

## **The Temple Book 2**

### *Narratives on a meaning beyond the LDS endowment ceremony*

*“The endowment is all about you. Look around to see a reflection of yourself in all of creation. Look within to comprehend why. Look beyond and be amazed at what you find.”*

*“All symbols are meaningless. It’s what they represent that is meaningful.  
Until we come to know meaning, it helps to study symbols.”*

*“One day, we will comprehend how all of our former beliefs were illusions. We will see far enough beyond them to comprehend how there is nothing but truth, but we understood it in the wrong way.”*

-- Eleazar --

## Author's Preface

This book is a compilation of narratives written over a period of half a dozen years. There was no original intention to compile these writings into a book nor was there an organized effort to write on topics in a proscribed order. I wrote each of them whenever I got in the mood. It is for these reasons that this compilation doesn't follow an organized plan in regard to having a definite beginning, middle, and end. In compiling these narratives into this volume, I generally arranged them in the chronological order that I wrote them.

In the mid-1990's, I came into possession of *The Temple Book* attributed to the late Max Skousen as author. At the time, I was a devoted member of the LDS church and a veil worker in the Toronto temple. I had been through the endowment ceremony enough times to have it memorized verbatim, but I knew relatively nothing of what the endowment means. In my conversations with others, I found that most admitted little understanding of what is meant by the endowment. I also encountered a strong reluctance to talk about the endowment, even inside the walls of the temple. I was eager to learn more about what it might mean and reading *The Temple Book* felt like getting a breath of fresh air, despite it being an underground publication considered by the authorities to comprise forbidden literature. *The Temple Book* helped me to look at meanings of the temple ceremony in new ways and, ultimately, led to writing the narratives found in this book. It is because of the existence of *The Temple Book* that I have titled the present compilation *The Temple Book 2*. In spite of the name, this compilation should not be taken to be a continuation of the ideas presented in *The Temple Book*.

The narratives in this book do not pretend to comprise a definitive exploration of the symbolism of LDS temples or their ritual endowments. There could never be such a definitive work in the first place, nor should there be. It is important that seekers undertake their own explorations and experience the joy of personal discovery first hand. Any sort of definitive work, presuming it is feasible in the first place, would defeat the purpose of what we are about.

In reading the following narratives, it is important to remember that these were written over a period of years by someone who, like you, is on the voyage of discovery. During that period of time, my understanding of possible meanings of the endowment was evolving. Looking back, I can now see errors, especially in the earlier narratives, as well as parts that might be mistaken as errors. I have been tempted to go back and correct the offending passages. However, whenever I am tempted to do that, I get an overwhelming feeling not to do so. It seems that it is important that these writings contain errors. Errors in these writings seem to be integral to the symbolism and part of the purpose. If there were no errors, it would tend to defeat that purpose.

In the endowment washing and anointing ceremony, there is an admonition to "*let your bowels do their proper function.*" This admonition is a symbolic metaphor about allowing ones spiritual bowels carry out their function in sifting (digesting) truth. It seems strange that LDS are prone to believe that they have been doing that all along when the reality of it is that they have not because they have been allowing others to do the digesting. In truth, most of us as LDS have been partaking of a shared illusion. The symbolism of the endowment tells us so, notwithstanding few are able to perceive it. The purpose of these writings is to help others get started in their own searches by uncovering the

meaning of old doctrine in new ways. However, it is important in this process that these writings are not taken as the final word. Above all, these writings should not become part of an organized belief system or be used to generate new doctrine. One reason for errors in these writings is to discourage such.

The endowment is popularly considered to be a pinnacle of LDS experience. However, it seems that endowed LDS know relatively little about what it means. This includes those in the highest leadership positions. There is a purpose and reason for this universal failure to understand, but why it is this way may not become clear until one has let go of old notions to see the LDS temple and its endowment for what they truly are: *tokens, names, and signs*. One will need to comprehend fully what are tokens, names, and signs as well as understand why and how they came to be.

The title of this compilation includes a clause about a *meaning beyond the LDS endowment ceremony*. It's hoped that readers will consider that the meaning they are seeking in the endowment is beyond it rather than in it. The temple and its endowment, like all symbols, point to something else that is beyond the symbol. Yes, there are multiple levels of understanding in regard to all symbols, but there is only one level of true meaning. It is very important that seekers do not obsess themselves with the LDS temple, its endowment, or books such as this one because doing so is missing the point.

As I was putting this book together, an interesting event occurred. I was at home writing the paragraphs above when I received a phone call from a fellow in Utah asking about the meaning of the name given at the veil ceremony. He seemed to think that my writings suggested the higher things are gotten inside of the LDS temples and giving back the name of the second token was a sign to the temple workers. He interpreted my writings to say that when one gets the meaning of the name figured out, they would give a different name back in the veil ceremony rather than repeat the prescribed sentences verbatim as expected. The caller felt that such an act might be a signal to the temple workers that you understood it and were now ready for more. Doing such a thing would result in being taken aside by the workers and secretly ushered into higher endowment rituals that are unknown to those passing the veil in the usual way. He seemed to think that this is how one gets a calling and election made sure. When I tried to explain to him that he was missing the point of what I wrote and that such a deed would likely get him persecuted rather than rewarded, he abruptly hung up on me. This fellow seemed to think that the way out of illusion is by achievement and advancement, like one might move from high school to college. However, that was never what I meant. To get beyond illusion, we must get out of it, not build upon it.

In the endowment ritual, Adam partakes of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge, representing the entrance into illusion, and thereafter claims to be looking for messengers from his Father. Although Adam doesn't realize it, this mistaken notion is part of what keeps him imprisoned in illusion. Adam will need to realize why he doesn't need messengers. To do this, Adam will need to know himself first. He will find that the truth is within, where it has always been. Adam will also come to recognize that he doesn't need to test messengers to see if they are from God because all messengers come from God with no exceptions. Most importantly, Adam will come to comprehend how and why it must be like this. Emerging from illusion is not accomplished by building on erroneous notions of the past, but as a result of a complete and thorough yielding up of them. Adam will need to give up seeking in the wrong places.

Undoubtedly, there will be some who will find my presentation of symbolism in the endowment to be highly offensive. This seems to derive from a culture of secrecy operating under a

guise of sanctity. Readers may want to consider the possibility that hiding what is supposedly sacred is living a lie. If you would have others give freely unto you, then you must freely give unto others. Again, one of the greatest secrets of the temple endowment is that one gets by giving up. Until this happens, it may help to consider books such as this one. As one who has traveled this road, I claim from my own experience that finding true meaning is always done by removing what covers it to reveal what is already present. This book is intended to assist with that, but not substitute. To uncover the meaning, one will need to go beyond all appearances, including their manifestation as tokens, names, signs, leaders, endowments, temples, scriptures, veils, angels and messengers in all of their variant forms. When that happens, there will be no need for someone else to explain it to you because you will have experienced it yourself.

Eleazar  
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Medina, New York

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*Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? (1Corinthians 3:16)*

*Remember, to be carnally-minded is death, and to be spiritually-minded is life eternal. (2Nephi 9:39)*

## **Carnal *versus* Spiritual Understandings**

**By Eleazar, 1997**

Few who regularly attend the latter-day temples comprehend the deep meanings behind the teachings of the endowment or other ordinances. The purpose of this essay is to assist one in uncovering some of the ways that one looks at these teachings as well as those contained in the scriptures. It is hoped that this essay will assist in looking at the teachings of the endowment and ordinances in the temple with new eyes and new understandings, that one might begin to see anew. The material contained in this essay does not pretend to be authoritative, nor does it masquerade as either complete or the full truth. It is just "food for thought" which hopefully some will find valuable in assisting them in their own personal quest in finding the truth of all things.

**Many Levels of Understanding.** One thing that one must understand when approaching the endowment or any of the saving ordinances is that there are many levels of understanding. Sometimes what appears as a simple story or ordinance has many deeper spiritual levels of understanding if one is prepared and willing to find them. In the case of the endowment, the creation of man and his state of being is presented as a parable which is not very different than that contained in the book of Genesis or other places in scripture, but to which a few things are added. Unfortunately, many temple attendees do not take the creation parable, nor the tokens, signs, and penalties (penalties were recently removed from the ceremony) at much more than face value. Many view the tokens and signs in a fairly literal fashion, thinking they are like passwords, such as one might receive when joining an exclusive club or organization, despite the fact that many secret societies and brotherhoods use these same tokens and signs. The temple building itself is viewed in the same literal manner and few realize the deeper symbolism behind it. Many feel fairly comfortable in just finding time in their busy schedules to attend the temple regularly, when in actuality they have damned themselves by walking in darkness at noonday. While this might sound harsh, it hopefully will become more obvious that this is the actual case after reading this entire essay and then making further discoveries on ones own.

This essay will try to uncover what is meant by the forgoing words by briefly contrasting two major levels of understanding which are referred to in the scriptures as being "carnally minded" versus "spiritually minded". But first, one should realize that there are many levels to understanding of the teachings of the endowment or its cognate ordinances. In this sense, the creation parable presented in the endowment (or the scriptures) is like an onion with many layers that can be peeled off to always reveal a new layer underneath. However, it is not the purpose of this essay to uncover these deeper meanings. Rather, the purpose is to help others to wake up to their existence. Thus, only a few of the potential spiritual meanings will be spoken of in order to illustrate the difference between ways that people approach the temple and its teachings.

But, to realize the existence of these deeper truths and to find them is to know the mysteries of God. Many will see and hear the same things, but never perceive or understand. As Christ said to his disciples when they asked why he spoke in parables, "*...Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath. Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand.*" (Matthew 13:11-13).

**Carnal versus Spiritual Understanding.** Speaking in very general terms, there are two opposing ways to look at things. Again, the phrases "carnally minded" versus "spiritually minded" are sometimes used. Other times, words such as "external" versus "internal", or "profane" versus "holy" are used.

Those who have a tendency to view things in a carnal fashion usually see things on a outward or literal level. The perceptions are filtered through the senses rather than the spirit. This is as a result of fallen man being of a carnal nature, or a creature of the senses who, by virtue of partaking of the Tree of Knowledge, believes that all things can be judged outwardly.

An illustration of judging things outwardly, or by the senses, is portrayed in the conversation of Jesus with Nicodemus, a religious leader who sought Jesus by night... "*Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? ...How can these things be?*" (See John 3:1-12).

In carnal versus spiritual understanding, there is really a fundamental difference in basic philosophy. Carnal man works from the outside in; Spiritual man works from the inside out.

Carnal man is always looking for things outside of himself and is thereby always trying to improve his environment, thinking that this will bring him happiness. He has a tendency to externalize everything. He feels that outward saving ordinances and performances like those done in temples must be of the utmost importance over everything else.

Spiritual man realizes that the inner cup (his soul) is to be cleansed first, then all things will be added. So, he internalizes the search for that which is thought to be found externally by carnal man. Spiritual man understands that all ordinances are only outward symbols of what should have already occurred within himself. But, to him, it is the inner counterparts of the outer ordinances that are most important.

Thus, to carnal man, 'being born of the water' is a dunking process. To spiritual man it is the rebirth of the soul.

To a carnal man, the temple takes on an undue importance that overshadows other things. He sees it as an important place that he must go. He attends regularly to do work for his kindred dead, but does not realize that it is he himself who is found among the (spiritually) dead or that the work he does in the temple is more for his own benefit than for his ancestors. He speaks of the temple often, hangs pictures of it in his home, and gets angry when others do not show as much reverence for the building as he does.

Spiritual man realizes that the temple edifice is no more than a symbol of himself and that he is a walking temple of God as said in the scriptures (*cf.* 1 Corinthians 3:16). Spiritual man realizes that God can create a building much more grand than the best built by human hands. But, to create a son of God is much more difficult and that this is the work of creation and Glory of the Fathers. He respects the building, but sees it as a symbol of himself and does not revere it excessively. He loves others, despite their words or actions, because he sees them as God's grandest creation (true temples). Spiritual man is a temple that is built without hands.

Carnal man sees the creation parable (in the endowment) little more than a historical account of the creation of the earth outside of him and how man came to be. He sees the fall of man as a literal event caused by eating from a certain tree that was prohibited. He sees the way back to God in the context of all the things that he must DO rather than what he must BE.

Spiritual man realizes that all that is taught in the endowment is about he, himself. He realizes that he is the man Adam spoken of in the creation story. On a deeper level of understanding, he understands that man is a trinity composed of body, mind, and spirit, and realizes that Adam represents his own spirit and that Eve represents his own body. He sees that this is why Eve must be subject to Adam because the body must be subject to the spirit, otherwise there is death. He understands that God is a part of this trinity and that he (Adam; the spirit) can hear his voice if he will just pay attention and listen.

Carnal man perceives the signs and tokens given in the endowment as grand secrets that are given to the elect of God and feels that he himself is one of these elect. He thinks that he must protect the signs and tokens from being divulged on the peril of his own life because it is the mere knowledge of these secret signs and tokens will allow one to pass by angels and gain entrance into heaven. He cannot understand what will happen to others who know the signs and tokens, but received them from another place without having attended the temple. He thinks that these impostors will somehow be sifted out from those who received the signs and tokens legitimately.

Spiritual man realizes that the signs and tokens have a deep spiritual meaning and that they are a mirror of what he should be doing. He realizes that the mere knowledge of them exalts no one. He knows that it is his state of being and his relationship to God is what is symbolized by the tokens. He knows that he is not to reveal an improper state of being (of being in true fellowship with God) to the world (by his actions).

Carnal man sees the true order of prayer as an outward rite that he is convinced will surely make his voice heard by God. But he cannot fathom why the rites of many groups that worship Lucifer are done the same fashion as the LDS true order of prayer, so he puts this idea out of his mind. He ignores the warning given in the endowment that when Adam speaks aloud and calls upon God, that Lucifer shows up and responds "I hear you!"

Spiritual man realizes that the true order of prayer is symbolic of what occurs within himself when he prays after the true order. He knows that Peter represents the voice of his spirit and that Adam and Eve (in the circle) represent his body. He realizes that he must retire to the secret place for prayer (Matthew 6:6) and that when his spirit and body become one and are united in prayer after the true order, then it is heard by God!

Carnal man lives in fear. He believes that when times get tough, he can save himself by his external preparations (eg. food storage), but is always fearful (rightfully so) that he has not prepared enough. He suspects that the 'holy place' spoken of by Jesus (Matthew 24:15) means a place in the temple (building), but he cannot fathom how all can get crowded into the temple when the Abomination that makes Desolate appears.

Spiritual man lives by faith and finds that perfect faith casts out all fear.. He knows that true peace begins within himself and that the 'holy place' spoken of is his own heart. He does not fear what happens externally, because he knows that whatever happens will be for his own profit and learning. He takes no thought for the morrow, but relies totally on God (Matthew 6:25-34).

Carnal man is continually trying to subdue the world around him and is thereby continually at war with it. He believes that he must tame the hostile world over which the Father has given him dominion. He is always searching for new knowledge that will help him accomplish this and in so doing, he is *"Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth."* (2Timothy 3:7) Carnal man is always searching for heaven, but never seems to be able to find it. He is confused when others cry "Lo here..... here is the kingdom of heaven!" But, carnal man eventually chooses one of them and becomes convinced that the way he has chosen is the correct one and that all others are in error. He trusts in the arm of the flesh and never finds heaven because he looks in the wrong place.

Spiritual man realizes that the creation parable teaches him that the new earth over which Adam is given dominion symbolizes his own physical body. He realizes that he has been given dominion to overcome the "lusts of the flesh" and make his world (body) a celestial abode. When others cry "Lo here", he is unmoved, for he does not seek externally for the kingdom of God, for he realizes that it is found within. He comprehends the words spoken by Jesus that *"The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you."* (Luke 17:20-21). He searches diligently in the correct place and ultimately finds what he seeks.

Carnal man thinks that life is a test and has a destination. He is seldom happy or truly joyful because of stressful thoughts that arise of his own potential failure of failing the test or not arriving fully at the destination.

Spiritual man realizes that life is a training process and a journey. He knows that none can fail at training and thereby finds great joy in the experience of life. He finds that this is one of the keys to finding eternal joy and happiness in progression that extends much beyond this life and is eternal. Thus, spiritual man ultimately finds God and enjoys life eternal.

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

## **The Meaning of the Apron**

**By Eleazar, 1997**

In receiving the endowment, most fail to comprehend the deep symbolic meanings of much that is presented. This short essay will endeavor to focus on the symbolic meaning of the apron worn as part of the ceremonial clothing. This essay is not meant to be authoritative, but has the purpose of providing much necessary food for thought by which an individual might seek and find answers directly from the Lord.

To fully understand the symbolic meanings of any part of the endowment, it is necessary to first speak of some of the underlying meanings of other parts of the ceremony, so that a full understanding might be realized. Therefore, before speaking of the symbolic meaning of the apron, it is first necessary to have a well grounded understanding of what the temple clothing represents. It is also necessary to understand some basic concepts surrounding the creation parable that is presented during the ceremony.

**What is the meaning of being naked?** Preparatory to receiving the endowment, a person first receives the ordinances of washing and anointing. To do this, one removes all of his/her street clothing and symbolically receives the ordinance as one that is naked. Although a person receiving the ordinance wears a loose fitting poncho for practical purposes of modesty, he/she should be considered entirely naked for symbolic purposes. Being naked is how Adam and Eve found themselves after eating of the Tree of Knowledge in the garden and being naked is symbolic of being without understanding. In this sense, nakedness represents a lack of knowledge and being clothed represents being clothed in knowledge.

Naked is how we find ourselves upon entering the temple. That is, we are there to be clothed with knowledge from God. Symbolically, we are as Adam and Eve, finding ourselves naked after eating of the Tree of Knowledge. The removal of ones street clothing upon entering the temple is symbolic of removing worldly knowledge preparatory to being clothed in heavenly knowledge from God. The washing and anointing ordinances pertain to the preparatory steps to receiving this knowledge. This essay will not attempt to go into the meaning of the washing and anointing ordinances because explanations are to be found in other writings.

For practical purposes, washing and anointing ordinances are done separate from the main portion of the endowment, but in reality should be considered as an integral part of it. It is common today, in doing work for the dead, for one person to carry out the washings and anointing and another the main portion of the endowment. In the latter case, one usually dresses in "whites" on entering the temple, which consists of a garment and white clothing worn for modesty. However, the person does not symbolically receive the garment or any other clothing from the Lord until well after the ceremony begins. Thus, at the beginning of the main endowment ceremony, the person is considered to be

without the garment or any other clothing. Like Adam and Eve, the person receiving the endowment is considered naked until the garment is placed upon them by God. They are reminded of this at the appropriate time in the ceremony with the words "*....You must consider yourselves as if you were respectively Adam and Eve....(and).... the garment that was placed upon you in the washing room is to cover your nakedness and represents the coat of skins spoken of.*"

**Many levels of understanding.** The endowment story is a parable in which there are many levels of understanding. The lowest level of understanding is at the PROFANE level. Those who understand things at this low level are told all the things they want to hear. Thus, profane individuals will hear such things as they will be crowned Kings and Queens or that they will pass by the angels and enter the celestial world. However, understanding the endowment at the profane level does not bring salvation, but damnation. Profane understanding brings pride instead of humility. To understand the meaning of the apron, it is necessary to realize that there is a profane level of understanding and that there are many deeper, spiritual levels of understanding. Hopefully, this will become evident as this essay progresses.

**The tests.** The endowment is a series of lessons and tests. Man is given knowledge from God and then he is tested to see whether he has learned and if he is in fellowship with God. The most effective test is always one where the candidate never knows he is being tested. Such is the handshake, which is a major theme of the endowment story. It was common in the past to see a carving or other representation of two hands fully clasped in a handshake as a motif decorating the temple. Today, the handshake remains as a common way of greeting friends. Anciently, the handshake was considered a test to see if a person held a weapon in his hand. A true friend would never have a reason to hold a weapon in the presence of another trusted friend. So, the handshake is a mutual way of showing that there is no weapon. The phrase "the hand of fellowship" is meant to connote this principle.

But, many do not realize that the handshake is a test. Once they realize that it is a test, they should also be led to ask "what other tests are there of which I may yet be unaware?" Considering this, perhaps one might ask "is the wearing of the apron itself a test of which I am unaware?"

**Lucifer is a father of lies.** Prior to getting to the meaning of the apron, it is necessary to understand an important concept that should be plain to most, but does not always appear to be so. This concept is that Satan is a master of deception and is CONTINUALLY attempting to lead men astray. He never leads towards Christ, otherwise his house would be divided against itself and it could not stand. However, many who enter the temple somehow mistakenly get the idea that Satan is also a great teller of truths. Some profane individuals even think that Satan leads towards God. In the church today, one may hear a statement to the effect that "Satan will tell nine truths and then slip in one lie". However this is a false teaching. One might ask what is wrong with this picture: "Satan, a bearer of truths!" Some will even argue the point by pointing out that Lucifer tells truths in the temple ceremony. If one truly believes this, then they have been taken in by his deceptions. Recognizing this simple concept of Satan (Lucifer) as a master of deception will help in answering certain deeper questions about what is truly meant in many of the conversations occurring between Satan and Adam, Eve, Eloheim, or Peter.

To briefly illustrate briefly how Satan (Lucifer) attempts to deceive, we will look at a small portion of the creation story as an example. It is also necessary to understand this particular portion of the endowment in order to understand what is meant by eating from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil and the true meaning of the word 'knowledge' instead of how Lucifer uses it.

When Eve first encounters Lucifer, he says *"Eve, here is some of the fruit of that tree. It will make you wise. It is delicious to the taste and very desirable."* Having failed at enticing Adam, Lucifer attempts to get Eve to partake of the fruit that the Lord commanded them not to eat. Lucifer is well aware of this commandment not to partake, but he is trying to lead men astray.

Eve replies with *"Who are you?"*, to which Lucifer replies *"I am your brother."* Here Satan continues his lies with telling Eve that he is her brother. In doing this, he implies that he is her friend and has her best interests at heart. The truth is that he is NOT her brother. Eve is a daughter of God, but Lucifer is not a son of God. He was cast out of heaven for rebellion and became Perdition.

Upon hearing Lucifer's claim to be her brother, Eve responds with *"You, my brother, and come here to persuade me to disobey Father?"* to which Lucifer immediately retorts *"I have said nothing about Father."* Here he is again lying, for in the previous statement did he not say that he is Eve's brother? The fact that a person is brother and sister automatically says that they have a common mother and father. Moreover, Eve's response shows that she clearly understands this. But Lucifer is acting like a lawyer, saying that he did not literally say anything about Father, so it did not happen. Language is a form of communication where words are symbols. The implied meaning of language means nothing to Lucifer in his argument that he said nothing about Father. Moreover, Lucifer desires to take the conversation away from Eve's question about disobeying Father, for he knows that Adam and Eve have been commanded by the Father not to partake of the Tree of Knowledge. Lucifer desires to move the conversation to territory that suits his purposes.

So, Lucifer skillfully directs the conversation back to his original request, that of getting Eve to partake of the Tree of Knowledge. Lucifer continues *"I want you to eat of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, that your eyes may be opened, for that is the way Father gained his knowledge. You must eat of this fruit so as to comprehend that everything has its opposite: good and evil, virtue and vice, light and darkness, health and sickness, pleasure and pain--thus your eyes will be opened and you will have knowledge."* In this part of his statement, Lucifer freely invokes the Father because it suits his purposes, even though his first words in this series was to deny the Father.

Furthermore, Lucifer is back to his deception when he claims *"that is the way Father gained his knowledge."* In reality, God did NOT gain his knowledge by eating of the fruit of that tree. To understand this, it is necessary to comprehend what knowledge is. But first, it is necessary to realize that Lucifer is telling Eve that she can become like God by eating of the Tree of Knowledge. He repeats this later on. However, this is a total lie. If it were true, all who have eaten of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge would be like God now. But, we see that this is not so. After Adam and Eve partake of the fruit, they instead must be shown a way to return to God. They must be shown a way to recover what they lost in the first place. Eating of the Tree of Knowledge in reality brings death instead of life and blindness instead of opened eyes.

