of God male and female? Moreover, is mankind created after the image and likeness of the exalted couple? We know that God, or Elohim, must be plural, for deity can only be *two* according to the plan and doctrine of exaltation. President Kimball made the statement that "God made man in his own image and certainly he made woman in the image of his wife-partner."<sup>141</sup> The second

---

author said, led to the conclusion "that the God in whose image we are made must also be both masculine and feminine-both Father and Mother...as part of an original couple." Pagels, states on p. 51, "Proponents of these divers views agreed that the divine is to be understood in terms of a harmonious, dynamic relationship of opposites" male and female.

<sup>139</sup> Pagels, *Adam*, p. 68, maintains that just as the creation of Adam was not complete until the introduction of Eve, so also perfection (exaltation) may only come as "Adam, reunited with Eve, becomes complete again."

<sup>140</sup> Joseph Smith, quoted in Cook, p. 247, that "the design of the Almighty in making man, was to exalt him to be as God." Exaltation like creation can only be "in his image and likeness." See also Phipps, p. 2-4, the word, Elohim is used in the Bible about 2,500 times to express God, and "the totality of Godness." It is a plural word with the plural "im" ending, and usually accompanied by a singular verb. "Elohim could have either a female or a male reverence" or both. "Both genders are incorporated in the divine name because the human sexes reflect the image of Elohim" and would be faithful to the Genesis account to consider both the male and female image in the term Elohim.

<sup>141</sup> Spencer W. Kimball, *Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, Ed. Edward L. Kimball. (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1982), p.25. Joseph F. Smith, p. 276, discusses this concept by stating:

*"He made us in the beginning in his own image and in his own likeness, and he made us male and female. We never could be in the image of God if we were not both male and female...He has made us in his own form and likeness, and here we are male and female...When we become like him you will find that we will be presented before him in the form in which we were created, male and female. The woman will not go there alone, and the man will not go there alone, and claim exaltation. They may attain a degree of salvation alone, but when they are exalted they will be exalted according to the law of the celestial kingdom."*

Horowitz, p. 185, considers that the "notion of the combined Adam" or the whole man was corresponding to the idea that the "God in whose image Adam was formed, has both a male and female dimension." Phipps, p. 2, states: "Thus Elohim designates the essence of individual male and female deities who had been incorporated into a single divine person." This concept was according to

thought implies that Adam was not complete until the creation of Eve. Humanity then, does not exist, and cannot be complete until there are two components, that of male and female. Before the creation of woman, God knew that in an immortal, as well as in a mortal existence, "it was not good that man should be alone."<sup>142</sup> Expanded contemplation should also interject that *in the highest celestial realm, man could not be alone*. So God created woman as a helper equal to man, the perfect companion. Adam declares that the name of this new and perfect creation will be "woman for she was taken out of man." The creation of man was not complete until the creation of the woman, he was unfinished and it was "not good." Adam makes the doctrinal statement that a man is to leave his parents and "cleave" or be "sealed" to a woman, making this union a beginning of exaltation in eternal marriage. Only within the bonds of eternal marriage, being sealed by the Holy Spirit of Promise can the blessings of Adam, Abraham, or the Temple be fulfilled.

Erastus Snow in 1878 discussed the meaning of Genesis 1:26-28, and Genesis 5:1, 2.

*...the being we call man, but which in the language of these Scriptures was called Adam--male and female created he them, and called their name Adam. . . There was no effort at distinguishing between the one half and the other, and calling one man and the other woman. This was an after distinction, but the explanation of it is--one man, one being, and he called their name Adam. But he created them male and female, for they were one, and he says not unto the woman multiply, and to the man multiply, but he says unto them multiply and reproduce your species, and replenish the earth. He speaks unto them as belonging together, as constituting one being, and organized in his image and after his likeness . . . "What," says one, "do you mean we should understand that Deity consists of man and woman?" Most certainly I do. If I believe anything that God has ever said about himself, and anything pertaining to the creation and organization of man upon the earth, I must believe that Deity consists of man and woman . . . What! God a man and woman? . . . One party says he is a man, and the other says he is a woman. I say he is both. How do you know? I only repeat what he says of himself; that he created man in the image of God, male and female created he them, and he called*

---

Pagels, *Gospels*, p.57, 59, common in the church "probably as late as the year 200" when virtually "all the feminine imagery for God had disappeared from orthodox Christian tradition."

<sup>142</sup> See Horowitz, p. 187, where he states that the sages observed: 'a man without a wife lives without blessing, without life, without joy, without a helpmate, in want of all that is good and without peace without a blessing for it says "God blessed them" only when they were a pair (Midrash Ps. 59).'