Lucifer also implies that God sees things in opposites and that is what Eve is to gain by eating of the Tree of Knowledge. This is also a lie. However, this particular topic will not be discussed in this essay because it does not directly pertain to the topic at hand (the symbolic meaning of the apron).

**The meaning of knowledge.** It is not the purpose of this essay to go through and discuss all of the deceptions of Lucifer and how they relate to us. So, at this point it is more productive to enter into a brief definition of knowledge. The Lord uses this word one way and Lucifer uses it in another.

According to the Hebrew Kabbalah, knowledge is reconciling principle between 'wisdom' and 'understanding'. Wisdom is the female principle and understanding is the male principle. These are represented by our hearts and our minds. Women have a tendency to live by intuition, or what they feel in their heart (wisdom). Men have a tendency to live in their minds, using the power of reason (understanding). God joins men and women together and commands that they become 'one flesh'. Also, God gives both wisdom and understanding and commands that they become one (knowledge).

A person that lives totally by intuition is only a half a person, just as a person who lives by reasoning is half a person. This is the same as being without marriage where an individual woman or individual man could be considered half a person.

An artist might be an example of a person who lives and seeks truth by what is felt. A scientist could be considered an example of one who lives and seeks truth by reasoning. Neither arrives at truth as well as they would if they work together.

Again, knowledge is the reconciling principle between wisdom and understanding, or the heart and the mind. Sometimes wisdom is referred to as the principle of the mind and understanding is the heart. That is, sometimes they are reversed. But, usually these come as a pair.

This principle of getting wisdom AND understanding is reflected in the scriptures. There are many examples of this, but following are just a few:

*"But where shall WISDOM be found? and where is the place of UNDERSTANDING? Man KNOWETH not the price thereof; neither is it found in the land of the living." (Job 28:12-13)*  
(capitalization used for emphasis)

*"The Lord by WISDOM hath founded the earth; by UNDERSTANDING hath he established the heavens. By his KNOWLEDGE the depths are broken up, and the clouds drop down the dew." (Proverbs 3:19-20)*

*"My son, attend unto my WISDOM, and bow thine ear to my UNDERSTANDING: That thou mayest regard discretion, and that thy lips may keep KNOWLEDGE." (Proverbs 5:1-2)*

*"And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of WISDOM and UNDERSTANDING, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of KNOWLEDGE and of the fear of the Lord;" (Isaiah 11:2)*

*"For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the KNOWLEDGE of his will in all WISDOM and spiritual UNDERSTANDING;" (Colossians 1:9)*

*"And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of WISDOM and UNDERSTANDING, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of KNOWLEDGE and of the fear of the Lord;" (2Nephi 21:2)*

As mentioned, wisdom and understanding are principles of the heart and the mind which ultimately should become one, just as male and female are united in marriage to become one flesh. Following are a few examples of how these terms are used in the scriptures:

*"And I will raise me up a faithful priest, that shall do according to that which is in mine HEART and in my MIND: and I will build him a sure house; and he shall walk before mine anointed for ever." (1Samuel 2:35)*

*"And thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect HEART and with a willing MIND: for the Lord searcheth all HEARTS, and UNDERSTANDETH all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever." (1Chronicles 28:9)*

*"Yea, behold, I will tell you in your MIND and in your HEART, by the Holy Ghost, which shall come*

*upon you and which shall dwell in your heart." (D&C 8:2)*

*"And with one HEART and with one MIND, gather up your riches that ye may purchase an inheritance which shall hereafter be appointed unto you." (D&C 45:65)*

*"And the Lord called his people ZION, because they were of one HEART and one MIND, and dwelt in righteousness; and there was no poor among them." (Moses 7:18)*

With the idea that we should let our hearts and minds (wisdom and understanding) become one (knowledge), let us return to what is said in the creation parable presented in the endowment. When Lucifer tempts Adam and Eve to partake of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, which the Lord commanded them not to partake, he tells them that doing so will make them "wise". In repeating his statement, he also says "for that is the way the Father gained his knowledge....thus, your eyes will be opened and you will have knowledge." Again, this is a lie, for by eating of that tree, they do not get wisdom or knowledge, but instead confusion and darkness.

One might ask, where do we get knowledge? Knowledge comes from God. Also, so does wisdom. This is why the Holy Ghost dwells in your heart. Men may receive a measure of understanding (supposedly) by their own efforts. This is what the world seeks through scientific endeavors. But these intellectual pursuits never lead men to a KNOWLEDGE of the TRUTH. Thus, men are "Ever learning (understanding), and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." (2Timothy 3:7)

**What the temple clothing represents.** The temple clothing represents knowledge received from God. Again, a person enters the temple and removes his worldly (street) clothing and is washed and anointed preparatory to being clothed in the temple clothing. This is symbolic of casting off your worldly knowledge and being clothed in knowledge from God.

The garment is the first piece of clothing that God places upon Adam and Eve. It is symbolically made of animal skins and is to cover their nakedness (lack of knowledge). Eloheim commands as follows: "*Jehovah, inasmuch as Adam and Eve have discovered their nakedness, make coats of skins as a covering for them.*" These 'coats of skins' are given to Adam and Eve after they make promises to follow Gods law, which law they broke by listening to Lucifer and eating from the Tree of Knowledge. The Lord sets his hand to recover His people. He is continually doing the same for all of us.

The fact that the garment is made of skins of animals also has a number of meanings. One concerns the level of knowledge with which Adam and Eve are being clothed. It is a level of a lower nature, similar to that of animals. For example, animals are clothed with a certain type of knowledge that we refer to as 'instinct'. So-called modern science is unable to fathom where animals obtain this knowledge. In the present case, man becomes endowed with a lower level of knowledge that will allow him to survive in the 'lone and dreary world', but this level of knowledge alone will not exalt him in the heavens any more than that of animals will exalt them. This is what is meant by "*It is impossible for a man to be saved in ignorance.*" (D&C 131:6)

It is also important to realize what happens to this garment as the endowment progresses. As Adam and Eve progress, they are given additional knowledge from God. Of course, this is represented by the additional clothing with which He (God) clothes them. The robes of the Holy Priesthood completely cover the garment. Moreover, these robes are placed on over the garment. This is representative of the further 'light and knowledge' which the Lord bestows on Adam as being placed

above that which is represented by the garment of skins. That is, this new knowledge covers the old. Adam and Eve find themselves clothed in 'light and knowledge', which hides their 'nakedness'.

**The origin of the apron.** Even though the garment is the first clothing which God bestows on Adam and Eve, it is not the only clothing which Adam and Eve find themselves wearing

After eating of the Tree of Knowledge, Adam and Eve hear the voice of Eloheim. They are sent into a panic by Lucifer who tells them *"See, you are naked. Take some fig leaves and make you aprons. Father will see your nakedness. Quick! Hide!"* Lucifer is successful at instilling a fear of God in Adam and Eve. This is illustrated by Adam's remarks to Eve *"Come, let us hide."* Later, in conversing with Eloheim, Adam remarks *"I heard thy voice and hid myself, because I was naked."*

It may be important at this time to notice some of the prior conversation between Lucifer and Adam in order to consider this topic further. Of course, it is Adam and Eve themselves, not God, who clothe themselves with the apron. Moreover, it is done at the suggestion of Lucifer, who is the master of deception. After partaking of the Tree of Knowledge, Adam notices that Lucifer wears an apron and asks him *"What is that apron you have on?"* Lucifer replies with *"It is an emblem of my power and Priesthoods."* Of course, Lucifer has no 'power or priestoods', but he likes to think so. In reality, Lucifer has no power except that which man chooses to give him. Likewise, he had no power in the Garden over Adam and Eve. But, they chose to give him their attention. This is the same with all men and women. Lucifer only has power over those whom choose to give it to him. Thus, this power is of mans own creation, not that of Lucifer. Lucifer's power lies in deception. When men and women learn the truth (knowledge), then they are free of him. When this happens, Lucifer is left without power and is said to be bound.

**The composition, color, and wearing of the apron.** Not only is it important to notice the origin of the apron, but it is also important to notice its composition, color, and how it is worn. The apron does a poor job of covering Adam's nakedness in a literal sense. This is symbolic of it failing to cover nakedness (lack of knowledge) well in a symbolic sense. It is made of fig leaves, which wilt very quickly. Unlike God's 'knowledge', man's 'knowledge' does not endure, but eventually wilts and passes away.

Also, not only is the apron the only article of temple clothing that does not come from God, but it is the only article of the temple clothing which is not white. The apron is green. Green represents several things. Green traditionally represents jealousy, and perhaps represents the jealousy of Lucifer towards the position of the Father. But, perhaps a deeper meaning comes from green representing 'nature'. Perhaps it is helpful to consider the words of King Benjamin. *"For the natural man is an enemy to God, and has been from the fall of Adam, and will be, forever and ever, unless he yields to the enticings of the Holy Spirit, and putteth off the natural man and becometh a saint through the atonement of Christ the Lord, and becometh as a child, submissive, meek, humble, patient, full of love, willing to submit to all things which the Lord seeth fit to inflict upon him, even as a child doth submit to his father."* (Mosiah 3:19)

It will become important later in this essay to go back and carefully consider the words of King Benjamin that for man to yield to God that he must 'put off the natural man'. But, those who go through the endowment ceremony don't do this. The clothing (knowledge) by which Adam clothes himself (apron) which represents 'natural understanding' (natural man) is worn throughout the endowment, including in the celestial room.

It is also important for the purpose of this discussion to notice how the apron is worn. It is worn on the outside of the garment, not underneath. Moreover, when God bestows on Adam the robes of the Priesthood, the apron is removed and placed OUTSIDE the robes. This is symbolic of how men place their worldly knowledge above the knowledge given by God.

It is also important to mention briefly that an apron is an article of clothing normally worn by those who are servants. But, there are two kinds of servants: Those who perform service willingly and those who expect to get paid for the service. Profane individuals are those who expect payment for their services. A son or daughter of God expects no payment for service rendered in their own household, for this service is performed out of love. To expect payment for such services would be equivalent to a mother charging a beloved daughter for raising her. Such things are done out of pure love. There is a major difference in attitude between those who serve the Lord because they expect a reward and those who do so because they love Him. Profane individuals expect that entering heaven is a just payment for their good works. But, this is not true. To these profane individuals, Jesus responds *"Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."* (Matthew 7:22-23)

**Moroni's apparel.** Prior to concluding this essay, it may be helpful to consider the clothing worn by Moroni when he appeared to Joseph Smith. Joseph records this as follows. *"He had on a loose robe of most exquisite whiteness. It was a whiteness beyond anything earthly I had ever seen; nor do I believe that any earthly thing could be made to appear so exceedingly white and brilliant. His hands were naked, and his arms also, a little above the wrist; so, also, were his feet naked, as were his legs, a little above the ankles. His head and neck were also bare. I could discover that he had no other clothing on but this robe, as it was open, so that I could see into his bosom."* (Joseph Smith History 1:31)

It is clear from this statement that Moroni, when he appeared to Joseph Smith, did not wear an apron. Moreover, it appears that he did not wear a garment either. It is difficult to tell whether the robes spoken of are analogous to the robes used in the endowment. However, the point is that Moroni was not wearing the full complement of endowment robes for one reason or another. Either it was because the apron and the garment are not worn in heaven, or it is because he did not need to wear them on this occasion in his visit to Joseph Smith. The significance of this point will perhaps be understood more fully after reading this entire essay.

**Further light and knowledge.** One of the great mysteries of the endowment is revealed at several places in the ceremony, but becomes most obvious when the candidate is presented at the veil. The purpose of the endowment is to show the path that a person must take to enter back into the presence of God. This trek back is necessary as a result of being cast out of God's presence for following Lucifer and eating of the Tree of Knowledge.

The presentation at the veil is a short summary of all that has happened to Adam on his path back into God's presence. Prior to passing through the veil, a series of tests are given. It is important to realize that NONE of the answers given in response to the questions asked are successful in allowing a passage through the veil. That is, all but one.

When Adam is presented at the veil, the worker responds to the Lord on the other side of the veil with *"Adam, having been true and faithful in all things, desires further light and knowledge, by*

*conversing with the Lord, through the Veil."* Notice that Adam is requesting FURTHER light and knowledge. What he has already received is represented by the temple clothing.

Another response by the worker is given prior to Adam passing through the veil. *"Adam, having conversed with the Lord through the Veil, desires now to enter his presence."* Only then is Adam allowed to pass through the veil. The mystery is that nothing allows Adam to pass through the veil until he has CONVERSED WITH THE LORD THROUGH THE VEIL and received the FURTHER LIGHT AND KNOWLEDGE that the Lord has promised. This is the only thing that allows Adam to pass. Nothing else done at the veil is successful in doing this.

Instructions on how to converse with the Lord through the veil is given in other parts of the endowment, but will not be discussed here because it is not the topic of this essay. However, it is important to realize that PERSONAL REVELATION is the key to entering back into God's presence.

But there is also another key mystery. This mystery is the mystery of the tests that Adam is continually given. Many who attend the temple do not have a fundamental understanding that a simple handshake is a test. Upon passing through the veil, they enter the celestial room where their instruction ceases. They pass into this area wearing the apron prominently as a part of their clothing. When they get tired of being in the celestial room, they go to the dressing room, put back on their street clothes, and return to the world from whence they came. Most are no further along in knowledge than they were prior to entering the temple because they fail to comprehend the deeper meaning. These are said to be PROFANE and they are the ones walking in darkness at noonday. These wear the apron as a prominent part of their clothing and thus fail to pass one of the tests. These are the natural men and women! These are they who will not endure meat, so must continue on milk.

**Summary and closing comments.** This essay has attempted to focus on explaining the symbolic meaning of the apron worn as a part of the ceremonial clothing of the endowment. It was not the purpose of this essay to cover other deeper doctrines that are taught in the endowment. Only those that were considered necessary to uncover the meaning of the apron were discussed. The reader is asked to prayerfully consider the meaning and truthfulness of the contents of this essay as well as to prayerfully seek knowledge of the deeper meanings of other portions of the endowment.

The apron is the only piece of endowment clothing that is not white and, with the exception of that which is worn for practical purpose of modesty, it is the only clothing not bestowed by God. Nakedness is symbolic of being without knowledge. This is how Adam found himself in the Garden after eating of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. This is how we find ourselves prior to obtaining the endowment. Being clothed with the temple clothing represents being clothed with knowledge by God. Placing of the apron over the clothing which God bestows is symbolic of placing ones own knowledge above that which God has given. Again, this is what many of us find ourselves doing in this life, despite the clear instructions we have been given. This is walking in darkness at noonday. This is why MANY are called, but FEW are chosen: *"But behold, verily I say unto you, that there are many who have been ordained among you, whom I have called but few of them are chosen. They who are not chosen have sinned a very grievous sin, in that they are walking in darkness at noon-day."* D&C (95:5-6)

When a true son or daughter of God understands that they have been profane and have placed their own knowledge above that given by the Lord, then they will rise up and cast their aprons far from them. Then they will no longer carry their own false knowledge as a burden that keeps them from

progressing. Then they will be prepared to claim their royal birthright as true sons and daughters of God and will be prepared to inherit 'all that the Father hath' instead of receiving the servants wages. Then they will be prepared to receive the further instructions through the veil that will exalt them as sons and daughters of God. Then they will be prepared to truly enter God's presence instead of returning to the world from whence they came. Then they will be truly endowed instead of falsely so.

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*"And it came to pass that he commanded the multitude that they should cease to pray, and also his disciples. And he commanded them that they should not cease to pray in their hearts." (3Nephi 20:1)*

*"... your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him." (Matthew 6:8).*

## **The True Order of Prayer**

**By Eleazar, 1998**

This essay is directed to those who have taken out endowments in the LDS temples and are searching for meaning of the different orders of prayer and what it means to pray in the true order. Please do not be afraid to read these words and consider them. There are many who think that discussing the endowment is prohibited and this is one of the reasons that many walk in darkness. However, when one looks carefully, it is found that Jesus taught the true order of prayer in the sermon on the mount and several other places recorded in scripture. The purpose of this essay is not to make light of sacred things taught in the endowment, but to assist others to begin to comprehend the deeper meanings of the gospel and to come personally unto Christ and be free.

The author of this essay does not claim to be anyone special, nor is there a claim that the material in this essay contains the entire truth or the deepest meaning. The material presented here is only meant to be taken as food for thought. It is hoped that these words will stimulate one to ask deeper questions and to search further by asking of God. The greatest truth is meant to be discovered.

**Many levels of understanding and the purpose of the endowment.** Prior to fully understanding what it means to pray in the true order, one needs to have a fundamental understanding of the purpose of the endowment. Those who have taken endowments know that the ceremony is presented as a play that is acted out. However, most fail to grasp the meaning of who the players are and how they relate to them as an individual being. Just as there are many levels to understanding of scriptural passages, there are many levels of understanding of the endowment story.

Generally, there are three major levels of understanding which are ultimately realized. At the lower level, one applies the meaning of the endowment to the world around him (or her). In the next level, one applies it to his or her church or family. At the higher level, it is applied to you, yourself. Thus, at the lower level, one might view the story of the creation and Adam and Eve in a historical perspective – but sees the story as apart from oneself. At the next level, a husband might see himself as Adam and his wife as Eve and that these events are about him and his own life and that of his

family. At the higher level, one realizes that Adam and Eve are represented in oneself and that the story is all about one's own individual sojourn in life. At this level, one realizes that Adam represents the spirit and Eve represents the physical body. This is why Eve is placed under subjugation to Adam – it is because the body is meant to be subject to the guidance of the spirit. Eloheim, Jehovah, the preacher (the preacher is a character in the pre-1990 endowment), Peter, James, and John, and other characters in the creation parable can be considered to be represented in each individual in a way that is meant to tell you about yourself, how you are acting, and what you should be.

Thus, when receiving the endowment, you might consider that you are taking part in a play that is designed to teach you about yourself. It is important to have a basic comprehension of this concept before the deepest meanings behind what is taught in the endowment can be realized.

**Many mysteries – the importance of personal revelation.** The endowment story teaches many mysteries, many of which are only such because so few understand the simple concepts that are taught. However, after some of these so-called mysteries are understood, one might wonder how they were missed in the first place. It is not the purpose of this essay to give a thorough discussion on the entire endowment, nor is the purpose to discuss the true order of prayer in detail. Rather, the purpose is to discuss enough of the symbolism to realize that there are many hidden teachings to be learned in the endowment and to encourage one to search on a personal level for the deeper meanings. Only the portions of the endowment that help in uncovering some of the fundamental meanings behind the true order of prayer will be discussed.

One of the mysteries of the endowment is in regard to what one must do to re-enter the presence of God. The answer is lost on most, but is stated quite clearly in words used when one passes through the veil. When Adam (or Eve) arrives at the veil, a person representing the Savior stands on the other side and a series of tests are given. These represent the tests we are given at the present time in each of our individual lives. However, it is important to notice that none of the answers to the tests are successful at allowing Adam to pass through the veil, except one. Prior to passing through the veil, an attending worker replies to the Lord with the words: "*Adam, HAVING CONVERSED WITH THE LORD THROUGH THE VEIL, now desires to enter His presence.*" (capitals added for emphasis). Thus, it is "*having conversed with the Lord through the veil*", or PERSONAL REVELATION, that is a prerequisite to passing through the veil. In the conversation with the Lord through the veil, this is represented by the name of the second token of the Melchizekek priesthood. It is only AFTER repeating this name (given by revelation through the veil) back to the Lord that the Lord replies with "*That is right*" and the testing process ends. It is only after this occurs that Adam is allowed to pass through the veil and enter the Lord's presence.

**Orders of prayer.** The process of receiving personal revelation is alluded to at many places in the endowment, but most importantly with Peter teaching Adam the true order of prayer. Inasmuch as there is a true order of prayer, there must also be false orders as well as lesser orders of prayer. It is important to realize that Adam is not taught the true order of prayer until immediately prior to being presented at the veil.

Most remember that Adam built an altar when he was cast out of the garden, on which he offered up a prayer, saying "*Oh God, hear the WORDS OF MY MOUTH.*" The wording here clearly indicates that this is a vocal prayer because it is uttered with the mouth. This is as opposed to a silent prayer of the spirit, that is uttered from the altar of the heart.

In the endowment story, after Adam offers up the (vocal) prayer at the altar, Lucifer shows up immediately and replies "*I HEAR YOU. What is it you want?*" He (Lucifer) then proceeds to give Adam a counterfeit of what he perceives that Adam wants.

One thing that is important to realize in this exchange is that Lucifer is able to hear the prayer that is uttered with the mouth (vocal prayer). Moreover, it is important to realize that Adam has not yet been taught the true order of prayer, and thus, his prayer must not be after the true order.

**The mind of God.** Before proceeding further in this discussion, it may be necessary to take a look at certain passages of scripture that indicate that the Father is able to hear a silent prayer of the heart, but Lucifer cannot. Recorded in the scriptures are the words of the Lord to Joseph Smith: "*Yea, I tell thee, that thou mayest know that there is NONE ELSE SAVE GOD THAT KNOWEST THY THOUGHTS AND INTENTS OF THY HEART.*" (D&C 6:16)

In order to understand the meaning behind much of the endowment, as well as many passages of scripture, one must comprehend that mortal (and spiritual) man comprises a trinity of being. Sometimes the scriptures use the words "body, mind, and spirit." In this case, the body is the physical body, the spirit is the spirit that resides in the body, and the mind is that part of us that is God. Sometimes in the endowment Adam represents the physical body, Jehovah the spirit, and Eloheim the mind of God. Other times, Eve represents the physical body, Adam the spirit, and the Jehovah the mind. It is important to realize that this concept of a trinity of being is repeated throughout the endowment and throughout the scriptures.

This part of us that is referred to as the mind of God may be seen as the deepest part of our souls that must be approached to hear the voice of God. This is why Jesus said "*The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS WITHIN YOU.*" (Luke 17:20-21). This is what was meant when Jesus said "*I am IN THE FATHER, and the Father IN ME, and the Father and I are one.*" (3Nephi 11:27) Jesus was able to reach deep down inside himself and contact that part of him which is needed to make himself a WHOLE (or holy) BEING (trinity). This is also where one first hears the (still small) voice of God. Unfortunately, very few realize that God is a part of them, although the scriptures affirm it repeatedly. This part of every man is frequently referred to as the "*light of Christ*" and is so often ignored by men that the Lord comments that He (God) is "*The light shineth in darkness (in men), and the darkness (men) comprehendeth it not (don't realize it); nevertheless, the day shall come when you shall comprehend even God, being quickened in him and by him. Then shall ye know that ye have seen me, that I am, and that I am the true light that is IN YOU, and that you are IN ME; otherwise ye could not abound.*" (D&C 88:49-50)

When man unites his spirit and body with that of God, then he becomes whole (holy being). He then becomes OF ONE MIND (cf. 2Corinthians 13:11) and HIS MIND IS SINGLE (cf. D&C 88:68). He then loves God with ALL HIS MIND and strength (the greatest commandment; Mark 12:30).

With this understanding, let us look at a passage of scripture regarding Satan, who "*... sought also to beguile Eve, for HE KNEW NOT THE MIND OF GOD, wherefore he sought to destroy the world.*" (Moses 4:6) Satan, a carnal being who externalizes everything, is neither a whole (holy) being nor a trinity as is God. Inasmuch as he is not able to "*know the mind of God*", he is not able to read the thoughts and intents of your heart, as can the Father (D&C 6:16). This is also a state of being

occupied by fallen man, who knows not the God that dwells in him, nor is willing to hear the still small voice, as mentioned of the children of Adam who *"loved Satan (carnal, external things) more than God (spiritual, inner things)(Moses 5:13)* and *"... they would not hearken unto his (God's) voice,(that is in them)" (Moses 5:57)*

**Vocal and silent prayers.** Many realize that the Lord commands us to *"... pray vocally as well as in thy heart; yea, before the world as well as in secret, in public as well as in private."* (D&C 19:28) Again, there are many orders of prayer as well as the "true order of prayer." Moreover, Adam uses a vocal prayer prior to being taught the true order of prayer, and Lucifer hears it and shows up to tempt Adam. This should not be taken to mean that vocal prayer is a false order of prayer or that the Father cannot hear one that is spoken vocally. But, what is the reason for vocal prayers? A careful reading of the scriptures (such as the one above) indicate that we are to pray publicly and that these prayers are to be uttered vocally. But, what of private prayers? Should these be uttered vocally? The author of this essay is troubled by a recent teaching by church leaders that all prayers, even private ones, ought to be uttered vocally (as if God cannot hear a prayer of the heart). This teaching does not come from God, but from Lucifer, and it is in direct conflict with what is said in the scriptures (cf. D&C 19:28; 20:47; 20:51; 23:6),

The reasons for praying privately go much further than the advantage that Satan cannot hear a prayer from the heart. Vocal prayers are uttered in the language of the spoken word and are limited in conveying the true intent of the heart. Language is a method of using symbols (words) to convey what one wishes to communicate. Moreover, the effective use of language as communication is dependent on the speaker and hearer agreeing on the meaning of the words (symbols). A higher form of communication is by pure thought or pure feeling. This form of prayer is one that "cannot be spoken" because the proper words to express the feelings cannot be found.

**The true order of prayer.** With the above concepts in mind, let us take a look at the symbolism in the true order of prayer as taught to Adam. As is usual, carnal man will make the mistake of focusing on the outer form of the prayer, but will largely ignore the symbolism or the deeper meanings. Many notice that the outer form is a vocal prayer and is very similar to the form of prayer uttered by groups that worship Lucifer. However, as in the parables taught by Jesus, there is a much deeper meaning that will be noticed by spiritual man, but largely lost on carnal man.

In the true order of prayer, Adam and Eve form a circle around the altar. This circle is symbolic of at least two things. One is that it represents wholeness (holyness). Another is that the circle represents a closing off of the outside world, so that the prayer can be uttered IN SECRET. In this case, Adam and Eve represent the physical body and the altar represents the holy place that is the heart, for true prayers are uttered from the heart. Peter represents the spirit which utters the prayer from the altar of the heart. The prayer is repeated by those in the circle, symbolizing that the body is one with the spirit in praying in the true order.

There is a reason that the signs and tokens are acted out PRIOR TO the prayer being uttered (as well as prior to crossing the veil). Adam now sees himself as HE IS and these are to remind Adam of his path taken in life. The entire endowment is about you. The temple (building) represents your (physical) body (*"Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?"* -- 1 Corinthians 3:16) and all things in the endowment are about what happens inside you. The signs and tokens are representative of the your sojourn throughout life and your relationship with God. Adam reminds himself of this by acting out the tokens and signs prior to saying the true prayer

(or crossing the veil). By this time, Adam is no longer a pretender who honors the Lord with his voice (lips), but whose heart is far from Him.

To comprehend what is meant in the previous paragraph, it is important to understand what is represented by the signs and tokens that Adam is given. This essay will not discuss the symbolism behind the tokens, their names, signs, and penalties (penalties are a part of the earlier endowment) because it is not the purpose to do this. The reader is asked to ponder and pray on these things to receive a full understanding from God.

**The true order taught by Jesus and at the veil.** When the Savior came in the meridian of time, he taught a variety of higher concepts to the people and many of these are recorded in the sermon on the mount. Regarding the order of prayer, Jesus said *"But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast SHUT THY DOOR, pray to thy Father which is IN SECRET; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly."* (Matthew 6:6) A careful study of this scripture reveals that this is, in essence, the true order of prayer. It is a prayer that is uttered from the heart, in secret, to a loving Father who hears in secret.

Moreover, there is an important event that occurs at the veil with regard to Adam and the true order of prayer, notwithstanding it is not evident in the current (altered) endowment. Prior to 1990, the ceremony at the veil included Adam receiving the name of the second token of the Melchizekek priesthood through the five points of fellowship, which are *"inside of right foot by side of right foot, knee to knee, breast to breast, hand to back, and mouth to ear."* Having been taught the true order of prayer, Adam now uses the true order to speak with the Lord through the veil to receive the name of this token.

One should notice that Adam does not use the five points of fellowship to speak to the Lord through the veil until he is ready to receive the name of the second token of the Melchizekek priesthood, which up until now, he had not yet received. That is, the testing of Adam's knowledge (comprehension) regarding the tokens and their names prior to this, is not done on the five points of fellowship. This represents Adam speaking to the Lord through the veil using another order of prayer, but not the true order.

In receiving the name of the second token of the Melchizekek priesthood, the five points of fellowship represent the oneness that Adam now holds with the Lord. He is now one with him, just as Jesus is one with the Father, or is said to be a whole (holy) being. Adam then receives the revelation by speaking to the Lord through the veil which revelation allows him (Adam) to cross the veil. The Lord and Adam speak to each other MOUTH TO EAR, which is whispering that is representative of the still small voice. This represents a prayer that is uttered in secret, or to the mind of God that resides within oneself. In a sense, there is a veil over the mind that separates us from God. By uttering a prayer from the heart, the veil is pierced and man becomes one with God.

**Summary and closing comments.** The endowment ceremony is meant to be instruction to each of us individually concerning our sojourn through life, our relationship to God, and what we must be to again enter His presence. Unfortunately, many who pass through this instruction are still at the level of being that is represented by the first token of the Aaronic priesthood. In order to become more like God, many must begin to wake up to the teachings hidden in the endowment ceremony and begin to apply these teachings to themselves.

Carnal man is forever externalizing all things and believes that merely acting out the ceremony of the endowment is what brings him to God. However, this is great hypocrisy, because these are then forever honoring the Lord with their lips, but whose heart (the altar in the true order of prayer) is far from him. Such externalizing has many dangers, including placing oneself in the realm of the "God of this world" (Lucifer).

Spiritual man realizes that the endowment is all about himself and what he must BE. He realizes his folly of being a hypocrite and approaches the Lord in deep humility in the true order of prayer. Sacrificed on the altar is his broken heart and contrite spirit. He prays the words that cannot be spoken or written because they are uttered with pure thoughts and feelings by the spirit that kneels at the altar of the heart. Satan, who knows not the mind of God is unable to hear such a prayer, notwithstanding Satan is good at reading countenances. But, God is able to hear such a prayer and therefore " ... knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him." (Matthew 6:8).

In praying in the true order, the (physical) body is one with the heart (spirit) and God (the mind of God) hears the prayer. A person praying in the true order becomes one with God and a whole (holy) being. Thus, arriving at this point Adam (who is you) now comprehends one of the most important teachings of the endowment and is able to pierce the veil and become one with God.

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*"And he (Christ) received all power, both in heaven and on earth, and the glory of the Father was with him, for he dwelt in him.....I give unto you these sayings that you may understand and know how to worship, and know what you worship, that you may come unto the Father in my name, and in due time receive of his fullness." (D&C 93:17-19)*

## **The New and Everlasting Covenant**

**by Eleazar, 1998**

The purpose of this essay is to attempt to uncover the meaning of the New and Everlasting Covenant. It is not unusual to find disagreements among individuals in the LDS or other restoration groups as to the true meaning and identity of this covenant. Some will say that it is temple marriage or that it pertains to plural marriage, others will say that it is the gospel, and others that it is the doctrine of baptism and the church organization itself. Most can locate a particular scripture that supports their particular (carnal) idea and while these ideas may contain a measure of truth, they all miss the mark. There also may be some who have had the everlasting covenant restored in their own individual lives, but are not able to comprehend the full meaning of the covenant, despite it being that within which they themselves operate in their daily activities. While this essay is primarily written to the former group, it is also written to the latter, that they may know what they worship and how they worship (D&C 93:19).

Thus, this essay comes with a word of warning to many who will read these words: The fullest meaning of the new and everlasting covenant cannot be comprehended with the carnal mind. Natural

man will never understand the deepest meaning of the everlasting covenant no matter how plain it is explained to him because the covenant can only be comprehended by partaking of it. Moreover, it can only be partaken of when the natural (carnal) man is cast off and the spiritual man revealed. Thus, it may seem that writing this essay is futile because carnal methods (words and reasoning) are being used in an attempt to uncover the spiritual. However, the real intent of this essay is to aid those who are sincerely and diligently seeking by providing food for thought that will assist in the seeking process.

**Symbolism and the deeper meanings.** Prior to proceeding with this essay, it is important for the reader to comprehend that scriptures and ordinances contain deep meanings that are rooted in allegory and symbolism. Natural (carnal) man is forever filtering the meanings through his external senses and therefore only sees the surface meanings. He hears but does not understand and sees, but does not perceive (the true meanings). In one sense, these hidden (symbolic) meanings have a great purpose, because they hide that which is holy from the dogs (carnal and natural beings who are not ready to receive them).

Of course, one might ask whether this essay is casting that which is holy before dogs. However, there is a reason such an essay as this should be written at this time. Part of it is because of the special dispensation in which we live. Not only must the Sons of God begin to awake from their slumber, but all things are to be revealed in their plainness (secrets will be shouted from the housetops).

Returning to the topic at hand, it is very important, again, for all to realize that the endowment and what we call scriptures is highly encoded material that is deeply symbolic. This not only applies to the endowment and scriptures, but to all other things including what we refer to as the other "saving ordinances". Once one realizes that this deeper symbolism exists, then one can begin a journey to seek for the deeper (symbolic) meanings.

**Some examples of deeper symbolic meanings.** Prior to proceeding with discussing the new and everlasting covenant, it may be necessary to explore this concept of deeper symbolism further. Hopefully, the reason for doing this will become more clear as this essay proceeds.

Many are familiar with the saying by Jesus that is recorded in the New Testament where he says *"And ye shall know THE TRUTH and THE TRUTH will make you free."* (John 8:32)(capitals added for emphasis). Many who read this scripture miss the deeper meaning of this passage entirely. They think that "the truth" is that which is not false. To them, the truth is a set of facts that are accurate. However, this understanding of the passage is a profane or carnal understanding. In another passage, Jesus says *"... I AM the way, THE TRUTH, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."* (John 14:6) Thus, the deeper (spiritual) meaning is that the truth is Christ himself. According to the passage, we have to KNOW Him (Christ) to become free. This idea is stated openly a few verses after the original passage, albeit it seems that almost none notice the words... *"And ye shall know the truth and the truth will make you free... If THE SON therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."* (John 8:32-36)

Another example of this symbolism is in the familiar story of Lehi's dream in the Book of Mormon (1Nephi chap. 8-15). Most are aware that the "iron rod" that leads beside the path to the Tree of Life represents the "word of God" (1Nephi 15:23-24) and that it is by clinging to this rod that one is able to make it through the dark mists that are cast upon the path. Again, the profane (carnal or natural) meaning of this passage is that which seems to be the most obvious. Many think that the iron

rod is the scriptures (words of the prophets), but in reality this is the (natural) understanding that brings damnation rather than life eternal.

A higher (spiritual) meaning lies in Jesus himself as being the word (the meaning of the rod of iron)... *"For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, THE WORD, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one."* (1John 5:7) Thus, it is Christ himself that is represented by the rod of iron in Lehi's dream to which all must cling to reach the Tree of Life. In reality, Jesus condemned those who relied upon the scriptures rather than clinging to the true "rod of iron"... *"(Ye) Search the scriptures; for in them ye THINK (carnal understanding) ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. And YE WILL NOT COME UNTO ME THAT YE MIGHT HAVE LIFE."* (John 5:39-40) Most should notice that this is a restatement of the idea that "salvation cometh by none other than Jesus Christ" (cf. John 14:6). Moreover, it may not be plain at this time, but this points directly to the everlasting covenant. As we study further, it will hopefully become more plain that THE EVERLASTING COVENANT IS THE CULMINATING PRINCIPLE OF THE SCRIPTURES, THE OUTWARD ORDINANCES, THE (MELCHEZIDEK) PRIESTHOOD, AND ALL OF THE GOSPEL.

**The symbolism of (eternal) marriage as a token of the everlasting covenant.** Marriage is used often in token (symbolic of) the (new and) everlasting covenant, albeit temple marriage is not the covenant. Much of the confusion derives from a carnal understanding of D&C 132 which is the section on eternal marriage. This confusion is augmented by our own misunderstandings of what the endowment ordinances mean. In actuality, sealing of husband to wife in the temple ordinance is meant to teach the meaning of the (new and) everlasting covenant through the symbolism and allegory of marriage.

Most will notice that marriage (and sealing of children to parents) is the culminating ordinance in the (LDS) temple experience. Moreover, Christ is often referred to as "the Bridegroom" in the temple and many places throughout the scriptures. It is Christ (the bridegroom) who (symbolically) stands on the other side of the veil and reaches forth his hand to pull us across. The church (all of us) is often referred to as "the bride". In the scriptures (as well as the endowment), we find the allegory of marriage is used many times to teach us (through symbolism) about our relationship to Christ. This is why the great abominable church is called THE WHORE... *"... with whom the kings of the earth have COMMITTED FORNICATION, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication."* (Revelation 17:2) It is also why rebellious Israel is likened to *"... a wife that COMMITTETH ADULTERY, which taketh strangers instead of her husband!"* (Ezekiel 16:32) Thus, the allegory of the betrothal of a bride to the groom and the marriage covenant is used to symbolize our own relationship to Christ and the world around us. When we (the bride) stray from Christ (the bridegroom) and seek after other Gods, we are as a bride who commits (spiritual) adultery.

**The meaning of the new and everlasting covenant.** Then if marriage is a token of the everlasting covenant, then what is the covenant? Why is it a "new" covenant and why is it "everlasting"?

A great key to understanding is given in the first section of the D&C: *"For they have strayed from mine ordinances, and have broken mine everlasting covenant; They seek not the Lord to establish his righteousness, but every man walketh in his own way, and after the image of his own God, whose image is in the likeness of the world, and whose substance is that of an idol, which waxeth old and shall perish in Babylon, even Babylon the great, which shall fall..... Wherefore.... The weak things*

*of the world shall come forth and break down the mighty and strong ones, THAT MAN SHOULD NOT COUNSEL HIS FELLOW MAN, NEITHER TRUST IN THE ARM OF THE FLESH- BUT THAT EVERY MAN MIGHT SPEAK IN THE NAME OF THE LORD, even the Savior of the world; That FAITH ALSO MIGHT INCREASE in the earth; THAT MINE EVERLASTING COVENANT MIGHT BE ESTABLISHED;" (D&C 1:15-22)*

Similar words are used in the old and new testaments: *"... Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a NEW COVENANT with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt (the carnal Law of Moses); because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I WILL PUT MY LAWS INTO THEIR MIND, AND WRITE THEM IN THEIR HEARTS: AND I WILL BE TO THEM A GOD, AND THEY SHALL BE TO ME A PEOPLE: AND THEY SHALL NOT TEACH EVERY MAN HIS NEIGHBOR, AND EVERY MAN HIS BROTHER, SAYING, KNOW THE LORD: FOR ALL SHALL KNOW ME, FROM THE LEAST TO THE GREATEST. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away."* (Hebrews 8:8-13; see also Jeremiah 31:31-34)

A careful examination of these (and other) scriptures reveal some of the same principles spoken about in the previous section on marriage being in token of the covenant. One will notice that "men will not counsel their fellow man" (an adulterous relationship)... but that the Lord will "write his laws in their minds and hearts and he will be unto us a God and we to him a people" (the symbolic marriage relationship). Hopefully it becomes clear why the covenant is everlasting (it exists from age to age and is eternal) as well as new (it is a new covenant that replaces the old covenant of carnal laws).

**The covenant as exemplified by Christ.** The everlasting covenant is further revealed in the relationship of Jesus to his own Father and this relationship is meant to teach us about our own relationship to Christ (who is the Father and the Son). Many times, Christ prayed that we would have this same relationship (ie. restore the everlasting covenant). What follows are a few passages of scripture that show this:

*"And after this manner shall ye baptize in my name; for behold, verily I say unto you, that the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost are one; and I AM IN THE FATHER, AND THE FATHER IN ME, AND THE FATHER AND I ARE ONE" (3Nephi 11:27)*

Notice that this is a relationship of one-ness (At-one-ment) with the Father that is an underlying theme in the life of Jesus. Moreover, he prays that we can have this same relationship that he has with his Father:

*"I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine.... And now I AM NO MORE IN THE WORLD (no longer carnal), BUT THESE (referring to us) ARE IN THE (carnal) WORLD, and I come to thee (in the new and everlasting covenant). Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, THAT THEY MAY BE ONE, AS WE ARE ONE (become at-one in the covenant)... Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; THAT THEY ALL MAY BE ONE; AS THOU, FATHER, ART IN ME, AND I IN THEE, THAT THEY ALSO MAY BE ONE IN US: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that THEY MAY BE ONE, EVEN*

*AS WE ARE ONE: I IN THEM, AND THOU IN ME, THAT THEY MAY BE MADE PERFECT IN ONE; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me (ie. the allegorical marriage covenant)." (John 17:9-23)*

*"And none of them that my Father hath given me shall be lost. And the Father and I are one. I am in the Father and the Father in me; and INASMUCH AS YE HAVE RECEIVED ME, YE ARE IN ME, AND I IN YOU (referring to a restoration of the new and everlasting covenant). Wherefore, I am in your midst (the light that shines in darkness which few of us comprehend), and I am the good shepherd, and the stone of Israel. He that buildeth upon this rock (which is to KNOW Christ) shall never fall. And the day cometh that you shall hear my voice and see me, and KNOW that I am." (D&C 50:42-45)*

**The new and everlasting covenant as a culminating principle.** Again, the new and everlasting covenant can be considered to be the culminating principle of the entire gospel of Jesus Christ. A careful examination of the endowment ceremony reveals that it is given as a parable that tells us all about ourselves and what we should BE to (re)enter the presence of God. This is particularly pointed out in the true order of prayer and the ceremony at the veil. Most will notice that the true order of prayer teaches us of an allegorical union (marriage) of our bodies (Eve) with our spirits (Adam) as well as a union (marriage) of our spirit (Peter) with the Father. We are to become one! This is the at-one-ment or the culminating principle of all things! It is (allegorical) marriage (in the temple) to the bridegroom (Christ) and just as Adam and Eve are commanded to become one flesh, we are taught to become one (with God).

In the ceremony at the veil, most will notice that we are not allowed into the presence of the Lord until we have "... conversed with the Lord through the veil". This is done on the five points of fellowship (pre 1990 ceremony), symbolizing oneness with God, and mouth to ear, symbolizing the whispering of the spirit (of God) within each of us. Even in the washing and anointing ceremonies, the symbolism points to the everlasting covenant. We are admonished to "...become clean from the blood and sins of this generation", which words point to the atoning blood of Christ, but which words should give us cause for concern in wondering why this has not happened to us yet.

The everlasting covenant is the central theme that pervades the scriptures and we can see it if we cast off our carnal being and use our spiritual eyes and spiritual understandings. Let all who have (spiritual) ears to hear, hear (understand) it, and (spiritual) eyes to see, see (perceive) it. Dear reader, go back and re-read the section with the heading "Some examples of deeper symbolic meanings" and ask if it now begins to make sense.

*"And ye shall KNOW THE TRUTH and THE TRUTH WILL MAKE YOU FREE." (John 8:32)*

The culminating theme of the scriptures, the outward ordinances, the (Melchizedek) priesthood, and all of the gospel is to COME UNTO CHRIST (in the new and everlasting covenant) AND BE SAVED, for there is no other name under heaven that bringeth salvation. The (new and) everlasting covenant is to KNOW God and Jesus Christ, who He has sent.... it is to BECOME ONE with Him.... it is the EVERLASTING ATONEMENT of God which unites all things in one (at-one-ment) with Him.... it is ETERNAL MARRIAGE TO THE BRIDEGROOM. If you have not yet done so, may you make the sacrifice of a broken heart and a contrite spirit, casting off all unGodliness, and experience it for yourself.

*"In that day shall there be an altar to the LORD in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar at the border thereof to the LORD. And it shall be for a sign and for a witness unto the LORD of hosts in the land of Egypt: for they shall cry unto the LORD because of the oppressors, and he shall send them a saviour, and a great one, and he shall deliver them." (Isaiah 19:19-20)*

## **The Great Pyramid and Temple Symbolism: One Message in the Many**

By Eleazar, 1999

The Great Pyramid at Giza in Egypt is the only remaining member of what the Greeks called the seven wonders of the ancient world. It stands in the geologic center of the earth and could rightly be considered the world's greatest wonder in this day. Its mysteries have yet to be unraveled by mankind as a whole, although well understood by an unknown few. The Pyramid stands as a witness to the glory of God as well as the ignorance of carnal man. Its message is one that is timeless. It is truly a wonder(ful message) to the modern (contemporary) world as well as the ancient world. When fully unraveled, one will stand in wonder at its message and to the glory of God.

The mysterious message of the Great Pyramid is one that lies at the foundation of nearly every religion. In its essence, the message is one that is plain, although it remains hidden to many in this age as well as in ages past. Its plain message can be titled by a simple phrase that is identical to the message underlying the LDS endowment ceremonies and repeated in many places throughout creation itself. One can simply title its foundational message as: "The Mystery of the Temple." The profound statement that reveals the mystery is "Ye are the Temple (of God)" (ie. you are what these things are all about).

But, there is much more (mystery) to it than the simple platitude that "Ye are the Temple". This brief essay will attempt to uncover a fraction of the mystery. There is a reason for this. It is because one must first realize the existence of the mystery, then discover how to find the mystery (treasure) on ones own. This essay will also include a warning. This is that no amount of intellectualizing can unravel the mystery of the Temple. To comprehend the real mystery, one must go beyond the intellect. Ironically, that is part of the mystery itself.

Again, this essay will not pretend to contain a complete analysis of the Great Pyramid or even a small fraction thereof. Many volumes have already been written on the deep and extensive symbolism contained in the Pyramid. Ironically, there is so much more symbolism yet undiscovered that even more volumes wait to be written by men who are truly ignorant of the real message. We do not intend to add to the volumes of vain intellectualizations already manifest. Rather, the purpose is to get at the real and plain meanings that are meant to be conveyed by the Great Pyramid and all Temples (buildings).

Ironically, this by itself is one of the great paradoxes that the Pyramid is meant to unravel. The mystery of the Temple is both complex and plain. One may take a whole lifetime in an attempt to capture all of the complex symbolism and yet, in doing that, he would have learned nothing. Men do this all of the time. Such efforts result in endless intellectual works of little real value because it is the plain message which is the one of real importance. One can get lost in studying the many complexities or, alternatively, one can find oneself in its plainness. Thus, this essay need not be lengthy. Its purpose is to point a direction rarely seen by carnal man. This direction leads to the message of the Great Pyramid (Temple) in plainness. And it is a message about you, the true Temple.

**The Purpose of the Great Pyramid (Temple).** Most are aware that there are many theories as to the origin of the Great Pyramid and its purpose. We will only briefly mention a few of the more prominent theories because it is too unwieldy to consider them all. One theory proposes that the Pyramid was meant as a tomb for a great pharaoh (earthly king). Another proposes that it was to guard some great treasure (wealth) in gold and other precious things. However, careful study reveals that neither of these can be true, at least not in the way proposed. A careful study of the Pyramid and its empty sarcophagus in what is called the King's chamber reveals that it is not at all like the traditional methods of Egyptian burial chambers. Although it is not the purpose of this essay to discuss these points at length, one might briefly mention the mystery of the missing lid to the King's sarcophagus. Why is it that the lid to the King's sarcophagus, one that must have weighed many tons, is not found in the room? Certainly, such a granite lid was not of sufficient value to carry off, nor could it have been physically removed through the narrow entrance passages to the Pyramid. This by itself is enough to bring the tomb theory into serious question.

In a likewise manner, it boggles the mind as to why anyone would construct such an edifice as the great Pyramid at such unprecedented labor and expense that would have cost many times more than any earthly treasure that it could have guarded.