*their name Adam...So that the beings we call Adam and Eve were the first man placed here on this earth, and their name was Adam, and they were the express image of God . . . And for this reason says St. Paul, "the man is not without the woman, nor the woman without the man in the Lord." In other words, there can be no God except he is composed of the man and woman united, and there is not in all the eternities that exist, nor ever will be, a God in any other way. I have another description: There never was a God, and there never will be in all eternities, except they are made of these two component parts; a man and a woman; the male and the female . . . (J.D. 19:269-277).<sup>143</sup>*

Adam and Eve sought to become "as the gods" by partaking of the fruit from the tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. With this knowledge arrives the power to "do" good or evil. This will exalt or damn dependent on the choices made in the face of temptation. By the correct decisions and actions we, as the man Adam and woman Eve receive that which the first parents sought in the Garden of Eden, to "become as the gods" (D.&C. 132:19-20). Together they are endowed with "powers" and "dominions" as the blessings of the garden are restored a thousand fold, in the more complete and greater glory which "God giveth to all the obedient" (Moses 5:11).

## ETERNAL POSTERITY

In the context of the *Doctrine and Covenants* the sanction of posterity for the faithful are extended to man as "they become the sons of Moses and of Aaron and the seed of Abraham" (D.&C. 84:34). The consummation of the covenant of Abraham and the blessing of Adam in Genesis 1:28 is to have seed without number in the eternal world:

---

<sup>143</sup> If these statements are true then deity must consist of two persons, the exalted man and exalted woman. Thus the two are God. Alone, male or female, may not inherit the highest degree of the Celestial Kingdom. To become God then requires an equal help mate and companion to function in the office of God. McConkie, in *Mormon Doctrine*, p. 844, states that man "cannot attain a fullness of joy here or of eternal reward here-after alone. Woman stands at his side a joint-inheritor with him in the fullness of all things. Exaltation and eternal increase is her lot as well as his. Godhood is not for men only; it is for men and women together." The term "Elohim" is a plural word, most often used in a singular context. Perhaps inherent in the word "Elohim" is that which requires God to be God, male and female. The quest for "Mother in Heaven" need no longer be pursued because reference to God, Elohim, or Father in Heaven would have to include the exalted couple. 'Neither is the man without the woman, or the woman without the man' defined as God. See also McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, pp. 516-517, "Mother in Heaven".

*Abraham received promises concerning his seed, and of the fruit of his loins--from whose loins ye are--which were to continue so long as they were in the world; and as touching Abraham and his seed out of the world they should continue; both in the world and out of the world should they continue as innumerable as the stars; or, if ye were to count the sand upon the seashore ye could not number them.<sup>144</sup> This promise is yours also, because ye are of Abraham, and the promise was made unto Abraham; and by this law is the continuation of the works of my Father, wherein he glorifieth himself (D.&C. 132:30-31).*

By the capacity to create and procreate God glorifies Himself; because of posterity His works and His words have no end (Moses 1:4). The promise to the exalted couple is similar: to have "seed out of this world" that will continue "forever and ever" and "have no end" (D.&C. 132:19,30-31).<sup>145</sup> This power is inherent in God, as it will be in those who become, a Father and Mother in exaltation and glory:

*which glory shall be a fullness and a continuation of the seeds forever and ever. Then shall they be Gods, because they have no end; therefore shall they be from everlasting to everlasting because they continue...For strait is the gate, and narrow the way that leadeth unto the exaltation and continuation of the lives. (D.&C. 132:19).*

*Gods Glory & works continue by this Law.*

The covenant and blessing of posterity that God gave to Adam and Eve and later to Abraham and Sarah are the same to all the obedient and faithful offspring of God. The blessing of procreation, in part fulfills the purpose of creation. It becomes,

<sup>144</sup> Rabbi Berachiah said in *Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer*, p. 229. that He (God) would bless him (Abraham) "in this world and in the world to come, as it is said, 'By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, because thou hast done this thing'; and it says 'That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed, as the stars of the Heaven;' 'That in blessings' refers to this world; 'I will bless thee,' in the world to come; and 'I will greatly multiply thy seed' in the future that is to come."

<sup>145</sup> Paradise, as Pagels describes in *Adam*, p. 133, would be a 'condition in which childbearing is painless, and marriage can exist without oppression or coercion.' This is the perfect and painless equality of exaltation.

a power inherent within God, and may be finally and fully realized in the attainment of immortality and eternal life (D.&C. 49:15-17).<sup>146</sup>

## EXALTED INHERITANCE

The man and woman received the law of inheritance as the Lord issued the command to subdue the earth. This earth, given to them becomes the inheritance upon which they must rely for sustenance. Before the fall every tree did grow "naturally, that is pleasant to the sight of man," and God had prepared all things "for the use of man; and man saw that it was good for food" (Moses 3:9). In the garden God commissioned them to "dress and keep it" with the invitation "of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat" (Moses 3:15-16). The beautiful sanctified world was given to the heirs and offspring of God as an eternal inheritance.