In careful retrospection (not fully discussed here), one finds that theories of why the Pyramid was built (like those stated above) cannot be correct in the way they are proposed. Yet, there is a great irony in that these theories are indeed correct in their essence. The real treasure that the Pyramid was meant to guard is a treasure that is still there. But, it is not a treasure of gold, silver, or other precious things that carnal man values so highly. It is not a treasure measured by bushels and weights, but rather one that cannot be measured. Simply stated, the priceless treasure (of the Pyramid) is the mystery of the Temple (you). If one prefers, one can call it an endowment (higher teachings that one is to receive).

In a sense, the Pyramid is also a burial chamber of the pharaoh (earthly king). But, it is carnal man who is the earthly king spoken of. Ye are the earthly king that is to be entombed in the Pyramid (Temple). To become holy, carnal man (the earthly king) must die and a new man (Heavenly King) reborn. The sarcophagus does not have a lid because the death, which is what the Kings chamber is about, has a new life in its realization. The missing lid is to tell one that it is all about life and resurrection more than it is about death. It has the same meaning as the stone rolled away from the door of the tomb of Jesus.

Thus, the Great Pyramid at Giza is not a tomb for some Egyptian king of long ago, nor was it meant to hide precious metals and jewels. Yet, it is indeed meant to do these things. That is, these things are true if one considers the self to be the Egyptian (earthly) king and the endowment (teachings) as the treasure that is carefully guarded by the Great Pyramid (Temple). In reality, the

Great Pyramid at Giza was and is a Temple of instruction (endowment). The endowment (teachings) contained within the Great Pyramid is the real treasure that is priceless. Moreover, this priceless treasure can still be found by any who will search for it.

Before proceeding, one might notice that it is the same principle with all Temples that are built with hands (buildings), including the LDS temple buildings. Their value lies not in their costly exteriors or their beautiful furnishings, which is what carnal man often sees as the utmost value. Rather, the real treasure is contained within the message (endowment) that is within. And it is even much, much more than that. Again, one ultimately finds that it is all about you, yourself, the true Temple of God, one that is made without hands.

**Noticing the Simple Things.** Most books on the Great Pyramid are filled with mathematical analyses of its structure, its passages and rooms, and analysis of related Egyptian hieroglyphs. But, one need not travel far and wide, nor study ancient language or complex mathematics to unravel the mystery of the Great Pyramid. One only needs to start noticing the simple things. Again, these simple and plain messages are prone to be overlooked by those delving into the complex matters.

As an example, one might take a look at the Great Pyramid today in the context of what has happened to it. One might notice that the Pyramid today has lost all of its beautiful outer casing stones. These casing stones were carried off into the cities by the local people for the purpose of adorning their own houses. This by itself is deeply symbolic of the preoccupation of carnal man with the facade; the outer tinsel which he seems to place so much importance and thus spends his entire earthly existence pursuing. Carnal man is prone to place all of his emphasis on the outer shell and none on the inner structure. After stripping the Great Pyramid of its casing stones, carnal man leaves the underlying stones where they are, thinking that these are of little value because they have no outer beauty which thing he values above all else. But, he misses what has the greatest value because he has no eyes with which to see. That which has the greatest value to (spiritual) man lies within the very thing he (carnal man) has left behind... the message of the Temple itself. Even those who broke into the Temple searching for earthly treasure came away with nothing of real value because they did not have eyes to perceive the real treasure therein.

Alas, carnal man lives in the midst of Egypt itself and is of it (Egypt). Yet in the midst of Egypt, a symbol of carnal man himself, stands a Temple which guards a treasure which is overlooked by all those who are so focused on the outward facade that they cannot see (perceive) it.

As a result of his profane mind, carnal man spends his life in acquiring that which does not give life and that which fails to bring him joy. He lives fully in Egypt. We who are of the modern world (of Egypt) spend much of our lives in the pursuit of beautiful homes, cars, boats, recreation, and the praise of men. These things we consume on our vain lusts, yet one never finds joy that is lasting. Although carnal man may find temporary satisfaction in what he acquires, he always finds that his hunger (dissatisfaction) returns and draws him in pursuit of even more of what failed to satisfy him in the first place. Ironically, right in the midst of Egypt stands the Temple (Pyramid) and its priceless treasure that is unseen.

Like the prodigal son, carnal man eventually "comes to himself" and realizes the futility of trying to find joy in attempting to satisfy the demands of the carnal (outer) senses. Eventually, he realizes that he, himself, is the Temple that stands in the midst of Egypt. In coming to himself, he discovers the true meaning of what the Great Pyramid symbolizes.

Thus, in its essence, the message of the Great Pyramid is profoundly simple. Yes, it is written in perfect symbolism in stone for anyone who desires to uncover its secrets. Of course, these are only secrets (mysteries) because carnal man has blinded himself to understanding them.

**The Return of Those Who Were Lost.** Again, it is not our purpose to cover all of the complex symbolism in the Great Pyramid. But perhaps it might be helpful to visit some of the more obvious things to give this essay some substance and direction.

History tells us that in the year 820 AD, the door on the north face of the Great Pyramid at Giza was discovered by Calif Al Mamoun. The original door (entrance) is today known to have been hidden from the outside when the Pyramid was built, but could be opened by anyone who knew (or discovered) its location. Of course, in due time the door ceased to function (because of the pillaging of casing stones as well as the Pyramid being sealed up by the Egyptian priests) and became lost to all. Thus entered the Calif Al Mamoun, who located the entrance in 820 AD by excavating the north face of the Pyramid with a large company of workers. Of course, the purpose of the excavation by the Calif was to uncover a treasure of precious gold and jewels that the Pyramid supposedly guarded. But, the Calif did not find such a treasure, rather he found the Pyramid to be empty. Again, carnal man is prone to miss the true treasures in his vain quest for worldly riches.

One might notice that the location of the entrance to the Great Pyramid (Temple) is on the north side. Today, we know that this entrance and its accompanying passageway align exactly with the north (pole) star. But, few have understood why this is so. Perhaps we ought to look more carefully at what is right in front of us.

One might first notice what one is doing when entering the Pyramid (Temple). One enters from the direction of the north. Most will recall that north is the direction from which the lost tribes (of Israel) return from their wanderings. When an individual enters the Temple, this is what one is doing (returning from being lost). One might even wonder whether all modern Temples (buildings) have their public entrances on the north side.

There is also much, much more in this symbolism. How much further shall one go in discovering it? One will notice that the north star today is "Al Ruccaba" (called Polaris in modern English) which means "the turned on" or "ridden on". Seven thousand years ago the polar star was the Dragon Star (Alpha Draconis). One will notice that these pole stars are symbolic of Lucifer. All stars in the heavens appear to revolve around this northern pole (Lucifer) star, which star by itself is of very low magnitude. However, the stationary pole star is merely an illusion created by the turning of the earth on its axis. It is all a false appearance; this pole star is not really a central star in the heavens at all.

There is more too. The Egyptians were very familiar with the signs in the heavens, although they did not appear to comprehend them fully. Abraham is known to have reasoned with the great Pharaoh in Egypt about the stars and their meanings. In truth, what we call Astrology today is a (perverted) remnant of the teachings that came from Abraham through the Egyptians. God taught Abraham (endowed him with) the story of all things by the symbolism (pictures) in the constellations (heavens). In reality, the Zodiac tells the same story as the Great Pyramid, which is a story of the creation of the earth, the fall of man, and the Messianic plan of redemption. But, this Zodiac topic is much larger than this essay so it will not be discussed. Hopefully, one will begin to realize that the symbolism in creation is endless.

**The Plain and the Complex.** When one begins to look at the outer and inner structure of the Great Pyramid, one begins to be overwhelmed at the depth and complexity of its symbolic messages. There are ascending and descending passages, crossroads, a grand gallery, low passages, dead ends, and chambers. Pyramid scholars tell us that the entire past and future history of the earth is recorded in the mathematical measurements of it. Again, volumes upon volumes of analyses have been written on it and there are more yet to be written. Yet, a great irony is that one need not depend on knowing all of the symbolic meanings to discover the priceless treasure of the Temple. In fact, a careful study of the complex symbolism of the Pyramid can be distracting to the true goal. Perhaps this in itself is the most important message of the Great Pyramid. This may even be the most elusive mystery of all to carnal men, yet most plain and precious to those who are spiritual.

One's first impulse arising from the desire to discover the secret (treasure) of the Great Pyramid is to run to a scholarly book on the subject in order to peer at the symbolism unraveled. Although these may indeed help, there is also a real and hidden danger. It is this: In searching for the deeper meanings, one stands at a crossroads. There are two ways to go; two roads to travel. The difference between them is a very subtle one and which way one chooses will make all of the difference. Dear reader, look carefully and see the way!

One can spend eons pursuing the endless symbolic teachings and wear oneself out trying to know what one cannot understand or, alternatively, one can try to understand what is plain. The many volumes of intellectual analyses of the Great Pyramid have done little to help in locating the priceless treasure, even though they have provided intellectual entertainment for many. One must comprehend that which is plain and precious. Rather than get lost in the ever deepening intellectual pursuits, one needs only to realize what it is about. Again, the greatest mystery is that it is all about you. Ye are the Temple of God, one that stands in the midst of Egypt (the world). All of the symbolism in the many passages and rooms of the Great Pyramid apply not only to the history of the earth, but more importantly to you as an individual. Ultimately, one will come to put off the outward exploration of the Great Pyramid and begin the inner exploring the true Temple (yourself). Only then will one begin to unravel the "mystery of the Temple." This is the greatest mystery and the greatest treasure.

Not only does the Great Pyramid stand as a witness in Egypt for the glory of God, but it also stands as a monument to the ignorance of fallen (carnal) man. One will notice that the Great Pyramid is incomplete. It is missing its capstone. This (missing) capstone represents the stone that the builders rejected (in the foundation) and yet is to become "head of the corner". One will notice that the top of the Great Pyramid, at the capstone, is where the corners meet (the head of the corner). The temple of carnal man is missing this same capstone (the Christ). Carnal man is an incomplete temple.

But there is more. What need is there of such a Great Pyramid (Temple) endowment if carnal man was already aware of his folly? One realizes that the Great Pyramid and the myriad other Temples being built in our own time are to endow carnal man with what he does not already possess. If man were pure and holy, then there would be no need of these Temple buildings (eg. Great Pyramid) because he would not need to enter to learn (be endowed with) what he already knows. The ignorance of carnal man is why there are temples being built today. But, the scriptures attest that (carnal) man will ultimately come to comprehend the true mystery of the Temple. Then the temple will no longer be needed. This is why John saw the New Jerusalem which had "... *no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.*" (Revelation 21:22)

**The Plain Message of the High Priest.** In the early half of this century, the Great Pyramid was still accepting initiates to discover the secret treasure of its endowment. Dr. Paul Brunton spent a night alone in the Pyramid, laid his body dead on the floor and crossed the veil. He was attended by a High Priest from the other side of the veil that spoke to him (as recoded by Brunton):

*" 'My son,' came a murmur from the High Priest, 'it matters not whether thou discoverest the door or not. Find but the secret passage within the mind that will lead thee to the hidden chamber within thine own soul, and thou shalt have found something worthy indeed. The mystery of the Great Pyramid is the mystery of thine own self. The secret chambers and ancient records are all contained in thine own nature. The lesson of the Pyramid is that man must turn inward, must venture to the unknown center of his being to find his soul, even as he must venture to the unknown depths of this fane (temple) to find its profoundest secret.'" (1)*

The essence, indeed the very sum and substance, of all religions is that there is a hidden divinity in man which is waiting to be discovered. That is the plain message that is the one out of many. That was the very message of the man (ifestation of God) called Jesus.

The plain message of the High Priest to Paul Brunton is that one need not travel to Egypt or to a building to be endowed. The priceless treasure guarded by the Great Pyramid of Egypt (Temple) is even now present right where you are. Anyone can seek it by shutting off the outward world and then begin discovering the hidden passageways in the true Temple of God. The Temple is (to be) the abode of God. Ye are that Temple spoken of.

This is the mystery of the Temple. But, this essay only scratches the surface because it cannot reveal that which is impossible to reveal through intellectualizations. To discover the real mystery and to find the priceless treasure, one must venture into the Temple. It is a narrow path that can be walked by only one person. That person is you.

### **Endnotes.**

1. Paul Brunton, Dr. A Search in Secret Egypt, Samuel Weiser, Inc, York Beach, Maine, 1984, 288 pp. ISBN# 0-87728-603-5.

Peter Lemesurier, The Great Pyramid Decoded, Barnes and Nobel Books, NY, 1996, 401 pp. ISBN# 0-76070-321-3

E. Raymond Capt, The Great Pyramid Decoded, Artisan Sales, P.O. Box 1529, Muskogee, OK, 1971, ISBN 0-934666-01-6

"...what manner of men ought ye to be?... even as I am." (3Nephi 27:27)

## The Name of the Second Token

By Eleazar, January 2000

The purpose of this essay is to uncover some of the meanings behind the name of the second token of the Melchizedek priesthood as given in the LDS endowment ceremony. This document will be entrusted to fall into the right hands. However, for those who may be personally offended by this discussion: Please do not continue reading!

Generally speaking, few who continue to attend the endowment rituals in modern temples understand the meaning of the name of the second token in the least bit. The reason why this is true becomes evident as one begins to comprehend what the name of the token means. The meaning is not really a secret; It's profound teachings are present in Biblical writings as well as a variety of other documents that are in public hands. Unfortunately, the attempt to protect the sacredness of the endowment by hiding it in a supposed attitude of holy-secrecy has resulted in a ban on all discussion of what any of it means. As a result, an understanding of it has been lost and many who might be assisted along their own personal paths of self-purification are condemned to an endless cycle of going through the ritualistic motions without coming to understand why they are doing so. This loss of understanding of the endowment ritual is symbolized in the very structures of the newest temple buildings themselves: They are increasingly becoming cheaper and smaller with no floors above ground level. As the unfortunate situation stands now, those who pretend to guard the secret meanings of the endowment know very little about that which they zealously claim to guard.

This essay is intended to assist those who have yet to comprehend the name of the second token by discussing a portion of what the token might symbolize. The purpose is to wake others to the presence of deep symbolism in the name of the second token in particular, as well as the endowment in general, so that it might encourage further seeking. Thus, the intent is to discuss only a portion of the name of the second token with the rest left for personal discovery.

**Secrecy and the endowment.** Orthodox LDS will understandably be uncomfortable with this essay because of the adherence to what amounts to a sacred code of secrecy in regard to the endowment ceremony in general and the signs and tokens in particular. Unfortunately, that way of thinking is the very reason that the meanings behind the endowment are so little understood among mainstream LDS. There is an uttered as well as un-spoken prohibition of speaking of these things in good company, much less openly, despite the apologetic explanation often given to non-LDS that these things are "*sacred, not secret.*"

Previous versions of the LDS endowment ceremony included what have become referred to as "blood oaths" which attached death penalties to the act of revealing the tokens, their names, and signs to the world. The current endowment lacks the penalties, but participants are still placed under a solemn oath to never reveal the tokens or their accompanying names and signs. This oath of secrecy applies to the first and second tokens of the Aaronic priesthood as well as to the first token of the Melchizedek priesthood, but few understand why this is so or what the oath means. Most take the

secrecy literally and thereby fall into being bearers of secret oaths and combinations themselves, a thing which they will openly disavow as evil (except in their own particular circumstance). One will find that the endowment is full of the most amazing ironies. Ultimately, one will come to realize that it is meant to be that way.

One needs to realize that the story of the endowment is the story of each of us, what we are doing right now in our mortal lives, and what we should be. It is also important to begin realizing what the tokens, names and signs are all about and what this oath of secrecy really means. One might first notice that the "tokens of the priesthood" are nothing more than a series of handshakes which progress from half grips to full grips as the endowment ritual progresses. These handshakes (tokens) represent man's own relationship to God; As a fallen and carnal man, Adam is in half-fellowship with God, symbolized by the first two tokens of partial grips that come under the preparatory (Aaronic) priesthood. These first two tokens are named with Adam's own names, which are really the same name(s) worn by the fallen angel Lucifer, which one might aptly call the "self", referring to the outer or fallen self. Carnal man often lives his life in an attitude of self-importance and professed piety. However, this is but a covering he has placed upon himself to hide his own nakedness. He has been so successful at this covering that he even deceives himself. This is symbolized by many things in the ritual, most prominently by the apron of deception (fig leaves) which Adam places upon himself. But, one might also notice the contradictory signs Adam makes for the tokens. The sign of the first token is one of being square with God, which is expressed (signed; acted out) in contradiction to the meaning of the token (of half-fellowship) and its name (of self-importance).

Unfortunately, only a few of those who have taken endowments themselves, ever progress in their own personal lives beyond what is symbolized by this level of ritual (the Aaronic). In his own self-righteousness, fallen (carnal) man is not even aware of his own failure to live up to his promise to never reveal the tokens (of half-fellowship) to the world, which he always does (and is doing) by his actions. In the earlier endowment ceremonies, the penalty for revealing these tokens was death, which of course refers to spiritual death rather than physical death. Fallen (carnal) man remains under the curse of (spiritual) death as long as he continues to reveal the tokens (of partial fellowship with God) to the world (through his actions). Unfortunately, this includes everyone who is there present.

**The progression from Aaronic to Melchizedek.** Again, to be able to comprehend the meaning of the name of the second token of the Melchizedek priesthood, it is necessary to first understand that the endowment is a story of the progression of fallen man and what he must be in order to re-enter the presence of God, the place from which he has fallen. This is represented by the progression through the four tokens of the priesthood. Again, man is at first completely unaware of his own half fellowship (symbolized by the half-grips of the Aaronic priesthood), and so he lives his life in a state of hypocrisy and self-delusion (as illustrated by the relationship of the tokens to their names and signs).

Eventually, carnal man comes to partially recognize his folly and, in his desire to change his ways of error, he puts forth his hand to grasp the Lord's hand in a token of full fellowship. This is the beginning of the transition from the Aaronic to the Melchizedek level, but fallen man has still not arrived at a fullness, so to speak, and that is why there is much more to learn in the endowment ceremony before he passes the veil into the world of the living. The Lord returns Adam's offer of full fellowship by piercing Adam's palm as with a nail (the first token of the Melchizedek priesthood), symbolizing the chastising events that will come in Adam's life to benefit him by purifying and cleansing his soul. Personally, Adam has come to the realization that he is a son (The Son) of God,

but he still lives his life in a fallen state of self-delusion. He is yet to come to see himself as he is as well as others (who are whole/holy) see him.

It is not uncommon for those who have reached this level, upon receiving a few personal revelations, to begin suffering from new state of false piety; At this juncture, Adam is often prone to suffer from a state of spiritual swell-headedness. Mormon history is filled with stories of those, who upon realizing a few of their own revelations, begin to a campaign of self-promotion that they are a chosen leader, such as "the one mighty and strong", the "only true prophet", or the Davidic servant who is to set things in order. They may even be told that they are such a person, but it is really their own house that is to be set in order rather than that of others. At this point, Adam is still spiritually dead (has yet to pass the veil). His own imperfection continues to delude him, but he is making progress. The chastising events (represented by the nail) that will continue to come to the fallen man Adam are meant to purify him, for he is a son of God. The Lord loves those whom he chastises and these things are done for Adam's benefit.

Some may notice that a few who reach this level will attract followers and found groups that are break-offs of the old way of living or may even be considered new religious sects. It is very important to realize exactly what is happening. Such churches (or religions or groups) are merely branches of the same preparatory gospel that one may have fled in the first place, nearly always retaining the burdens of the former as well as adding new ones. The leader at the center, as charismatic as he may be, is still at a level of partial-fellowship with God and reveals it through his actions, although this is rarely obvious to himself or his followers. But, eventually the piercing of the nail, which represents God's purifying chastisements, will be sufficient to break his remaining pride (or that of his followers) to lead him (and them) to the next level. Indeed, the purpose of the preparatory gospel is to wear one down and break ones pride (and vanity). It serves as being the taskmaster that is to bring one to Christ. This is accomplished by laying heavy burdens on the back of Adam, which allows him to break himself on the impossibility of living them. Adam increasingly comes to frustration and disappointment at the failure of the preparatory gospel to give back what it promises in return for what it demands of him. Eventually, the experience wears Adam down until his (proud) heart is completely broken. Ultimately, he lays his broken heart on the altar as the acceptable sacrifice. But, many will travel far among the different sects of the preparatory church before they reach this point.

Of course, the fallen man Adam is unaware at this time that the mere receiving of revelations is not the sign of holy purity or oneness with God. Fallen man often misunderstands the truth that he is given by filtering it through his own carnal mind. In reality, this is part of the meaning of repeating the name of the second token correctly back through the veil. Repeating the name back correctly symbolizes that Adam has come into a full and accurate comprehension of the further light and knowledge that God has sent him. Adam no longer perverts what he has been given by filtering it through his fallen mind.

**The endowment and hypocrisy.** There is a profound irony that will eventually be realized when one comprehends the magic of the entire endowment ceremony. It is that the endowment ceremony makes men and women into hypocrites. In fact, it is supposed to be that way. Again, one needs to begin realizing that the endowment is really about only one person (you). It is meant to tell you about yourself and what you are doing right now, so that you can begin to see what you must be (right now).

Many will be surprised at the claim that the endowment ceremony makes the participants into hypocrites. However, this becomes more obvious after one takes honest notice of what they are doing during the endowment. A patron might first look down and notice the apron that one wears over the robes given by God and ask why it is worn. One needs to recall that Adam places this apron on himself at the suggestion of Lucifer. Patrons don the apron in the ceremony when they are instructed by a voice (over a loudspeaker) telling them to do so ("*Brethren and sisters, put on your aprons.*"), but few ask where this voice comes from or what it represents. In reality, it is the voice of Lucifer that Adam obeys without hesitation or question (Lucifer to Eve: "*I am your brother...*"). The irony is profound and unnoticed by the fallen man Adam (the patrons). Indeed, this apron of fig leaves represents a covering that Adam intends to use to hide his nakedness (lack of glory/intelligence). Of course, the apron doesn't really do that. Instead it openly reveals hypocrisy to all those who have eyes to see (to use the metaphoric vernacular).

There is much more. Adam, who previously states his intention of obeying all of the Father's commandments, yet willingly breaks one in partaking of the fruit, is later placed under the law of the gospel (as contained in the scriptures). He accepts the law of the gospel by making a solemn oath to obey it (being instructed by Peter), which act of course, is forbidden in the same scriptures that he is swearing to obey (*cf.* Matthew 5:33-37).

At a particular point in the endowment ceremony, Lucifer makes a surprising pronouncement that everyone who does "*... not walk up to every covenant they make at these altars in this temple this day, they will be in my power!*" Of course, none who attend the endowment live up to every covenant made in the endowment because it is impossible to do so. One example is pointed out above in regard to oath-making (swearing). Also, upon leaving the temple, patrons nearly always return to their normal practice of tithing payment (10% donation) rather than live the higher law they just covenanted to observe (complete consecration). Only a few will even notice their failure to live the covenant of consecration in the context of the interesting pronouncement of Lucifer.

At this point, some might be asking what one is to do when one comes to full comprehension of the meaning of the endowment? This question will be our next topic of discussion.

**The dead always do the work for the dead.** Once one comprehends the endowment ceremony, there is no need to attend the endowment again, it having fulfilled its (preparatory) purpose. Dear reader, please take sufficient time to ponder this seemingly incredible statement!

Many will wonder about how the all-so-important work for the dead will be done if one does not attend the endowment. Indeed, work for the dead is very important. This is the very reason why there is an endowment in the first place. But, perhaps we ought to discuss why and how it is to be done?

To begin to understand why the above statement is true, it is first necessary to come to an understanding of the purpose of the endowment and why it is given to anyone at all. Simply stated, the endowment ceremony is given to those who can most benefit from the teachings therein. It is the story of the fallen man Adam and his journey in mortal life to pass the veil that separates him from God. During the ceremony, all are told to consider themselves as the fallen man Adam. Again, the ceremony is best understood when applied to you as individual. Man in his fallen condition is said to be "spiritually dead", being cut off from the presence of God. Thus, the work for the dead is more accurately understood in terms of spiritual death rather than physical death, and this applies to

individuals in the physical world as well as the world of spirits. Thus, to those who will object to the idea of not needing to attend the endowment in the future, please begin to realize that the work for the dead is the work for those who are spiritually dead, the very people who are going through the ceremony! The dead are the ones who are to do the work for the dead. Simple and honest reflection should reveal that requiring attendance for those who do not need it is a ridiculous waste of effort. All things are in their proper order, although few have come to realize that it is so.

**The name of the second token.** With the above highly unorthodox views in mind, perhaps we are now ready to begin considering the name of the second token of the Melchizedek priesthood. To those who pay little attention to the endowment and what it is about, this name may not appear to be much more than a silly-sounding phrase. However, it is far from so. As in other portions of the endowment, there are great many more treasures to be uncovered than carnal man is prone to imagine.

First, one might notice that Adam, in progressing to this level, has come to the veil seeking further light and knowledge. A worker at the veil passes on Adam's request with the statement that *"... Adam, having been true and faithful in all things, desires further light and knowledge, by conversing with the Lord, through the Veil."* Of course, Adam up until now has not really been true and faithful in all things, even though he has often claimed it. Again, this is symbolized by the tokens of half-fellowship accompanied by the signs he gives. Of course these tokens and signs change as the ceremony progresses. As Adam is progressed through the levels of priesthood understanding, the tokens start to change to the opposite direction. One might notice that the sign of the second token of the Melchizedek priesthood is made by raising the hands above the head and vocally uttering the words "Pe La El" (earlier endowment), which is Hebrew (literally "Mouth to God") for "Oh God, hear the words of my mouth." This last sign has no oath of secrecy or attached penalty, which thing is very important. Although we will not discuss this further in this essay, it is important to notice that, in coming to this point, carnal man begins to realize his own hypocrisy in pretending to be one with God when in reality, as a spiritually dead (fallen man), he is not. But, Adam has come a long way by the time he reaches the second token of the Melchizedek priesthood. He begins to stop acting (signs) the hypocrite and increasingly sees things as they are (rather than living in self-delusion). In the case of the second token, Adam acknowledges this with his sign of the (unholy) prayer of the lips of "Oh God, hear the words of my mouth" (as opposed to the holy prayer of the heart). One might recall that this is the same unholy prayer that Adam spoke when he left the garden as a fallen man.

But, is Adam being sincere now? Is he really being true and faithful in all things (right now) as he claims (by acknowledging his faults)? This is what the veil ceremony is all about. God will now test Adam to see if he comprehends what God sends him. Adam is tested to see if he is able to see himself as he really is as well as see himself as he is seen (by others who are whole/holy).

It is important to notice that nothing that Adam does at the veil is successful in passing the tests the Lord gives him through the veil, except one thing. Dear reader, look at the veil ceremony very carefully. Adam has come to the veil to receive what he acknowledges he does not possess (the name of the second token), which is: *"Health in the navel, marrow in the bones, strength in the loins and in the sinews. Power in the priesthood be upon me and my posterity through all generations of time and throughout all eternity."* Adam has now progressed to a point where he realizes he knows little, if anything at all. When Adam loses his self-righteous pride and is able to realize that he is not so smart after all, he becomes teachable. One can never teach someone who thinks that they already know. There are also grades to this. Until now, Adam has not understood the things that the Lord has bestowed upon him, having perverted the things by filtering them through his carnal mind (which he

still does when he moves from the Aaronic to the Melchizedek level in the endowment). However, Adam ultimately comes to realize his folly and is able to repeat back the token correctly which results in the profound reply from the Lord of *"That is correct"*. This last statement was not spoken in response to anything that Adam did at the veil up until now. The accurate repeating of the name of the second token is the test that Adam passes that allows him to pass through the veil.

There is something very profound to this which should not be missed. Again, it is very important to notice what the second token represents. It has little to do with the dead ritual ceremony of standing in front of a curtain and giving the scripted responses. On the other hand, it has everything to do with the individual and his own personal spiritual state of being right now (in the eternal present). The act of receiving the name of the second token through the veil means much more than the mere receiving of personal revelation. As already stated, the test is not passed until Adam correctly repeats the token back through the veil. This latter point is one of utmost importance. The ritual of Adam correctly uttering the name of the token symbolizes that he fully and accurately comprehends what the name means (ie. he lives the token). This is the topic that we will start to discuss next, but only in a limited manner.

**Health in the navel, marrow in the bones.** To those who may still wonder why this essay is being written, it is hoped that the reason is becoming clear: What is discussed here is meant to help those who stand on the threshold of understanding the endowment and are ready to receive the further light and knowledge that they desire, yet are kept from moving forward because there is no one to assist them. Again, this essay is not intended to give a thorough discussion of the name of the second token. In lieu of discussing the entire name of the token, we will limit our discussion to the meaning of the words: *"Health in the navel, marrow in the bones...."* To that end, we will next discuss a few themes that may benefit in understanding this particular part of the name of the second token.

**The organization of the church.** One key to uncovering the symbolic meanings behind the words *"Health in the navel, marrow in the bones..."* is to come to a full and accurate comprehension of the events that took place during the coming of Jesus in the meridian of time, as well as during the restoration events of the early 1800's, in regard to churches and their organizations. Very few comprehend the role of organized churches in the spiritual progress of fallen man. These church organizations (and religions) indeed have an important role, but it is not what many suppose them to be. Many who live their lives in a mind of professed self-righteousness and pious self-justification tend to think of their own church organizations as the pinnacle of spiritual achievement. Perhaps those of the LDS and other restoration churches are among the most guilty of this; Many are familiar with the self-justified cry of "this (ours) is the only true church" as well as what amounts to open idolatry by worshiping the organization as well as the apostles and prophets who administer it.

A close study of the scriptures gives a different view altogether than that held by leader-worshippers or church-worshipping organizationalists. Paul wrote to the Ephesians that *"... he (Christ) gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; ... For the perfecting of the saints,... Till we all come in the unity of the faith, ... unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ:"* (Ephesians 4:11-13) One might take time to read this very carefully and ponder its meaning. Notice that the organization of apostles and prophets is given for the perfection of man and not because of it; It is a preparatory condition. When unity (full-fellowship) with God is found and the perfect man (Adam) is realized (the very thing of the endowment ceremony), then the organization of apostles and prophets are no longer needed, having fulfilled the intended purpose. This is indeed a difficult pill for self-righteous carnal men to swallow. It comes as quite a surprise to many that the church

organization proper is evidence of disunity and imperfection rather than the opposite, albeit its purpose is to bring carnal man into unity (with God). In this case, the unity spoken of is not a state of being in agreement with other men, but rather being one with the Father in the new and everlasting covenant.

The unorthodox idea expressed above is revisited during the establishment of what many rightly call "The Restored Church" of 1830. Most do not realize that the restored church refers to the preparatory church (again) restored. In this context, the church is indeed a true church (ideal for the circumstances), even though such churches are far from being the pinnacle of spiritual achievement. Ultimately one comes to realize that the church is the beginning, not the end; It is a step towards progression out of carnality, not the reward at its end. In section 22 of the Doctrine and Covenants (LDS version), a revelation is recorded that is about this very thing. History tells us that there was a variance in the early 1830's among leading individuals over the necessity of re-baptism to join the newly-restored church. D&C 22 records a severe chastisement to those involved in this dispute that they were missing the point entirely, having placed too much faith in the dead work of water-dunking rather than being in the new and everlasting covenant of becoming one (unity) with God. The third verse (D&C 22) is very revealing: *"For it is because of your dead works that I have caused this last covenant and this church to be built up unto me, even as in days of old."*

The organization of apostles and prophets serves as a preparatory gospel to lead man to where he needs to be. However, carnal man erroneously elevates the organization, or those who lead it, into objects of worship. For fallen man's own benefit is a preparatory church given (restored as in days of old), complete with its organization (of apostles and prophets) that is perfect for the circumstances at hand, although still fallen.

In reality, all things are to be in their proper order. With this idea in mind, one might consider why it is that Peter, James, and John (the chief apostles), rather than Jehovah, are sent to the fallen man Adam in the endowment ceremony. Indeed, the same themes spoken of above replay themselves often.

**The teachings of Jesus to his disciples.** In the context of the same ideas discussed above, it is important to discuss the master-disciple relationship that Jesus enjoyed with his followers in the meridian of time. Orthodox theologians are prone to view the disciples of Jesus as close-to-perfect individuals, perhaps because they walked in the presence of the master. But, the Biblical accounts clearly show that this idea is untrue. Judas certainly fails this pattern, having stood as the symbolic disciple-but-betrayer. Even the chief disciple Peter came to deny the divinity of Jesus on the eve of the crucifixion. Thus, one should begin to realize that the twelve disciples of Jesus at the meridian of time were being progressed into a spiritual state of being just as Adam is portrayed during the endowment ritual. It is also no different for each of us, since we are Adam (as well as Judas and Peter). Again, it is all about you. At the higher levels of understanding, these things are meant to be applied to you and what you are right now.

Ironically, most tend to see the story of Jesus leaving his disciples after his ascension as a giant step backward for them. Wouldn't it be better if they could continue to walk and talk with Jesus personally for many more years, rather than their having to go on without him? Dear reader, one needs to realize that it is not so.

At one point Jesus spoke to his disciples saying "... *It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you.*" (John 16:7) The necessity of Jesus leaving his

disciples is evident in this saying, but it is not well understood because carnal man is prone to value the presence of the outer man Jesus (the Second Comforter) over the presence of the Holy Ghost (the first Comforter).

Here we come to the crux of the matter of the first part of the name of the second token. Dear reader, please take notice of this simple principle! There is such a thing as over-reliance of one person upon another such that the reliance leads to dependency and stagnation of growth. We often hear of how someone has not "cut the apron strings" from parents and thereby remain as dependent children rather than being a mature and independent adult. This simple principle can be applied to the case of Jesus and his relationship to his disciples. While he was physically present, they would tend to rely on him and his holy teachings. In doing so, they would be hindered in further progression themselves. This was why Jesus said it was necessary (expedient) that he leave them. His leaving was for their own good, which would then necessitate them relying on the Comforter (already in them) rather than the man Jesus (Second Comforter) who was outside of them. This was a necessary event for them (the disciples) to become like him (their master Jesus).

Indeed, the idea in the above paragraph is at the root of understanding the first part of the second token given in the endowment. Notice the symbolism of the words! "*Health in the navel ...*": The unborn child is fully dependent on the mothers nourishment through the navel (umbilical). This symbolic nourishment-in-the-navel relationship was metaphorically the same enjoyed by the disciples while Jesus remained with them and taught them personally. Jesus took what was within himself and used it to nourish his disciples. But there came a time in their progression for them to be born and weaned. Jesus would have them move to the marrow in the bones stage, which is a progressed state that Jesus himself enjoyed. One notices that physical nourishment to the body (ultimately) comes through the blood, which is made in the marrow of the bones. This physical blood is symbolic of the spirit, which is what is to nourish the Christ-man. Indeed it is the Holy Spirit, the Mind of God, and the First (primary) Comforter. One need not look far to see this same symbolism replayed in other ordinances such as the ritual of the sacrament.

**What it means to follow Jesus.** It is not the intention here to be redundant. But, with the above paragraphs fresh in mind, it may be helpful to discuss what Jesus meant when he said to follow him. Carnal man is prone to think that following Jesus is to be behind him rather than beside him. There is a widely-held misconception by carnal men that following Jesus is to make him the boss and all others are to be underlings.

In reality, the admonishment of Jesus to "*follow me*" is not to "*become by eternal subordinate*", as many seem to think, but rather meant as "*do as I do*". The true disciple-master relationship is no different than the perfect student-teacher relationship. The perfect master will love his disciples as he loves himself and will often put their interests above his own. He will work to make the students better than himself and will rejoice when they do so. This is the relationship that the perfect master Jesus meant to share with his disciples in the meridian of time. Unfortunately, they often misunderstood his words and were often at variance with one another, even to the point of asking who of them would get the choicest seat in heaven. The response of the master that the "*... least in heaven is the greatest*" was to tell them the unrighteousness of the hierarchical orders that often stain the fabric of earthly existence.

The statement by Jesus to "...take up your cross and follow me" (cf. Mark 10:21) was meant as a plain injunction to "do as I do". Jesus proclaimed that those who followed him (did as he) would do greater works than he (John 14:12). This could only be true if they became as He.

**The meaning of the name of the second token.** What does it mean to do as Jesus did? It was no less than becoming one with the Father/Spirit/Christ in the new and everlasting covenant just as Jesus showed by his perfect example (cf. John 17:9-23). It is the injunction to find "health-in-the-*navel*" (ultimately the Christ/Man nourishing relationship) as well as the "marrow-in-the-bones" (the same relationship with the Christ/Spirit) which is the very birthright of every man (woman), each of which is to be a Son of God, even *ONLY BEGOTTEN SONS* (DAUGHTERS) who are to be in the *BOSOM OF THE FATHER* (the full fellowship)(cf. John 1:18).

Dear reader, take a close and thoughtful look at the rest of the name of the second token. It is expedient that our conversation end here so that you might benefit by pressing on yourself. Go beyond the literal and begin to understand the deep symbolism. Realize that words like references to "loins" and "posterity" are all about your creative powers as a Christ-man (woman). Realize that priesthood power is the binding authority of love given unconditionally.

As one fully realizes the meaning of the name of the second token, (s)he will begin to see things as they are and themselves as they are seen. One will move beyond the mere act of receiving the meaning of the name of the token through the veil (getting personal revelation). In doing so, one will be able to repeat the name of the token correctly (ie. will comprehend it and will live it). As a result, one will begin to see that things are in perfect order and always have been. He (she) will begin to look back on their past with new understanding and with thankfulness for how it has prepared them for this moment (the now). Such a person will begin to look upon all those who travel the same road with increased love, empathy, and compassion, realizing that these things are for good and knowing (by experience) what it means. As this happens, the power of the priesthood (unconditional love) will descend (be) upon them and they will see things anew. The old bottle will be broken and there will be new wine filling a new bottle; The old earth will have passed away and a new heaven and a new earth will have taken its place. Again, it is all about you.

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*"And above all things, clothe yourselves with the bond of charity, as with a mantle, which is the bond of perfectness and peace." (D&C 88:125)*

## **The Meaning of the Sash: Sealing Power and Authority**

**By Eleazar, February 2000**

The sash is worn as part of the ceremonial clothing in the LDS endowment ceremony. This essay will focus on discussing some of the symbolism behind the sash. It will be helpful if one has already read the essay titled "*The Meaning of the Apron*" prior to reading this one. The reason is that

many of the symbolic concepts concerning temple (endowment) clothing were discussed in the former essay, but will not be undertaken here in detail to avoid unnecessary duplication.

Briefly, one first enters the temple as one who is (symbolically) naked, representing a lack of glory (knowledge and understanding). One has supposedly come to the temple as a humble individual who has willingly cast off his worldly clothing (understandings) and is now ready to be clothed with new understandings by God. At a particular point in the ceremony, Peter is instructed by God to go down to the earth and to clothe the man Adam (which includes Eve) in the robes of the holy priesthood. These robes represent glory and power bestowed on Adam by God (through Peter). The identity of Peter and his role in this drama is very important, but will not be discussed in this essay because it does not pertain directly to the sash. However, to comprehend the deeper symbolism of the endowment (including the sash), one needs to eventually come to an understanding of the role of Peter and how these things are delivered.

Those who have been through the ceremony will recall that the sash is tied about the waist with a bow on the opposite side of the body from the shoulder that bears the robe of the holy (whole) priesthood. In reality, the priesthood is not complete (whole; holy) without the sash. One might notice that this is represented by the bow on the cap (crown), also opposite to the shoulder, and the fact that the cap is tied to the robe, making it one unit. The sash should also be viewed as being an integral part of the priesthood robes; Elohim refers to them as "the robes of the holy priesthood" rather than separate pieces. The sash is placed above the apron (which apron Adam has placed upon himself), but does not hide it, and has the purpose of binding or tying the ceremonial clothing together at the waist.

**Binding or sealing power and authority.** Most who are paying attention in the endowment will realize the basic meaning behind the sash. Simply stated, the sash sits on top of the robes at the waist and binds (ties, fastens, seals) the clothing to the individual, which symbolizes binding or sealing power and authority. It is tied with the bow opposite the robes (fills in), symbolizing wholeness (holiness). But, there is much more to this symbolism than many are prone to notice. Although, sealing power and authority is a frequently discussed topic in church classes, very few appear to comprehend what it really means. Most think that sealing keys and authority are permission given by God to perform an outward ordinance that (supposedly) joins two souls together. However, if this were true, then none of the marriages done like this would end in dissolution. In reality, there is a plain, yet more profound, idea behind sealing keys, power, and authority that goes unnoticed by most.

The rest of this essay will bring up a few points to consider when trying to comprehend the meaning of "sealing power and authority." One might ask what is the essence of "sealing power and authority"? How is this sealing event accomplished? What is it that seals one individual to another? How is this sealing power and authority (symbolized by the sash) related to priesthood power and authority? Who is the one individual on earth who holds the keys of (sealing) authority and how are they held? What is the "Holy Spirit of Promise" and how does this relate to the sealing?

As in other writings by this author, there is no claim that this essay represents a thorough or accurate discussion of the topic at hand, nor does it come with any claim of authority. Its purpose is to stimulate thought and a desire to seek further.

**Plain versus complex.** Before discussing the essence of sealing power and authority, there is an important concept that may be helpful to discuss first. The concept is an apparent paradox, but one will ultimately come to realize that the paradox is far from being a contradiction. Indeed, deep

contemplation on the matter will reveal the wisdom and justice in why it is this way. This is the concept: The principles of the gospel are best understood at their most profound and deepest levels when viewed in simplicity and plainness.

Carnal man is prone to create an image of heaven in his mind patterned after what he sees on earth. On earth, progression in material society is seen as a result and reward of hard work and accomplishment. In the material world, those who are recognized as "being learned" (scholars) are considered the experts to consult for understanding on matters of importance. However, one will ultimately realize this view to be a great error because the greatest and most profound understandings are revealed in plainness. One ultimately finds that the greatest truths are revealed unto babes.

The scholar will miss the plain teachings because he is prone to look far beyond them. Indeed, scholarly intellectualism is often a hindrance to comprehending great truth; a learned man cannot read a sealed book because he is unable to break the seals. This has more to do with a way of thinking than it does with understanding: Carnal man tends to despise simple truths in his quest to seek for what he cannot understand (*cf.* Jacob 4:14).

The most profound teachings in the endowment are revealed in plainness, but are often overlooked by those who are asleep or cast aside by those who are looking for something more complex. Many will not accept the plain teachings because they do not fit into their preconceived notions of God, His church, or recognized leaders who (supposedly) speak dogma on God's behalf.

One might want to hold this thought and come back to it after reading this essay. Perhaps then it will become clear as to what this means. There is really nothing in the endowment that is a great secret because the profound and deepest concepts are taught openly (and plainly) in the scriptures. There is a great irony here, that the secrecy and hidden things spoken of in the endowment are only such because we have been so good at hiding them from ourselves. Endowment patrons often are like the absent-minded man who searches his house for his eyeglasses without even realizing they are already on his nose.

**Who holds the keys?** Who holds the keys is a common question arising out of the usual discussions of sealing authority. It is common among church-worshippers and organizationalists to interpret holy teachings in the context of the organization rather than the individual person. LDS doctrine interprets the meanings in the context of the LDS church organization and its corporate leader (prophet-president). Inasmuch as there is only one person on earth to hold these keys, it must be him, since he is the leader. Moreover, all others on earth, whether they are LDS or not, are subordinate to the prophet-leader in these things since there cannot be any sealing done without his (the leader's) sanction (permission). In the case of many fundamentalist Mormon groups, the same idea is proposed, but the individual holding the keys is identified as their own particular prophet-leader. Keys of authority, in this instance, are viewed as permission to act in the Lord's (or organizational leader's) stead, much like a corporation or government would grant permission for a specific individual to act in their behalf. Thus, "keys" mean "authority granted by permission" rather than "keys of knowledge" or "keys of understanding".

However, this idea is called into question by the endowment ceremony as well as the Mormon scriptural record. Endowment patrons will notice that the sash is given to every individual that passes through the ceremony, rather than only one individual. The bestowal of the sash on each endowment patron symbolizes that every (endowed) person is given the sealing keys. At first, this seems

confusing when considered in the context of widely-held dogma as discussed in the above paragraph. Again, carnal man is prone to interpret the heavenly in terms of his (imperfect) earthly experience rather than letting the Spirit teach him. In the LDS scriptural record (Helaman 10:7), Nephi is given the keys of sealing and holds them on earth at the same time as Simon Peter. But, few notice that this constitutes two individuals on the planet having the keys at the same time rather than a single individual holding them. This by itself is enough to call the literal view into serious question.

In both instances (above), the keys being held by "one on earth" make more sense when viewed as applying to the individual (you) rather than the planet (earth). In the endowment, the patrons are told to consider themselves as Adam (and Eve). The ceremony is best understood at the highest levels when it is applied to the individual rather than the group. In one sense of meaning, Adam (Michael) is you (your essence; your Spirit) and the physical body is the earth over which you (Adam) are given dominion by God. Of course, Adam has forgotten who he is and finds that the body (sometimes symbolized by the earth and sometimes by Eve) rules him rather than the opposite. The entire story of the endowment is about Adam realizing his folly and things being set in their proper order.

With these ideas in mind, one might want to reconsider passages of scripture about the "Ancient of Days" (Adam) eventually having all of the "keys" returned to him (*cf.* Daniel 7:9-14). These scriptures will begin to take on an entirely new meaning and make much more sense when viewed with these new understandings. Take a close look at the title "Ancient of days" and try to realize its meaning (eg. "Ancient of Days" vs "Eternal"). Some who study the teachings of Brigham Young adopt the idea that Adam is God the Father, including the Father of Jesus. However, this is only a part of the whole picture and is erroneous if taken out of context. Adam (Michael) is a creator-Son, just as Jesus is, and as you are. Again, the endowment admonishes one to consider themselves as Adam (and Eve), but few are willing to face the implications of this. "Keys" often refer to "keys of knowledge and understanding" rather than permission to act. When Adam remembers who he is, he has the keys (of knowledge; truth; understanding) returned to him and is able to reign (in righteousness) over the dominion he had long ago been given by God (the earth). Again, what needs to be returned to Adam (the Ancient of Days) is his memory of who he really is, not some permission to perform a ritual act (outward ordinance).

**Real power and authority comes from love rather than force.** Hopefully the paragraphs above are sufficient to give substance to the idea that "keys" and "sealing power and authority" are best understood when applied individually (*ie.* to the man Adam) and metaphorically (to mean "understanding"). Again, one should take careful notice that the sash (*ie.* keys of sealing power and authority) is given to each endowed individual. In fact, the endowment itself can be described as a bestowal of "keys" (of truth and correct understanding). However, there is more to it, too. There are important meanings behind the words "power and authority". Here, it may be helpful to briefly discuss the nature of real power and authority, rather than what carnal men view them to be.

In the material world, power and authority are instruments of brute force, so carnal man is always building up governing bodies with armies and navies to enforce their laws. Unfortunately, carnal man tends to view God in the same terms of power and authority that is highly valued on earth, so he views God in terms of being a wiser individual than (fallen) man with greater brute force at his command. On the contrary, Jesus came to show (fallen) man that brute force ultimately yields to a much greater force, that of unconditional love (charity). An enemy overcome by brute force will remain an enemy and will rise when he (re)acquires the force needed to subdue his captor. On the other hand, an enemy overcome by long-suffering and unconditional love (charity) will be changed

into a friend. Need one really ask where is the true power? God is often described as perfect love. Perfect love is the real power that heals all wounds and binds up that which was broken. Brute force causes wounds and breaks rather than binds.