Following the fall the earth was cursed 'for the sake of man' (Moses 4:23). His inheritance must now to be earned by laboring in pain to subdue that which freely gave of itself before the fall. This sorrow will exist until man shall "return unto the ground" (Moses 4:25) for out of it man receives life and unto it man will give his life.

The extended and fulfilled promise of inheritance echo through the pages of the Doctrine and Covenants:

*And I have made the earth rich, and behold it is my foot stool, wherefore, again I will stand upon it. And I hold forth and deign to give unto you greater riches, even a land of promise, a land flowing with milk and honey, upon which there shall be no curse when the Lord cometh. And I will give it unto you for the land of your inheritance if you seek it with all your hearts. And this shall be my covenant with you, ye shall have it for the land of your inheritance, and for the inheritance of your children forever, while the earth shall stand, and ye shall possess it again in eternity, no more to pass away (D.&C. 38:17-20).*

The earth will become an everlasting and eternal heritage for Adam's posterity who are obedient to the commandments of God. In the millennium the earth will be given to the righteous, "for an inheritance; and they shall multiply and wax strong, and their children shall grow up without sin unto salvation" (D.&C. 45:58). "And their

---

<sup>146</sup> Cohen pp. 207-208, writes: "On an individual level, too, a man's spiritual destiny depends on his procreative record." His divine inheritance is dependent on the use of the primal blessing "which is the secret of the world above."



freely gave of itself before the fall. This sorrow will exist until man shall "return unto the ground" (Moses 4:25) for out of it man receives life and unto it man will give his life.

The extended and fulfilled promise of inheritance echo through the pages of the Doctrine and Covenants:

*And I have made the earth rich, and behold it is my foot stool, wherefore, again I will stand upon it. And I hold forth and deign to give unto you greater riches, even a land of promise, a land flowing with milk and honey, upon which there shall be no curse when the Lord cometh. And I will give it unto you for the **land of your inheritance** if you seek it with all your hearts. And this shall be **my covenant with you**, ye shall have it for the **land of your inheritance, and for the inheritance of your children forever**, while the earth shall stand, and ye shall possess it again in **eternity**, no more to pass away (D.&C. 38:17-20).*

The earth will become an everlasting and eternal heritage for Adam's posterity who are obedient to the commandments of God. In the millennium the earth will be given to the righteous, "**for an inheritance**; and they shall multiply and wax strong, and their children shall grow up without sin unto salvation" (D.&C. 45:58). "**And their generations shall inherit the earth** from generation to generation, forever and ever" (D.&C. 56:20).

Beyond the present and paradisiacal existence lies the celestial promise: "he that endureth in faith and doeth my will the same shall overcome, and shall **receive an inheritance upon the earth** when the day of transfiguration shall come. . . " (D.&C. 63:20). This world in its glorified state will become the godly realm for the celestial worthy:

*...it is decreed that the poor and the meek of the earth shall inherit it. Therefore, it must needs be sanctified from all unrighteousness, that it may be prepared for the celestial glory; for after it hath filled the measure of its creation, it shall be crowned with glory, even with the presence of God the Father; **that bodies who are of the celestial kingdom may possess it forever and ever; for, for this intent was it made and created**, and for this intent are they sanctified....And again, verily I say unto you, the earth abideth the*

*law of a celestial kingdom, for it filleth the measure of its creation, and transgresseth not the law--wherefore, it shall be sanctified; yea, notwithstanding it shall die, it shall be quickened again, and shall abide the power by which it is quickened, and **the righteous shall inherit it** (D.&C. 88:17-20,25,26).*

The righteous in celestial glory and exaltation will receive that which was promised to the first man: this earth, which "in its sanctified and immortal state, will be made like unto crystal and will be a Urim and Thummim to the inhabitants who dwell thereon" (D.&C.130:9) "for this intent was it made and created."

## CONCLUSION

Because of Adam's fall we now live in a "natural" world outside of paradise and Eden. We are blessed with powers and attributes that will help us exist in mortality, separated from the presence of God. By the life and blessings of Abraham we may understand our potential and begin the road back. To follow this path we must do as Abraham did by becoming greater followers of righteousness and desiring to possess greater knowledge (Abr. 1:2). To the righteous posterity of God who have the opportunity to participate in the endowed ordinances of exaltation, the Lord speaks:

*They become the sons of Moses and of Aaron and the seed of Abraham, and the church and kingdom, and the elect of God. And also all they who receive this priesthood receive me, saith the Lord; For he that receiveth my servants receiveth me; and he that receiveth me receiveth my Father; and he that receiveth my Father receiveth my Father's kingdom; therefor all that my Father hath shall be given unto him (D.&C. 84:34-38).*