Eventually, one comes to realize that "perfect love" (charity) is not only synonymous with "God" (eg. God is love), but also with "Christ", "priesthood", "sealing power", "sealing authority", and many other holy (whole) teachings. This comes back to the very essence of meaning behind the priesthood robes and, more particularly, the sash. In reality, the sealing power and authority does not come (emanate) from the priesthood, as many suppose, but it IS THE VERY ESSENCE of the priesthood.

One might notice that the sash is tied about the waist or, to use a different term, the bowels. The bowels are metaphorically said to be a source of our true feelings; one might be reminded of colloquial phrases like "gut feelings" that are part of our everyday language. The scriptures admonish us to let our bowels be full of charity (cf. D&C 121:45). Inasmuch as true sealing power comes from perfect love (charity), the sash is meant to connote this by being tied across the waist (bowels). Charity is something that emanates as a feeling from deep inside of us, metaphorically from our bowels. This is a part of the symbolism of the sash.

Again, perfect love (charity) and priesthood are terms that should be looked upon as synonymous. Joseph Smith penned one of the greatest descriptions of this when he wrote about charity and priesthood from Liberty jail. Although it is rather lengthy, it is important enough to be quoted in full in this essay. Please take time to read it very carefully with the above concepts in mind.

*"Behold, there are many called, but few are chosen. And why are they not chosen? Because their hearts are set so much upon the things of this world, and aspire to the honors of men, that they do not learn this one lesson-That the rights of the priesthood are inseparably connected with the powers of heaven, and that the powers of heaven cannot be controlled nor handled only upon the principles of righteousness. That they may be conferred upon us, it is true; but when we undertake to cover our sins, or to gratify our pride, our vain ambition, or to exercise control or dominion or compulsion upon the souls of the children of men, in any degree of unrighteousness, behold, the heavens withdraw themselves; the Spirit of the Lord is grieved; and when it is withdrawn, Amen to the priesthood or the authority of that man. Behold, ere he is aware, he is left unto himself, to kick against the pricks, to persecute the saints, and to fight against God. We have learned by sad experience that it is the nature and disposition of almost all men, as soon as they get a little authority, as they suppose, they will immediately begin to exercise unrighteous dominion. Hence many are called, but few are chosen.*

*No power or influence can or ought to be maintained by virtue of the priesthood, only by persuasion, by long-suffering, by gentleness and meekness, and by love unfeigned; By kindness, and pure knowledge, which shall greatly enlarge the soul without hypocrisy, and without guile-Reprouing betimes with sharpness, when moved upon by the Holy Ghost; and then showing forth afterwards an increase of love toward him whom thou hast reprov'd, lest he esteem thee to be his enemy; That he may know that thy faithfulness is stronger than the cords of death.*

*Let thy bowels also be full of charity towards all men, and to the household of faith,*

*and let virtue garnish thy thoughts unceasingly; then shall thy confidence wax strong in the presence of God; and the doctrine of the priesthood shall distil upon thy soul as the dews from heaven. The Holy Ghost shall be thy constant companion, and thy scepter an unchanging scepter of righteousness and truth; and thy dominion shall be an everlasting dominion, and without compulsory means it shall flow unto thee forever and ever." (D&C 121:34-46)*

**Reliance on the (inner) substance rather than (outer) forms.** Carnal men are prone to worship the image by placing importance on the outward forms (eg. ritual observances) rather than on the deep and profound meanings behind them (the substance). In reality, there is no outward ritual in heaven or on earth that will bind two hearts together. These outward ordinances are no more than "dead works" if they are devoid of that which is the essence behind them. This is why there are so many broken marriages among those who have made (vain) promises in what appear to be holy ordinances (rituals) of sealing in (eternal) marriage. The outward ordinance often fails at sealing because it is not that which binds souls together.

Sealing of one person to another has to come from deep within. This sealing cannot be compulsory (see D&C 121 passage above), otherwise it is no different than the brute force so highly valued by the world. When one has "bowels full of charity" (unconditional love) for another being or beings and is willing to sacrifice all, even his own life, in unconditional love, then, and only then, does a sealing take place that cannot be broken. Charity is the sealing power and authority. Unconditional love (charity) is the very priesthood of God. It is also the very essence of Christ. When Jesus said that he (perfect love) would be "lifted up" and thereby draw all men unto him, he was speaking of this very thing.

When one has true charity (unconditional love) for another that arises from the bowels (is truly felt, not feigned), then the power and authority of the priesthood is manifest into being (reality). Dear reader, are you beginning to see what it means in the name of the second token, where one asks that the "*power in the priesthood be upon me and my posterity...* "? Power in the priesthood is the charity spoken of. That is, charity (unconditional love) IS the power in the priesthood. It is never compulsory, but always meek, longsuffering, kind, and virtuous. This is the true power and authority. The term "posterity" refers to all that one creates, every action you take, even the very words that you speak. When one asks for "the power in the Priesthood be upon... my posterity", one is asking for charity to be in all of our actions, even in the communications we share with others.

Most are aware of what happened to Emma Smith and the newly-organized church after Joseph Smith was killed at Carthage. Before he was killed, Joseph is reported to have said that he would go into hell for Emma, if need be. Did Joseph comprehend the sealing power and what is meant by the "Holy Spirit of Promise" (*cf.* D&C 132:26)? It would appear that he did. Only the charity that is priesthood is the power and authority that will bind Joseph to Emma. That is the (Holy Spirit of) Promise spoken of.

Whether Joseph held the "keys of sealing" as well as the "power in the priesthood" is not important to us as the larger question: Do we hold them ourselves? Are the sash and the robes of the priesthood mere pieces of cloth that adorn our bodies with nothing of substance underneath? If so, then we do not hold the keys (of understanding) because they remain hidden from us. But is it not we who hide these keys from ourselves? Again, the endowment is meant to be a bestowal of keys.

Dear reader, begin to understand that you and only you can hold the keys over your earth. No one can hold them for you. You are the only one on (your) earth that can have them.

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## **The Treasure in the Great Pyramid at Giza**

**By Eleazar, 2002**

There is a treasure contained in the Great Pyramid that waits to be found. Yes, the treasure is still there, despite the great passage of time. Though it is but a token treasure, its value is greater than the worldly riches that often occupy the thoughts and efforts of men.

What is this treasure and where is it to be found? To discover it, one must begin to think about symbols and their meanings.



When one looks at the Great Pyramid at Giza, one should notice that it is a structure that has lost its former outward beauty. The beautiful casing stones that once adorned the Pyramid were carried off and used for structures in the nearby city of Cairo. In addition, the means of gaining entrance to the Pyramid had been forgotten by the time individuals in known history sought to enter the structure. Modern history has it that one of the first to enter the Pyramid was Calif Al Mamoun who, in 820 AD, forced his way in by first making a hole on the North face of the Pyramid. Although they were expecting to find worldly riches therein, instead they found only dust inside. At the heart of the structure, the would-be robbers found a chamber with an empty sarcophagus.

The Pyramid has popularly been thought of as a burial chamber for a great (Egyptian) Pharaoh (king). And in many ways, it is. Despite its age, the Pyramid stands in the midst of Egypt where it is still seen today, though its former glory is gone and its capstone missing.

Hold the thoughts above in mind when looking at the pictures on this page. Consider that all of the pictures are similar in their symbolic meaning. Try to keep in mind that everything in creation is symbolic. In addition, consider that the symbolism in all things can be comprehended at the highest level of meaning when it is applied to each of us in the present moment rather than someone else at another place and time.

## Mummy of Ramesses V



**Hole in head caused by adze  
of robbers looking for jewelry**



**Mummy has organs removed  
and placed in jars**

The photograph above is of the mummified body of Ramesses V, an Egyptian Pharaoh-king. Take some time to look at this picture and notice how it is a repeat of the Pyramid symbol seen in the first photograph.

Notice how the former beauty is lost and a mummified corpse is all that remains. There is no one home (he is dead). Figuratively speaking, one might say that the sarcophagus is empty. Perhaps it can be said that this is how it has always been, even when the one called Ramesses V roamed the land of Egypt.

As in the Great Pyramid, inside of the body of Ramesses is little except dust. The organs have been removed and placed in jars by the Egyptian embalmers in an attempt to preserve the body. Were they successful? Some might claim so, but perhaps there is a point in this being true. Like the tomb robbers, might the Egyptian embalmers (like us) be misguided with the obsession with the body rather than seeking something else of higher value, yet unknown?

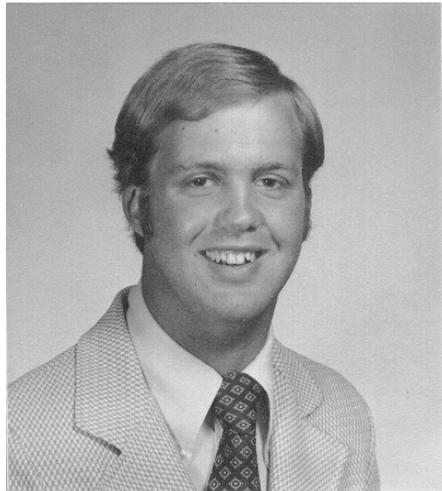
Notice how the mummy of Ramesses bears a hole in the head caused by robbers chopping through the bandages with an adze to speed up their unwrapping to gain access to the jewelry. Unlike those that forced their way into the Great Pyramid, these would-be robbers may have found some (token) jewels, but did they find the other treasure (which is still there)? Probably not, just as few find the treasure of the Great Pyramid or, ultimately, the true Temple.

When one thoughtfully gazes upon the mummy of Ramesses, one might say that one is gazing upon the tomb of a great Pharaoh-king of Egypt. Just as the Pyramid has lost its former glory, so has the body-container (pyramid) of Ramesses lost its former glory.

Both the Pyramid and mummies of the Egyptian Pharaohs are allegorical symbols of carnal man. They are symbols of us. In his reliance on the material world of the outer senses, carnal man stands (lives; exists in the present time) in the midst of Egypt (a symbol for the material world). Rather than build himself (as a) Temple of God, carnal man raises himself (his physical body) a tomb of an earthly (Egyptian) king. Inside of the tomb is found dust (things earthly) rather than the riches (glory/intelligence) of eternity. The end of carnal man is as the Pyramid, even though one might say that carnal man is as (spiritually) dead in his worldly existence as he is when he leaves his body behind to remain in the earth.

With that said, one might return to the question at hand: Where is the treasure of the Pyramid?

Perhaps to pass beyond the tokens and find the true treasure, one must continue to apply the symbolism discussed above to the self in the present moment. But, first it might help to carefully consider the portrait below of a man dressed in the trappings of the world. This picture could just as accurately be a portrait of anyone, including us. Moreover, it is not the dress that is important at all. Looking beyond the image, what is that which we see?



Perhaps the meaning of it all is more profound and easier to understand if we would look thoughtfully at our own reflection in a mirror and ask ourselves about that upon which we are gazing. Like the Great Pyramid, is that upon which we gaze a tomb for the so-called king of Egypt? In a similitude of gazing upon the mummy of the Pharaoh, do we gaze upon the house of the true King who has forgotten all (lost his former glory)?

And might that idea itself point to the real treasure of the Pyramid? Might the treasure of the Great Pyramid be its symbolic meaning? And aren't there many witnesses to this same thing? Today, one might attend LDS Temples and find great meaning (treasure) there too. Yet, the end of ones searching for spiritual riches there, or in similar places, will always be the same because the treasures of the Pyramid are mere tokens of the true riches they represent. We should not be obsessed with the tokens. They point the way, but they do not comprise the way.

If one were to ask those who claim to know where is the nearest Temple, one would predictably receive directions to a building. And in receiving such answers, one should take pause to consider whether or not these who answer in this manner know the way to the Temple at all.

In reality, it is all about us in the present time and place. Ye are the Temple of God. The tokens point the way to the true riches which are found therein. They can do no more. And despite how much more is said on this subject, the words can never amount to more than another token. The symbolic meaning of the Temple is that one must seek the hidden door to the true self (the true Temple) to discover the real treasure that awaits. In doing that, where one goes, no others can come.

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*"Adam, who told you that you are naked?"* -- LDS endowment

## **The Symbolism in the Temple Garment**

**By Eleazar, 2002**

The purpose of this essay is to uncover some of the symbolism in the garment bestowed on patrons in the LDS temple endowment ceremony. There are no promises of completeness or accuracy, nor does it come with any claims of authority. This essay is intended to offer thoughts for consideration and to potentially comprise a starting point for individual searches.

All of creation is symbolic, but few notice the profound messages that surround them. This symbolism is understood at its highest levels when it is applied to the self in the present moment. In order to comprehend the fuller meaning of the LDS Temple endowment ceremony, one must begin to pay attention to what occurs as well as learn to read the symbols contained therein.

In the case of the garment, endowment patrons are given a covering which they are told is the "Garment of the Holy Priesthood" and represents a "garment of skins" given to Adam when he was cast from the Garden of Eden. Patrons are told that this garment is to be a "shield and a protection" and they must wear this covering "all the days of your life". However, very few who have taken out their endowments in LDS Temples take time to consider what is symbolized by the garment or how it relates to the endowment ceremony and the temple experience as a whole.

## Tokens and Symbolism

Before proceeding to a discussion of the symbolic meaning of the garment, it may be valuable to discuss the meaning of tokens. First, one must come to understand what tokens are. This is one of the grand keys to comprehending the fundamental meaning of the endowment, as well as the meaning behind the temple, the apron, robes of the Priesthood, the garment of skins, and many other symbols used in the endowment ceremony.

Tokens are symbols. That is what the word token means. As symbols, they are representative of something else. They of themselves are valueless, except in regard to their symbolic meaning as tokens, signs, and images. An example of a highly valued and well-used token in our materialistic culture today is our monetary currency. Monetary currency (eg. paper currency, coins, computer blips) being used today has little inherent value of itself, but it is what it represents (a quantity of goods and services) that is real and has value.

In the endowment, Adam is given tokens by God and these come in a variety of forms in addition to the hand grips (handshakes) called tokens. Eventually one will come to notice that the temple building and the endowment itself are tokens. Moreover, physical items used in the endowment ceremony such as the apron, garment, priesthood robes, cap, slippers, and veil are tokens as well as is the words and teachings that comprise the ceremony itself. Each of these is meant to be representative (symbolic) of something else. One of the purposes of the endowment ceremony is to get Adam in a frame of mind where he begins to see beyond the tokens and uncover what they represent.

Unfortunately, carnal man tends to be obsessed with outer forms. As a result, he tends to mistake the tokens for what is valuable, sometimes to the point of worshiping them (holding them sacred). This attitude, in essence, makes carnal man into an image worshiper as well as a sign seeker. To benefit from the endowment experience, Adam needs to entirely change his (carnal) way of thinking such that he lets go of his grip on the tokens and then notices that which the tokens, signs, images, and forms represent. Unfortunately, the vast majority of those who regularly attend LDS temples fail to let go of the tokens and thereby trap themselves into a endless cycle of doing the "work for the dead" (their own work) until such a time that they begin searching for the further light and knowledge (meaning) that is promised. When this has occurred, then the LDS temple and its token endowment will no longer be needed, having fulfilled its purpose of taking Adam to a whole new level of being.

**Tokens and the True Temple.** Carnal man is prone to mistake forms for what is important and thereby miss entirely what he seeks. True to form, carnal man will totally miss the seemingly obvious idea that the true temple is he, himself, and that the LDS endowment itself is a token of this. Where is the temple? Those who think that it is yonder building are pointing to forms because the person is the temple spoken of.

At some point in his worldly experience, carnal man will begin to realize that he is mistaken in his perception of the temple being a man-made structure (a building) and will begin to realize it is "made without hands." At this time, he may even think that he has found the full truth, but it is not over yet because he may still labor under many of his former misconceptions. In realizing that he is the temple spoken of, carnal man may begin to think that the true temple must be his physical body. However, at this point carnal man is still caught up in the forms, though he doesn't yet know it.

Ultimately, time, sad experience and careful consideration of the idea will bring him to an understanding of his error in identifying himself with his physical body. He will begin to realize that he is not the body, therefore the temple, which is said to be him, must be something else that is in the body. As he does this, he will begin to revisit questions that he once considered solved such as asking who is he.

It may be valuable to point out that the Biblical passage stating that “...*Ye are the temple of God...*”, does not say that the temple is the physical body, but that it is you. It may be suggested that one will come to comprehend what is the temple only when they come to comprehend themselves. Ironically, that is a primary message of the endowment. Those who truthfully seek the answer to the riddle of the temple will joyously discover newer and higher levels of meanings to who they are (being).

**More about Tokens.** At a risk of belaboring the obvious, it may be helpful to visit the topic of tokens in the LDS endowment in further detail. Again, this essay is directed at uncovering the symbolic meaning of the garment. However, a fuller understanding of the man Adam in the endowment story is essential in comprehending the symbolic meaning of the garment because we (the patrons) are (symbolically) him and the garment is a part of our clothing.

Again, the temple and its endowment is meant to teach you about yourself and what you are feeling/thinking/doing. Unfortunately, many endowment patrons are unwilling to entertain the idea that they are living out their existence as carnal and profane beings. Their orthodox mode of thinking makes them prone to mistakenly interpret the endowment and its meaning in a self-flattering way. As long as we continue in this mode of thinking, the meaning of the endowment will continue to be unhelpfully flattering to us and, thereby, un-edifying. The profound meaning will continue to be elusive until such a time that we are able and willing to bear the chastisement of the endowment and, thereby, receive its intended benefit.

Inasmuch as the endowment parable is meant to show Adam what he is being, its meaning is relevant to Adam (who is us) in the present time and place. In many ways, it can be considered a mirror in which Adam can see himself in the present moment. As it turns out, the meaning that Adam is meant to see (perceive, comprehend) is profoundly edifying, though far from flattering. Hopefully, this idea will become clear as this essay progresses.

**Tokens are Free and Abundant.** Again, the garment is one of the many tokens (symbols) used in acting out the endowment. Of course, Adam fails to comprehend the deep meaning of the garment, much less the meaning behind other tokens he is given. In regard to tokens, there is an interesting exchange between the characters of Lucifer and Adam in the endowment story. Lucifer asks Adam if he has any tokens and whether or not he sells them for money. To Lucifer’s inquiry, Adam replies in the negative and adds that he “holds them sacred.” This reply is profoundly meaningful in regard to the endowment message about tokens.

In trying to uncover the meaning in Adam’s reply, one should remember that Adam, at this stage, represents fallen and carnal man who is, appropriately, lying. Even though this part of the endowment parable includes participation of multiple characters (Lucifer, Adam, Eve), the most significant aspect of this is that Adam lies to himself. Although, Adam does not directly sell the tokens for money, he does indeed use them in merchandising. All who attend the LDS temples to get the tokens (endowments) must first pass a series of questions that include an affirmative answer to

having paid up (in tithing). However, Adam is true to form in failing to notice what he is doing and, therefore, sincere in his answer.

But, that is not all, in fact, it is much worse because Adam claims to hold the tokens “sacred” and here one runs smack into the subject of worship. Although carnal man professes to not (directly) sell tokens for money, he claims them as his own, secrets them from (himself and) others, and is (often) found co-opting them into organized religion from which he uses them to merchandise men’s souls. Here, one might again be reminded that Adam represents us in our present state of being. In the same way that Adam erroneously thinks he is doing right by holding his tokens “sacred,” we as endowment patrons (Adam) do the same and, like him, become the worshiper of images. That is the state of mind of nearly all who regularly attend the LDS temples. While this might sound offensive to some, we should remind ourselves that the LDS endowment is meant to edify by teaching us. Moreover, it does this by (symbolically) showing us what we are doing at the present time so that we might understand (ourselves) and thereby uncover a new (state of) being. It would do little good to tell us something that we already know or teach us concepts that are obvious.

One might notice that since all of creation is symbolic, tokens (symbols) abound to such a limitless extent that they always surround us. Ironically, this is part of the meaning of the garment, which serves as a covering (surrounding) for the (true) temple (which temple ye are). There is also a significant meaning in Adam being representative (token) of each (and every one) of us. The name Adam itself is a token (symbol) that applies to all, rather than one, just as tokens (of creation) are given (freely) to all.

Like salvation itself, the symbols (tokens) are freely given to anyone who is able to read (comprehend) them. Moreover, when Adam comes to a true comprehension of tokens, he will realize that sacred is not secret. In fact, it is often the opposite. As Jesus said, man does not take (sacred) light (knowledge) and place it under a bushel (hide it in secrecy). Certainly, God does not since it (knowledge/light) is everywhere (in all creation) to be (freely) had for the taking by all who are awake (spiritually). Despite the fact that many will agree that tokens in creation are ubiquitous and freely had, some will still take offense that this essay (which is itself a token) openly discusses subject matter that is held (by some) as sacred. The surprising part of this is the great value which some will continue to place on tokens. If one feels offended at the openness of this essay, then one might be well advised to carefully consider why it is so.

**Adam’s (Our) Spiritual Greed.** The meaning of the garment is intricately interwoven into what Adam is being after he is cast out from the Garden and into "the world in which we (Adam) live now." Unfortunately, Adam doesn’t remember who he is, which knowledge would grant him a key to what is happening. Moreover, this knowledge is integral to his ultimate comprehension of the garment symbol.

As a result of his existence as a carnal being, Adam suffers from a form of spiritual greediness that makes him into a beast. Adam desires to achieve salvation, yet fails to recognize that his greedy zeal for salvation is the very thing that keeps him from finding it. Adam is told that salvation is free, but he erroneously thinks that he must earn it. Moreover, he is prone to think that salvation is earned through perfect obedience. As a result, Adam is willing to do almost anything that is required for achieving perfect obedience, despite what it may cost others. Furthermore, Adam tends to interpret the cause of his continued failing to "please God" and obtain salvation as a failure to obey (God)

without question. Adam erroneously perceives this (blind) obedience to God as being man's ultimate goal.

As a result of carnal man's misunderstanding of obedience, the well-known story of Abrahamic sacrifice, as well as the story of the fall of Adam, are mistakenly viewed as failures of obedience rather than failures of understanding. In the former case, it is popularly viewed that Abraham was fully willing to kill Isaac in perfect obedience to God and this is what made Abraham a great exemplar to generations after. However, it might be helpful to consider that this orthodox view is wrong. Abraham's supposed willingness to follow through with killing Isaac stands in stark contrast to the familiar story of the willing self-sacrifice of Jesus on behalf of others and the profound admonition to others that "... *whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it*" (Matthew 16:25). The orthodox view of Abrahamic sacrifice also stands in stark contrast to Abraham possessing the "*Greater love....., that a man lay down his (own) life for his friends*" (John 15:13).

In the case of Abraham, the story of righteous sacrifice is more profoundly understood when one realizes that Abraham did indeed sacrifice his own son, though he did not sacrifice Isaac. In this particular case, Isaac was the symbol of Abraham's one (and only) most prized and valuable creation, his own arrogant zeal, his unholy ego, and beastly nature. The sacrifice of one's own beastly nature is symbolized by the ram caught in the thicket by its horns that was said to be sacrificed by Abraham in Isaac's stead.

Because of the misunderstanding of what is required, carnal man is prone to commit the most beastly of acts in the name of perfect obedience to God in his attempt to secure his (own) reward. Though Adam does not yet realize it, this is the whole problem. In his greedy zeal, Adam is willing to murder to get gain (his own reward). However, Adam needs to comprehend that he cannot find salvation at such high cost to others. Instead, Adam needs to come to the point where he is willing to yield up everything, including his own life, for the sake of another. Did Abraham love Isaac more than himself? At the bare minimum, orthodox religionists should admit that their interpretation of Abrahamic sacrifice proclaims not.

At this juncture, one might consider the attitude of nearly the entire Christian world in regard to the voluntary self-sacrifice of Jesus. Nearly all who call themselves Christians maintain that the suffering of Jesus is essential to pay for their own sins so that they can be saved. Ironically, Christians will sometimes condemn those who were responsible for persecuting and killing Jesus while at the same time giving thanks that it happened (for their benefit). Again, this stands in stark contrast to the idea of having love so great that one will lay it down for their friend, since few are willing to do this, proclaiming that Jesus died for them, but they are not willing to likewise (in his example) give up their own lives (ie. salvation) to stop his suffering.

Unfortunately, carnal man, who fails in understanding the meaning of sacrifice of the beast, will eventually graduate from mistakenly killing innocent animals to requiring human sacrifice and ultimately the sacrifice of a God for payment to get salvation. One may realize that this has everything to do with the meaning of the endowment garment. To comprehend the meaning, Adam needs to entirely and completely give up his old way of thinking and begin to see himself with new eyes. It may be valuable to consider that this has everything to do with consecration. Ultimately, the carnal man Adam will mourn when he comes to the full realization that it is he, himself, who is the one

responsible for killing the Christ. And in doing so, he will also comprehend that the garment he wears is a token of what he has done.

## **Uncovering the Meaning of the Garment**

With the above thoughts in mind, perhaps it is now time to take up a discussion of meaning in the symbol (token) of the garment. The garment is a symbol of different things at advancing levels of understanding. Many of these meanings are interwoven in addition to being layered. The interweaving and multiple level of meaning of these symbols may be loosely compared to the proverbial Russian dolls which are stacked one inside the other. To uncover the more profound meanings of the garment, one must first consider what the garment is said to be and its purpose.

**Coat of Skins.** Endowment patrons are told that the garment they are wearing is a representation of the garment of skins that Adam was given when he was cast out from the Garden. Of course, this part of the endowment parable is intricately interwoven with such things as Adam receiving a physical body and placing an apron upon himself in an attempt to cover his supposed nakedness. One might notice that at one level of understanding, the garment represents our physical bodies. These physical bodies can be said to be garments of flesh (skin) that are a covering for the (true) temple in the same way that the cloth garment worn by temple patrons covers their physical body. The latter represents a token (the garment) being used to cover another token (the physical body) in an intricately-fashioned layer-upon-layer motif that is symbolic in itself.

Again, endowment patrons are told that the garment they wear represents the garment Adam was given that was anciently made of skins. Some might notice that there is an interesting correlation to the apron that is worn in Freemasonic ritual that is also said to have been originally made of animal skins, more particularly lambskin. Inasmuch as the endowment garment is, like the apron, considered by LDS to be a covering for their "nakedness," its symbolic connection to the meaning of the apron should not be overlooked. Again, there is often a layer-upon-layer form to meanings and symbols throughout creation. Moreover, there is often a repeat of symbolic motifs. In many ways, the meaning of the endowment garment is synonymous with the meaning of the endowment apron as well as similar symbols in our culture such as the emblematic necktie worn by those in the business world. In addition, there is meaningful symbolism in the garment being made of animal skin. Though not taught openly, LDS teachings have it that the garment given to Adam was made of the skin of the first animal sacrifice (presumably made by God on Adam's behalf) that was aimed at redeeming Adam from his fallen condition. In regard to this notion, it might be helpful to recall that the ancient Israelites mistakenly observed a bloody ritual of sacrificing (killing) a lamb as a part of their (failing) efforts in achieving perfect obedience to God. One might also want to remember that Jesus is often called "the lamb" and his sacrifice is often compared to the bloody Israelite ritual. All of these things are important to remember in discovering much of the deeper symbolic meaning behind the Temple Garment.

**That You Might Become Clean.** Keeping in mind that there are multiple layers of meaning, remember that every individual going through the endowment, regardless of gender, is represented by both Adam and Eve rather than one or the other. Adam symbolizes one thing, Eve another, but both pertain to each individual. This is opposed to the egotistical tendency for men to claim the chosen gender and relegate women to second class status.

At the beginning of the endowment ritual, patrons are greeted with the narration that “*Brethren, you HAVE BEEN washed and PRONOUNCED CLEAN, or that through your faithfulness, you may become clean from the blood and sins of this generation.... Sisters, you have been washed and anointed to become hereafter Queens and Priestesses to your husbands.*” (capital letters added for emphasis). The appearance of these words in the endowment are profoundly meaningful and are interwoven into the meaning of the garment. Therefore, these words may be worthy of careful consideration.

Although the patrons are told that they have been washed and pronounced clean, nowhere in the washing and anointing ceremony is this done. Rather, all patrons are washed (in the preliminary rites) that they “... *MAY BECOME CLEAN from the blood and sins of this generation*” (capital letters added for emphasis). As a result of their own (egotistical) way of thinking, many patrons, including women, will only hear (pay attention) to the first half of the narrator's pronouncement and, in doing so, will mistakenly think that they have already become clean. Moreover, true to form, women (the sisters) will tend to hear the same words without realizing that the statement above is addressed to the brethren. One should realize that it is intended to be this way and this is why the endowment is so powerful as a token (symbol). However, to uncover the deeper meaning, one needs to realize that men and woman are symbols for the spirit and the body, respectively, and it is never meant to be about gender.

In regard to the pronouncement in the washing and anointing ceremony (that one may become clean), it may be helpful to notice a few of the finer points of what is happening. One point to notice is that the words, in essence, are a pronouncement on patrons that they are UNCLEAN (since they are washed using the words ‘*to become clean*’). This is opposite to what most patrons tend to hear and remember in the temple experience. Ultimately, patrons need to notice this and more, such as the words that it is the blood and sins of “this generation” from which they are to become clean. Since ‘this generation’ refers to the one that is now, the admonition pertains to the present time and place.

Moreover, in the endowment parable, Adam is conned into thinking that he is naked. To cover his nakedness, he first dresses himself in an apron that he continues to wear proudly without once asking why it is so. God then bestows upon Adam a garment of skins that also serves the purpose of covering his “nakedness,” since it was given “*when he was found naked*” (words from washing and anointing ceremony), again which idea (nakedness) was all a con by Lucifer. Of course, if Adam doesn't question why he wears an apron (in which he has dressed himself), he will be much less likely to question why he wears a garment that he sees as given by God. Adam has yet to comprehend how things come to him.

In regard to the garment of skins, one might also properly refer to it as a “garment of sins,” since that is exactly what is going on. Adam is being cast from the garden for the sin of misunderstanding rather than of disobedience. As a result, it is profoundly appropriate that Adam be dressed in a garment of misunderstanding (his “sin”). Moreover, as a garment of misunderstanding, it fails to cover his nakedness (lack of understanding) as Adam intends. At this juncture, some might notice that in many ways the garment and the apron are identical. Adam graduates from using leaves (apron) to using the skin (garment) of innocent animals to cover himself. In doing the latter, he is symbolically “covered in blood” (since killing had to occur to acquire the skins). Again, these symbols are powerfully interwoven. It might be noticed that many in the Christian world who claim to love the Christ will proudly proclaim themselves to be clothed, baptized, or bathed in the “blood of Jesus.” This blood of the lamb, in essence, becomes their (proclaimed) covering and it is given (by

God) according to their desire. In being their (metaphorical) covering, it can also be compared (symbolically) to a garment that is worn by them. To become clean, one must do something quite different than perceived. Rather than bathe (clothe, cover) themselves in the "blood," they need to become clean (of it). And in our proclaiming of the orthodox gospel, we might consider that we have been guilty of shedding (innocent) blood (of the lamb).

Some may be confused over this proposed symbolism because the garment is also called the "garment of the Holy Priesthood." The meaning of this will not be discussed because it is beyond the scope of this essay. However, in trying to uncover the meaning of this reference to the garment, it may be helpful to remember that there are several priesthoods. One might also notice that the "robes of the Holy Priesthood" that are later given to endowment patrons, completely cover the garment.

**The Garment as a Veil.** Endowment patrons may notice that the garment they wear is tied closely to the symbolism of the veil that separates the patrons from the Celestial room. Not only is the veil made of similar material as the garment, but both also contain identical symbolic markings. This essay will not discuss the meanings behind the marks because to do so would appear too convoluted and unwieldy to contribute to the purpose of this essay. However, in pondering the deeper symbolic meaning of the marks, it may be helpful to notice that some are inverted in comparison to similar motifs found in Freemasonry. For example, the sign of the compass, which is said to represent the male (Masonry), is placed on the left over the heart (the position of the female) and it points up (V) in a receptive position rather than down (∧) in the opposite. These particular references have everything to do with deeper meanings of the creation parable that is the core of the endowment story.

Symbolism in the creation parable can be applied at more levels than popularly perceived. One additional level of meaning pertains to the "creation before the creation" or rather what occurred before the creation of this planet (earth). The words "in the beginning" refer to an earlier time of the spiritual creation that, of course, happened before the material creation. We need to recognize the role we play in the spiritual creation because of its relevance to the material creation. Unfortunately, we tend to be oblivious to the deep meaning that is right in front of us that tells the whole story of creation. We need to consider our role in the drama as "the woman." Despite the fact that there are frequent scriptural references to the whole of creation as "the woman," the church as "the bride", and the enemies of God as "the whore," there is a common inability to sort out what is symbolically meant by "woman." Again, one should remember that symbols are placed where they are most useful and this particular presentation of the (inverted) markings (motifs) is unusual. The deep meaning of the markings are particularly relevant to those who clothe themselves in a belief system which is unjustly patriarchal.

Returning to the veil, one might notice that the garment covers (surrounds) the body in the same way that (tokens in) creation surround each of us. The garment is often colloquially called the "temple garment" among LDS, which is a profound statement since the garment is used as a covering for the (true) temple. As stated previously, covering of the (physical) body by the garment is reminiscent of the same in regard to the physical body (a garment of skins) covering the temple of the spiritual body. Again, one might notice the layer-upon-layer of symbolism. In uncovering further meaning behind the garment symbol, it might also be helpful to notice the many other veil symbols and what they cover. Examples are such things as the atmosphere being a veil covering the earth, women patrons in the endowment have veils covering their faces, the temple veil covers the Celestial Room, and a "veil of forgetfulness" covers the memory of man's prior sojourn before coming into the Garden. At multiple levels of meaning, carnal man is to pierce all of the veils on his journey to remember

understanding and, in doing so, find wisdom. In this last respect, it might be valuable to recall the words of T.S. Eliot:

*We shall not cease from exploration.  
And the end of all our exploring  
Will be to arrive where we started  
And know the place for the first time.*

### **Final thoughts**

The purpose of the endowment is to do the work for the dead, which correctly refers to those who are the spiritually dead. The spiritually dead include many of those living in the spirit world in addition to those who are currently living in the mortal world of the flesh. The spiritually dead are those who are in the position of benefiting most from the endowment.

The (spiritually) dead also applies to those who are considered "custodians of the endowment". One might wonder what Lucifer is doing in the temple (or Garden). One of the great mysteries of the endowment parable is that Lucifer is placed in the Garden (by God) and gives an endowment to Adam and Eve (by giving them the fruit of the tree). It happened then and it happens now. However, Lucifer doesn't comprehend the endowment for which he is made the custodian (by God). Though he speaks words that are profound truth, it is not the way he means them. Lucifer is unable to perceive his own role in this drama or the meaning of what is happening.

The idea that the custodians of the endowment (LDS leaders) play the symbolic role of Lucifer is obvious in the endowment parable, but it is rarely noticed by patrons. One such obvious occurrence is where Lucifer is successful in instilling fear into Adam and Eve and successfully convinces them that they are naked. Prior to this, Lucifer says (to Eve) that he is her "brother." Immediately after Adam and Eve run to get aprons to cover their supposed nakedness (according to Lucifer's instruction), a voice (narrator -- a custodian of the ceremony) comes over the loudspeaker saying "*Brothers and Sisters, put on your aprons.*" Like Adam and Eve, the patrons readily comply without questioning what is happening or asking who is speaking to them. Moreover, the endowment patrons retain the apron throughout the endowment ceremony without questioning why or noticing much else that happens to them. Because of this failure to see what is most obvious, they are considered to be walking in darkness at noonday. And because of this failure to see the obvious, there is a need to return to the temple time after time to do the same work until one begins to see (perceive) what is happening.

With the above in mind, one begins to see the wise purpose of the endowment. When God says (to Lucifer) that "*I will place enmity between thee and the seed of the woman*", it is the same (meaning) as that which is spoken (to Adam) in "*... cursing the ground for y(our) sake.*" Rather than seeing such pronouncements as curses, one might more profoundly see them as blessings (since they are given for Adam's "sake"). The endowment itself is given for Adam's "sake" (blessing). A similar "blessing" is stated in modern times in regard to the church: "*... because of your dead works, I give this church unto thee...*" (D&C 22:3) That which is given to Adam is none other than the preparatory gospel in its fullness as contained in the BoM as well as other scriptures. Although it lays heavy burdens on Adam, it has a divine purpose of bringing Adam to a point of frustration where he becomes humble and, therefore, teachable. The purpose of the preparatory gospel is fulfilled when the Christ returns. Adam begins on the path to wisdom when he finally recognizes him.... not only the Christ,

but also the one who is called Lucifer. The latter stands at the head of nearly every earthly church, proclaiming his own light, and many worship him. Until Adam sees (understands) truthfully, he will continue to think and act as the proverbial wolf in lamb's clothing and hypocritically call himself holy in the name of the lamb whom he has slain. In doing such, he will continue to be found lying, secreting the tokens, and merchandizing them as a part of his precious religion. As Adam comes to see (perceive) the reality of his error, he will let go of his grip on the tokens and begin to share them freely and unconditionally with all, as they are intended to be. In doing so, he will be given the meaning, the very thing that he has been seeking without realizing it.

While the notion above may not be flattering, deep and sincere reflection upon it will reveal its wisdom. It is of little use to have anyone who deeply understands the meaning of the endowment to endlessly return to the temple (building) and repeat the motions without benefit. The work for the dead will continue, but the newly emerged man (formerly Adam) will no longer be needed there. The (spiritually) dead always do the work for the (spiritually) dead. This is the nature and perfection of the Telestial world, though few will comprehend what that means until they have passed beyond it.

In coming to an understanding of the garment, Adam would be well advised to take time to consider who it is who told him that he is naked. And in doing this, it may be helpful for us (Adam) to reflect upon the reason we wear an apron to "cover our nakedness." These considerations also apply to the garment that shares much of the same meaning with the apron. In taking the second step, Adam will need to come to grips with why God bestows the garment upon him. Ultimately, Adam will see (perceive) that it is part of the essence of perfection.

In the process of becoming clean from the blood and sins of (t)his generation, Adam will begin to understand what he has been doing wrong. He will begin to realize that his failure to find what he has sought stems from his failure of understanding what he is already given. The tokens will change for him so that they continue to reflect Adam's state of being.

In his journey to find wisdom, Adam will ultimately pierce all veils. In doing so, the old heaven and earth will pass away and a new one will come into being. These veils will become rent, fall behind, and will no longer occupy a forward position in Adam's new earth. In this process, Adam will overcome death. He will find that this can be done by simply taking it off and casting it aside. In the process of casting off his (bloody) garment of s(k)ins which he wears from killing the lamb, Adam will find a new (living) garment which has always been there, but unseen. And despite his having cast aside the (bloody) garment, Adam will have fulfilled his covenant to wear it all of the days of his (former) life. Adam was dead, but the one who became Adam lives again.

After reading this essay, some might mistakenly feel that they should immediately remove their temple garments. Perhaps these should be reminded that such an action would be wide of the point of this essay. Adam should not place undue emphasis on the tokens themselves because it is what they represent (symbolize) that is most important. In one sense, all in mortality wear the garment of skins (a physical body). One needs to realize that the garment is given for a divine reason that is for Adam's (our) understanding. Adam is to wear the garment until he doesn't need it any more. And when it is the right time (to remove it), he will know himself. And when Adam comes to know himself, he will have arrived where he started (the Garden) and comprehend it for the first time. As a result of (t)his experience, Adam will have found wisdom.

## Playing Simon Says in the Endowment

By Eleazar, 2003

One might come to notice how the LDS Temple endowment is played out as the proverbial game of "Simon Says".

In the childhood game of Simon Says, players are supposed to act out instructions only if Simon says so. If a player is enticed to do something that Simon does not say to do, then the player loses.

Simon is Peter, who is the narrator of the endowment ceremony. The other name of Peter in the New Testament is "Simon" (sometimes called Simon-Peter).

In the endowment, Peter is the narrator and (represented by the) officiator. Peter is the one who instructs the patrons. In the ceremony, there comes a time that the brethren (players) do by themselves what Simon never tells them to do (awake). This is incredibly symbolic and deeply profound, though not very flattering to the brethren. It symbolizes their own mistaken perception that they are awake and obedient in the ceremony, when the reality is that they are still asleep.

It happens this way (abbreviated for clarity):

**Elohim:** *"We will cause a deep sleep to come upon this man..."* (Adam)

**Simon** (the narrator's voice over the loudspeaker): *"...Brethren, close your eyes as if you were asleep."* (the male patrons properly obey, just as Simon says)

**Elohim:** *"Adam, awake and arise."*

**Simon** (narrator): *"All the Brethren will please arise."* (Notice that Simon asks the brethren to "arise", but they also open their eyes, *though never told to do so*)

In opening their eyes per the rules of the childhood game, the male patrons in the endowment fail to do as Simon says because the admonition to Adam (by Elohim) to awake was not from Simon. It is the player's mistake. Thus, the narrator (Simon) tells the (male) patrons (players) to close their eyes (as if asleep), but throughout the endowment Simon never tells them to open their eyes again (as if they were awake).

Much of the true joy in living comes from looking back and seeing how we've been so good at playing jokes on ourselves. This is one of these cases. And all around us is profound comedy if we will take time to notice.

*“When one sees fingers pointing at the moon, it is best to cease looking at the fingers and look where they are pointing.” -- Hindu Proverb*

## **Who is Eleazar? It doesn't matter and it is really about the meaning of new names.**

**By Eleazar, 2003**

I get emails from readers of this web-site (<http://www.geocities.com/eleazarbenyair/>) asking who is Eleazar that authored some of the essays. What follows may satisfy those who feel that knowing the identity of Eleazar is important. The format will comprise the usual FAQ structure where frequently asked questions are followed by responses.

After I got into writing this narrative, I started digressing quite a bit about the meaning of new names in the context of names in the LDS endowment ceremony. So, this narrative contains a lot of miscellaneous comments about that subject. It's a bit funny how these things tend to evolve.

Asking who is Eleazar is a symbolic act. But, one is asking about the wrong person. We should be asking who we are and find out what our own names mean. No, it doesn't mean to analyze your name. The meaning of that will become clearer after one has found out what they mean (so to speak). That is, the important task is finding out who you are before finding out about someone else. Who you are is symbolized by names. After one finds out who they really are, then the meaning of the names become clear. When that occurs, then there will no longer be a need to ask who is Eleazar. Those questions become meaningless for reasons that become clear after it's happened.

### ***Why don't you use your real name as author on writings?***

I prefer to keep my identity reasonably private and don't think it is important who it is who writes the material on the website. It could easily have been someone else rather than me. But, would that matter? You could have written these things.

Unfortunately, those steeped in LDS culture tend to get the message mixed up with the identity of the messenger. This emerges from the strong emphasis on belief that church leaders are the only ones having authority. Eventually, this leads to frustration because it is a messed up way to live and therefore cannot endure permanently. Ultimately one sees that worrying about messengers isn't needed. It becomes a moot point when one uncovers the truth. After the end, one sees that all messengers come from God, good or evil, so one gets beyond the idea of testing messengers or worrying about who they might be. It no longer matters.

In essays I've written, I've repeatedly stated that none of it comes with claims of being correct, complete, or authoritative. It is merely food for thought and anyone is free to take it or leave it. I don't go to great lengths to hide my given name, but prefer that I remain reasonably anonymous for the reasons stated above. I don't have any following that I know of, nor do I desire one, and I don't

pretend to be any different than anyone else in this wonderful world of death and hell. Ultimately, one realizes that all of us have the same name(s). Eleazar might be considered to be your name, too.

### ***Where did you get the name, Eleazar?***

Well, I guess I might answer, appropriately, like the Beatles when they were asked a similar question about why they chose the name ‘Beatles’?: “*It’s just another name, like ‘shoe’.* Yeah, we could have been the shoes.” (said with a wink and a nod)

The name Eleazar comes from Eleazar Ben Yair, the Jewish leader of the Zealots who perished at Masada (a mountain stronghold) in the first century revolt against the Romans. The story of Eleazar and the Jewish rebellion is told in the writings of the first century historian, Flavius Josephus. The Zealots were the last hold-outs of the Jewish rebellion and chose to commit mass suicide rather than be captured by the Romans and go into slavery. Eleazar Ben Yair (Eleazar, son of Yair) gave an impassioned speech to the Zealots that I was impressed with at the time I was looking for a pen name.

Timing is everything in this material world (In fact, the entire world operates on time). There are other names too that I’ve used as pen names, such as Po-Tai. Po-Tai is the name of the fat, bald, and jolly Buddha in Chinese lore (sometimes called the Laughing Buddha) and is spelled other ways too (eg. Ho Tei) when Latinized from Chinese. The Chinese Po-Tai looks a bit like a Santa figure who’s been through chemotherapy so has lost all of his hair, but none of his being jolly.

I suggest that you don’t take these names, or any others for that matter, too seriously. Names are, at best, symbols. At worst, they are misleading. If you want to know what is important about them, then search for what is real that they represent, but don’t get hung up on them and, most of all, don’t make them your obsession. That is where one gets misled.

### ***Is Eleazar a new name?***

No. In fact, it is an old one (chuckling), but what I mean to say by joking on this matter might go way over most people’s heads. I am not trying to be funny and I do not intend to offend endowment patrons by making light of something thought to be very important, or much worse, sacred. Are new names really new? Well, in the literal sense the answer is clearly “no”, most particularly in regard to LDS endowment new names. But, perhaps they are not metaphorically new names either. Failure to perceive this is, in fact, one of the symptoms of our disease.

**New Names.** As LDS endowment patrons know, there is a ritual of being given a new name. This new name is used as a name of one of the priesthood tokens that already has a name: “the First Token of the Aaronic Priesthood”. There is a lot of deep symbolic meaning here and one is wise not to miss it. When an endowment patron is asked “*What is that?*” at the veil, one might notice that there is a redundancy because the patron has two names for it, the old one (the First Token of the Aaronic Priesthood; already given name) and the new (the patron's new name). The Second Token of the Aaronic Priesthood has that name (old, given) and is also named with the patron's given name. One might first take time to notice that the First and Second Tokens of the Aaronic Priesthood are obviously meant to be synonymous with each of us, or what we are being, since they have our own name(s) on them.

The first and second tokens of the Aaronic Priesthood are partial handshakes symbolizing partial-fellowship with God. Names symbolize one's state of being and new names are supposed to symbolize new states of being. Temple patrons are told not to reveal these tokens, names, and signs (which once included penalties in the pre-1990 ceremony) to the world. However, revealing these to the world is something that carnal man is continually doing since everyone reveals themselves, who they truly are, in all that they do except sometimes in the case where one is skillfully deceptive. So, how does one succeed in not revealing these tokens, names and signs? Well, that comes as a part of changing what one is (being). That is, one succeeds in not revealing these tokens when the tokens, names, and signs no longer belong to him or, rather, when one stops living his (so called) life in the state of being symbolized by the tokens, names, and signs. The real purpose of the endowment is to transform the patrons completely into new beings rather than tell them how great they are doing as fallen beings. That is what new names ultimately symbolize, a completely new being. The perfect symbolism in the endowment ritual of new names tell us that we have things backward in thinking that we are doing what is correct.

Endowment patrons know that the new name is needed in the ceremony of passing the veil. Most who have attended these ceremonies tend to think that this veil ceremony constitutes practice for some future event, but it is not because it is really about what goes on in the present (time) and thus has some real meaning to it (right now) rather than imagined (needed in the future/past). When patrons are offered the token through the veil and then asked "*What is that?*", there are usual responses given and the patron mistakenly thinks that his accurate recitation of these responses is what gets him through the veil. But, the ceremony itself suggests not. Temple-goers might notice that one does not pass the veil at that time and no response is given from the other side of the veil in regard to getting it right. That is, except at a time that comes later on in acting out the veil ceremony. When the patron correctly gives back the mysterious name of the Second Token of the Melchizedek Priesthood, then and only then does one receive the response back through the veil of "*That is correct.*" Again, one receives no such response when giving the names of other tokens. All of this is very symbolic and meaningful, though few seem to notice what is happening to them in the least bit, both at the veil ceremony and in their everyday existence where they, figuratively speaking, stand at the veil right now and act out in reality what the veil ceremony merely symbolizes.