For the benefit of his posterity Abraham uses illustrations, as did the Navajo shaman. These images vividly and symbolically portray reality: the powers of creation, atonement, resurrection, and exaltation. Because of Jesus Christ we receive the immortality that was lost, and may, through obedience and repentance inherit the desired eternal life. Facsimile # 3 symbolically portrays the righteous admitted by politeness and grace into the presence God. There they are given His

authority, and the promise of eternal posterity as a god and goddess, king and queen, priest and priestess. Entering into the celestial residence they will be called a son or daughter unto God and be "encircled about eternally in the arms of His love" (2 Ne. 1:15) equal in exaltation and glory. The couple, worthy to inherit as the progeny and heirs of God, "all that the Father hath." They will be endowed with the power of God and Patriarchal Parent, to have eternal posterity and priesthood for infinite worlds. These three elements, *priesthood, posterity, and inheritance* comprise the patriarchal covenant pattern, and are the fundamental feature of all ritual and scripture.<sup>147</sup> These blessings are given to help us find, and understand our relationship with God, and our potential in the eternal worlds.

In the Old Testament, Genesis begins with the creation of a new world as the man and woman are placed there by God. The New Testament ends in the book of Revelation as a "new heaven and a new earth" (Rev.21:1) are created. The righteous and elect of God take their place in the "new" creation where the "tree of life" offers the fruit of immortality and eternal life (Rev.22:1-2). The great religious quest for Eden can only be achieved in exaltation. The "image of God," a husband and wife, will receive the fullness of the divine covenant blessing given to the first couple wherein God blessed them and said unto them: "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it, and have dominion..over every living thing."

---

<sup>147</sup> McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, p. 13, "All of these promises" (priesthood , posterity and inheritance) "lumped together are called the Abrahamic covenant, this covenant was renewed with Isaac and again with Jacob. Those portions of it which pertain to personal exaltation and eternal increase are renewed with each member of the House of Israel who enters the order of celestial marriage; through that order the participating parties become inheritors of all blessings of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob."

GARDEN

FALL

## THE COVENANTS OF THE FATHERS

Life

EXALT

	PRE-FALL	POST-FALL	ABRAHAMIC	EXALTATION
THE STATE OF EXISTENCE	1) Terrestrial 2) Immortal 3) Innocent 4) No posterity 5) With God	1) Telestial 2) Mortal 3) Knowledge of Good & Evil 4) Posterity 5) Not with God	With the reception of the gospel we begin to prepare for our potential by receiving the ordinances of salvation & eternal life.	1) Celestial 2) Eternal Life 3) Fullness of Light & Truth 4) Eternal Posterity 5) Are God
COVENANT	Adam and Eve together are "blessed"	To Eve alone	To Abraham and Sarah	To husband and wife who have been sealed by the Holy Spirit of Promise
POSTERITY	1) Fruitful and multiply and fill the earth (Moses 2:28)	1) In "sorrow" or by laboring in pain you will bring forth children (Moses 4:22)	1) Posterity shall be as the stars or sand of the sea (Genesis 15:5) Gen 12:2, 15:5, 12:16 Gen 17:2-6 Abr 2:9 Abr 3:14	1) "Eternal Lives" posterity in exaltation <u>innumerable</u> (D&C 132: 30-31)
INHERITANCE	To Adam and Eve 2) Subdue the Earth (Moses 2:28)	To Adam alone 2) In "sorrow" or by laboring in pain Adam will work to subdue the earth (Moses 4:23-25)	Gen 12:7-8, 15:18 2) Lord will give "the land of Canaan for and everlasting possession" (Genesis 17:8) Abr 2:6 Gen 13:14-16	2) "All that my Father hath shall be given unto him" (D&C 84:38) "Wherefore all things are theirs" (D&C 76:59) 38:20 / 45:58 / 56:22 / 57:5 / 59:2 63:20, 48:49 / 69:8 / 88:26 / 103:7 130:9
PRIESTHOOD	To Adam and Eve 3) "Have dominion over every living thing... upon the earth" (Genesis 1:28)	To Eve Alone 3) "Thy desire shall be to thy husband"  To Adam alone 3) Adam to "rule" over in righteous (Gen 3:16)	Dominion is seen in the blessing of Abraham and Sarah that "Kings" shall come from them (Gen 17:6,16) - Abraham and his seed to bear the ministry and priesthood (Abr. 2:9-11)	To the exalted husband & wife 3) They enter into their exaltation by entering into "this order of the Priesthood" (D&C 131:2-4) They become Gods & Goddesses Kings & Queens, Priests & Priestesses 132:19-20