Notice that a patron does a lot of 'giving' names through the veil. He mistakenly thinks that he does so correctly because he thinks that accuracy in obedience is what is wanted. We might consider that this is one of the greatest problems afflicting carnal and sensual man: His grasping onto material things so tightly that he completely misses what it means. He makes the error of becoming infatuated with symbols rather than what is real (What they represent). He can't give them back correctly because he has no idea of what that means. He thinks that perfect obedience is accurate obedience. When he reaches a certain level of frustration at not receiving further light and knowledge as he is promised, he might become able to give the names up (back correctly). That is, he will come to know what it is about and what he is missing. Carnal man needs to turn loose of all that he thinks is valuable (his preconceived notions) to get out of his dilemma. This has everything to do with consecration as well as other symbols that are redundantly given him, both in the endowment and elsewhere. It is all about a new way of being rather than correct acting out of a ritual.

Letting go of all that one possesses, or rather 'giving back' correctly (synonymous with consecration) is something that is exceedingly difficult to do for carnal man. He is unable to do so until after he fully hits bottom and then looks for a new way. Hitting bottom is what ultimately comes out of frustration at living the burdensome life of the preparatory gospel without receiving further light

and knowledge as is promised. Frustration is the purpose and ultimate end of the preparatory gospel. Some take longer than others to achieve a sufficient level of frustration to give it up, but that is fine. Until a transformation occurs, one tries and tries to get it right without moving onto new things. Carnal man will futilely try and try again, yet never get it right because his acting out of things is the very problem that afflicts him. He doesn't get it (understand what it really means) and until he does, he will stay where he is.

Because of the nature of this world and our reliance on it, many who have attended LDS temples for endowments are prone to place an obsessively high value on the new name, considering it a great secret and deeply personal (even sacred), despite the fact that everyone (except in rare cases where the new name matches a persons given name) of each sex gets the same new name on any given day and records are kept of what name was used on which day. There is a lot of deep symbolic meaning here and we should not pass over it too casually.

**Old New Names.** New names given in the LDS endowment are not really new, nor are they a secret. The 'new name' I received when being given my own endowments was "Amos" and every male going through endowments on that same day who were not already named Amos, got the same new name. If your given name matched the new name (Amos on that day), then you got the new name 'Adam'. If you happen to forget your new name, you can apply to the church and they will look it up on their records and remind you. Moreover, those who are familiar with these new names know that they all come from history so, in a literal sense, they are not new at all.

New old-names, so to speak, while not being literally new, are often very instructive and edifying by being profoundly symbolic and meaningful, though not always flattering. That is a major part of their purpose. New-old names are hardly ever flattering and inability to recognize that is where we as carnal and sensual beings continue to go wrong. That is, we go wrong by failing to see (perceive/understand) what it really means and thereby receive the purposeful benefit. Unfortunately, most will obsess themselves with the name itself and keeping it secret. One might look at the Hindu proverb at the beginning of this essay and notice a parallel with new names being like the fingers pointing at the moon. We play the fools when we obsess ourselves with the tokens, symbols, signs, images rather than what is meant by them. In doing so, we act out our existence as sign seekers and image worshipers.

**Tokens, Names, Signs.** Perhaps it is valuable to continue on this idea for a short time. Obsession with these new old names and the injunction to endowment patrons not to reveal tokens, their names and signs causes many to get hung up on trying to keep these new old names secret. However, the preferred word to use here, as nearly every LDSite knows, is 'sacred', not secret. This leads one into worshipping the wrong thing (a name) and missing the entire message about what is going on (what it means). This results in a lot of inversion in meaning where these things get turned upside down. One might notice that in keeping the name (a token/symbol/sign) 'sacred' (and secret), we worship that which is unreal rather than that which is real. Is the name real? No, at best it's a symbol (a token; a name of a token = redundancy), so it's redundantly unreal. What is real? What it means, symbolizes, represents, and 'names'.

The redundancy in tokens, signs, names, and images is something that few seem to notice. One might first notice language. What are words, but symbols? Since words are symbols, they too are 'names'. Every word on these pages are symbols left by a writer so that a reader can re-create meaning through seeing (reading) them. Of course, the writer and reader have to share a common

dictionary before the reader will get the right message. Moreover, God's thoughts are said in the scriptural record to be higher than (carnal) man's thoughts, therefore we might consider the possibility that, as carnal men, we might not have the right dictionary required to get it right on meaning. Perhaps that is why these things are so redundant?

A name of a token is a token of a token as well as a symbol of a symbol. Moreover, a name is a sign, a token is a sign and so forth; All are symbols. Thus, they are all the same thing, which means that the endowment is redundantly constructed. Again, carnal/sensual man falls into the trap of worshipping the image (token; symbol) rather than what it means and thereby lives his (so called) life (notice inversion in meaning in the word 'life') as an image worshipper and sign seeker. He foolishly thinks that because he can (literally) grasp these tokens (Is it an accident that the endowment tokens are grips?) that he has a hand(le) on what is real. But, the joke is that he doesn't grasp them (ie. He doesn't understand what it is about), despite the endowment 'tokens' being grips (handshakes). Well, by now you should see that they are much more than that. They are names and signs too. Symbols upon symbols and layers upon layers and redundantly simple. Yet, what are they really? And does anyone ever 'get' it? Well if not, then perhaps they have no purpose?

Hiding (secreting, concealing) the new old name is acting out in mock fashion of what is truly sacred. Does one take that which is sacred and place it under a bushel? Well, in this case it is thought so, but perhaps we ought to consider that this is a symptom of our fallen state (disease). Inasmuch as that which one creates always returns to him (the creator), those who secret (conceal, hide) the new name from others find it hidden from themselves. Admittedly, this may appear a bit convoluted for those hearing it for the first time. If so, think on it carefully and see if it makes more sense than you could have ever imagined. Again, we are really talking about meaning here, not the names. Don't continue to be mired in symbolism by thinking these names and acting out accurately are important. If one thinks that they should run out and reveal (tell others) their endowment name, then one ought to take pause and consider that they have missed the entire point of what has just been said. It may be helpful to take another look at the Hindu proverb at the beginning of this narrative. Fingers (and grips) are meaningless, though they represent (point to) something else that is.

**New Names and Ego.** Despite the fact that the scriptures say that God chastises those whom he loves (*cf.* D&C 95:1), there is a mistaken tendency by us carnal beings to take the things that come from God and use them to flatter the ego. In believing that God flatters us in these temple endowments, we might ask what we are saying about how God feels about us? One might also notice that flattery is hardly ever edifying, but has the opposite effect. Appropriately, natural man gets distracted by what he (foolishly) thinks is flattering because he has his priorities inverted. We should consider that these new names are meant to be highly instructive to us and ultimately they are (meant to be) deeply profound and edifying, rather than being flattering, shallow, and un-edifying. It makes a lot more sense that those attending endowments are those who can most benefit by their message rather than those who don't need it. Of course, this doesn't necessarily mean that those not attending will not need it. Again, all of the world operates on time. And when one is truly ready for it, one gets it, right on time.

Again, these new old names we are known by are rarely flattering to the ego in what they represent. Perhaps it is best to use me as an example in regard to the name Eleazar. In my own case, Eleazar was a new old name that I took at a specific time that is as appropriate as one of those new old names given in the LDS ritual. Who was Eleazar Ben Yair, but a Zealot? At the time I took the name, it was a perfect description of what I was being. I was living my (so-called) life as a Zealot.

You might even say that I was a superb Zealot (since Eleazar Ben Yair was a leader in Zealoting). Later, I was able to see what this is really about. It seems that somewhere along the way, one forgets the fingers and starts to notice where they point, often right back at us. Afterwards, one no longer cares so much for owning that name. No, it doesn't mean that one gets rid of it. Again, that would be missing the point. There is a total transformation in seeing things and one looks at (perceives/knows) things differently than before. The irony is that the names are meaningful when they are thought to be meaningless and meaningless when one sees them as they really are, symbols. In reality, it isn't about the names at all, but something else. Sometimes it takes a long time to 'get' (the meaning of the new name; comprehend) this. One gets new names in the endowment, but does one really? When they are truly gotten (ie. comprehended), then they are meant to be given up (correctly). Giving up (back) names is something that is symbolized in the veil ceremony.

There is a lot more symbolism in the name and story of Eleazar Ben Yair and 'history' at Masada, but it may be too unwieldy and unhelpful to cover more of it here. However, those who are interested can search it and it may be valuable to some because of where it ultimately leads, even if that is to frustration. When one looks at these his- stories, one needs to see them as parables and to notice symbols. In the case of the Zealots, they committed mass suicide rather than be subservient to the Romans. But not everyone died, so to speak. The historian Josephus has it that two women and five children escaped the death of the Zealots by hiding in a cave and it was from these that the story of Eleazar is known. Were these the lucky ones? Well, the mind of carnal man is prone to think so because he loves his own life (which is really death) so much. Because of his inverted way of thinking, he is oblivious to what is really going on.

Again, take notice of symbols and try to see the historical account as a spiritual allegory that can be applied to the present time and place. Masada is a mountain in the region of the Dead Sea. 'Mountains' are often symbols of the 'holy place' or that place to which one flees for refuge. The meaning of mountain is often synonymous with Temple which means that it is synonymous with you, the true Temple. 'Sea' often symbolizes people, so Masada is a (symbolic) mountain (holy place) among the (spiritually) dead people. . In contemplating such stories, one might also take time to notice the similarities in symbolism of the Dead Sea (Great Salt Lake) in Utah and the surrounding Mountains. All of creation is symbolic, but who can read it?

In regard to the 'death' at Masada, notice that the only ones who "survived" (remained behind) the mass suicide were two women (women are a symbol of creation) and five children (children are also symbols of creation; five the number representing senses/sensual) by hiding (it's a symbol: what we carnal beings do; what Adam and Eve did) in a cave (symbol: our hiding place; body; vehicle). Thus, the only ones 'surviving' (and continuing to 'live' under the Romans) were those representing the carnal/sensual being. Of course, the word 'surviving' is used in the above sentence in the usual fashion of the carnal world where it means exactly the opposite (where the meaning is inverted). Surviving in Rome is not life, but (spiritual) death. The two women and five children are symbols of carnal man who continues to live as a servant to Rome (Rome is a symbol of the world). When they emerge from their hiding place and we see them, then the story is told. Carnal man will recognize who he is after experiencing what he is not.

**Preparatory Gospel and Names.** The most fundamental message of these (and all scriptural) his-stories is that one must (willingly) give up one's (zealous/false/at war) life in order to find (the true/at rest) life. One might notice in the Masada history that the story of Eleazar and his fellow Zealots holds a promise of escape. But, the escape for the historical Eleazar and the Zealots

came by choosing their own death rather than be captured by the Roman soldiers. This allegory is the same one that is spelled out redundantly throughout religious his-stories and rituals. How does one escape the beastly world (represented by Rome)? Is it not by choosing death (represented at Baptism) and (hope of) resurrection (rebirth)? Death, of course, is not physical death, but spiritual. When one gives up the world (yes, in our inverted meanings, we call this life), one is reborn from death into life. Figuratively speaking, one goes from (spiritual) death to life.

One might notice that the big secret of the preparatory gospel is that it works its magic by frustration and giving up rather than by continuing in it until one gets (it/all) through achievement. Achievement is the way the world gets things and this is accomplished by effort. Appropriately, the mind of carnal man is always leading him to chasing a golden goose and fighting a war made (for him) in heaven. Things for him become, appropriately, backwards (inverted). He thinks his enemy is without when it is within. But, in this war made in heaven, one wins by losing rather than winning. Rather, winning comes after giving it up and choosing death. This idea is an integral part of the Masada his-story as well as many scriptural stories and many religious rituals. Again, death means death to the carnal being that is itself death. Death to death, so to speak. But, not really, since all death is an illusion, it is more properly death to man's illusion. In dying, all that we lose are our illusions and these are not real. What waits is (spiritual) life. Jesus phrased it that a man must lose his life to find it (Matt 10:39) and was talking about this very thing, finding by losing. But, there is something important to notice here. When one gives up, one never achieves life as a (just) reward. Rather, one 'finds' that which is already there and has been (waiting for us) all along. The big joke played out on us fallen beings is that great effort is not required. Life has always been free. It couldn't be so otherwise.

One might also notice that in the scriptural record, the additional phrasing about this is profound: "*For whosoever will lose his life FOR MY SAKE shall find it.*" (Matt 16:25) (capitals added for emphasis). Interesting. Many are prone to interpret this in terms of becoming a servant to the Jesus who bought us with his own sacrifice. This is despite the words of Jesus in the scriptures proclaiming us free (indeed).

There is something in this symbolism that is almost universally missed by those who call themselves Christians. How many are willing to give up their own life for Christ's sake? Hardly any. In fact, most Christians are cheerful about the crucifixion and openly proclaim their thanks that Jesus died for them. To them, the suffering of Jesus as written in history isn't optional. The real problem is that carnal man wouldn't dream of offering up his own life because he loves it too much. He would much rather that someone else give up their life for his sake. And he thinks that if it is Jesus, that's fine, especially since God gave that to him and he died anyway. After, all, it was God's idea, right? Carnal man doesn't have a clue as to what it really means.

Many LDS will not feel comfortable with the idea that the church and the gospel are the preparatory state because they think they are beyond that. After all, Jesus already came to earth, right? Again, that is perhaps because we cannot seem to see our history, yes all of it, as a parable about the present time and place. Because of that, we tend to view ourselves in the context of past and future. We are prone to proclaim that 'Christ has come' (past event) as well as 'Christ will come' (future event) rather than 'Christ is come' (a present happening). We as carnal beings have a hard time perceiving ourselves as living under the preparatory state (gospel) right now (in the present) because we egotistically think we have done all that is required of us. We have done everything accurately, right? Yes, right down to every jot and tittle, or at least, we are trying hard at it. This is despite the

fact that the scriptural record tells a different story. We should notice that the scriptural record is one of the failure of God's 'chosen people' to purify themselves rather than the opposite. That is our-story. It will make a lot of sense when one considers it carefully. Again, this has everything to do with tokens, names, and signs as well as history stories, parables, symbolism and creation.

**Names and Parables.** As discussed above, when we think of history, including so called 'scriptural history', we carnal beings are prone to miss the real point of it. We think that it is about the past rather than the present. This is equally true in the case of LDS who popularly view the Book of Mormon as a literal history and not much else.

The word history can be dissected into his-story. That is, the stories of our past are popularly thought to be stories of others (ie. His, that person's, story) rather than our own. So there is a great tendency to perceive these stories, first and foremost, as belonging to some other time and place. It is very difficult to see them as parables that are our-story, about us. The problem with this is that we do not benefit from what they really symbolize. Those who study the scriptures diligently will find more treasures in them when they begin to see them as real spiritual allegories and parables that are relevant to the present time and place rather than mere historical accounts.

There is much more to consider in regard to histories being parables. They are also names and names are parables. All of them are allegories that are dynamic in what they represent (symbolize). One might notice the LDS endowment name called the (name of the) Second Token of the Melchizedek Priesthood is a parable. It is not just a meaningless word, like a regular name, but a short paragraph with some real meaning. Such we are meant to see. In it, there is a dynamic and a redundancy that is thrilling to all who eventually see it. In fact, the endowment ceremony is based on a parable (the creation story), the entire endowment experience is a parable, the Temple itself is a parable, and all of creation is a parable. One might correctly call any of it a name or a token.

Again, names have (symbolic) meaning that is very real because it is what it is about that is real rather than what it is (a symbol). We fail to see what is real and what it all means because we are so obsessed with those damned symbols. Please pardon me if you are offended. In this case, the word "damned" is not used as profanity, but to enhance the correct meaning of "symbol" (though it is just another redundancy). That is exactly why it is so profound in the LDS endowment that tokens (symbols) have names (symbols) and signs (yes, more symbols). It is a parable itself. Moreover, it is not very flattering to those of us who obsess ourselves with the wrong things. But, that is what we carnal beings do. We worship the images (symbols) rather than what is real so we get a lot of them redundantly. When we figure it out, we will laugh heartily at ourselves because we will realize how well we've played this joke on ourselves. We can blame none but ourselves for the life we live, a true comedy rather than tragedy as we are prone to think at first. Out of much sadness will ultimately come the laughter. It waits for us, perfectly. We will laugh a lot when we can see perfection. And it will heal a lot of old wounds.

**Receiving names, giving names.** There are some interesting parallels in regard to how names are received. First, one might notice that the endowment new old name is distinct from what is called the "given name", though in reality they are both "given" (ie. The same). What is called the given name is the one normally given you by your earthly parents at birth. In that respect, the endowment new name is also a given name because you are given it by another (person) rather than taking it yourself or, rather, giving it yourself. This is one of many layer-upon-layers redundancy found in this symbolism.

Your earthy parent(s) named you with a given name at birth into the world. Endowment patrons are given a new name by a representative of a Heavenly Parent (represented by a temple worker) in an allegory of their birth as a new being into heaven. Patrons are then supposedly endowed by, among other things, being told a creation story of Adam (who they are told to consider as themselves) who names the creation. He first names Eve, then beasts, children, etc. The male patrons thereafter pass through the temple endowment in symbolism of following Adam (doing what he does) to later get his wife's name through the veil and afterwards get 'sealed' in marriage. From there, a man has his own offspring (children; his creation) which he (and his wife) give names. Again, when thinking about this symbolism, remember that women and children are often symbols of the creation itself. It is impossible to offer thoughts on all of it in this narrative so I will limit further thoughts on two anomalies in this story that, by appearing out of place, are perhaps meant to draw our attention. These are next.

**How does Adam get his name?** One might notice that nowhere in the creation parable is it stated where Adam gets his own name, Adam. He isn't known as Adam until he, supposedly, awakens from his deep sleep. But, is Adam really awake? It is clear from the creation parable that he is not. Adam is living a lie. And Adam represents (symbolizes) us.

In the endowment, Adam represents fallen and carnal man who is told to awake, but remains asleep, thereby said to be walking in darkness at noonday. When he is faced with being cast from the Garden, he covenants to do all that he is commanded. Moreover, he appears to perform all of these covenants accurately, but then why is it that he doesn't get out of his fallen state and re-enter the garden? Despite his apparent perfect obedience, he remains fallen. Perhaps this is an important place to ask why?

Examples of failure to emerge from the fallen condition despite intense efforts at perfect obedience appear throughout what carnal man calls his scripture. Despite those examples, fallen man can't seem to get the point of it. He wrongly perceives his failure in the context of obedience. He feels that his failure at such things as acceptable sacrifice is because he has missed something in regard to better obedience and that he must try harder. So, he tries harder at better (more accurate) obedience even though that isn't the problem. His problem is not in accurate obedience at all, but in failing to understand what is happening to him.

Here, one might utter a few profound words: "Welcome to the preparatory state." Endowment patrons are rightly told that this (preparatory condition; Lone and Dreary World) "is the world in which we now live." Although patrons are plainly told in the endowment that they, like Adam, are living in the preparatory condition, they don't seem to believe it. *"That's not us. Oh, no. We are a righteous people. And who but a righteous person would be inside the Temple this day?!"*

Adam will not emerge from his fallen condition until he gets frustrated enough to give up what he has been failing and transform himself into a completely new being. Again, the preparatory state is not what is responsible for getting you there, but rather it is one's failure to get there via the preparatory state that leads one to give it up. Afterwards, one learns to give it back correctly. Rather, one learns what consecration really means.

Although some might tend to think that the preparatory condition is useless and not needed, it has a grand purpose and that is why it exists in the first place. It is a part of perfection, but a

comprehension of how this is true is something that may not be obvious to those hearing this for the first time. Because it is beyond the scope of this narrative, it will not be discussed further here.

However, it may be helpful to return to how Adam is named. One might notice that it is said in the LDS endowment parable that Michael, *“when he awakens from his sleep... will be known as Adam.”* Michael IS KNOWN as Adam. What might be the significance of this? Adam, because of being the first man of creation, is also what one might call the ‘Firstborn’. In the LDS scriptures, there is interesting phrasing in this regard to a ‘firstborn’: *“They who dwell in his presence are the church of the Firstborn, and they see as they are seen, and KNOW AS THEY ARE KNOWN, having received of his fullness and grace.”* (D&C 76:94) (capitals added for emphasis)

This has everything to do with names, most especially new names. Again, names are symbols, tokens, and signs that signify what one is being. Carnal man needs to take time to contemplate who he is being. At a certain time, he will come to KNOW HIMSELF. And when that happens, he will come to ‘know as he is known’, though not by the world. The world never ‘knows’ because it is against its nature. Until then, carnal and fallen man will continue to have many other names in addition to Adam. It might be correctly stated of the ‘firstborn’ that Adam is ‘one of his names.’ Since we are to consider ourselves Adam, we should consider that it has everything to do with who we are, what we are doing, and what we are to be. We might ask who this endowment tells us we are being? Well, since the endowment clearly tells us to consider ourselves as Adam (and Eve), we might consider that, as endowment patrons, we are acting out as fallen man (in the temple this day).

**What Eve means.** An apparent anomaly in the LDS endowment is in the parable of how Eve gets her name. In the endowment act, the Elohim present the woman formed from Adam and says to him, *“... here is the woman WE have FORMED...”* (capitals added for emphasis), and asks Adam what he will call her. Adam responds that he will call her *“Eve... Because she is the Mother of All Living”* to which one of the Elohim responds by saying *“That is right, Adam; because she is the mother of all living.”* Even a casual observer would not be prone to miss such an obvious problem here, but it is the norm for it to be passed over

Eve is certainly NOT the mother of all living. It is clear that she is not the mother of the Elohim, nor is she the mother of Adam. But, a quick examination of this in regard to its metaphorical meaning appears to lack something that makes sense too. It requires deeper contemplation. Are the Elohim agreeing with Adam’s error because they are trying to placate a child in the usual way done by earthly parents? Are there hidden symbolic meanings in this parable that represent profound truths telling us of our error? Perhaps so on both accounts.

It may be suggested that this particular event lies at the heart of one of the greatest mysteries of the endowment and it is intricately interwoven into another enigmatic statement made by the Elohim in reference to the fallen man Adam (after he has eaten from the tree) that *“MAN (Adam) HAS BECOME AS ONE OF US, knowing good and evil.”* (Genesis 3:22) (capitals added for emphasis). This event may represent one of the greatest truths hidden deeply in the symbolism in the endowment story. Moreover, it is all about who is who, the War (made) in Heaven, who is the God of this earth, and what is really going on in this (the present) world of death and hell.

Because of fallen and carnal man’s condition, he is prone to wrongly perceive his world in terms of opposites. He has ‘partaken’ of the ‘fruit of that tree’ and has done it so completely that he

doesn't remember that opposite to that which is constitutes illusion. Adam eats from the tree and thereby comes to KNOW good and evil rather than just good (ie. perceive perfection). Of course, this knowing opposites of good and evil lies at the root of his problem. Adam sees that Lucifer and the Elohim are at apparent war (opposition), so he immediately perceives it (as well as the rest of his world) in the usual terms of “bad” and “good”, opposites. Lucifer is ‘fallen’ and ‘bad’, therefore the Elohim must be ‘good’ and ‘not fallen.’ Adam is prone to see it in terms of a war made (for him) in heaven. To him, it is part of a great battle between good and evil, life and death. But Adam might come to consider that he worships the wrong God and has been doing so for a long time. This emerges at several places in the endowment parable, but usually passed over by patrons without much thought. And it has everything with who are the messengers one is listening to. *“Brothers and Sisters, put on your aprons!”* It has a grand purpose, but not as popularly understood. It's purpose has to do with illusion itself.

It is clear that LDS doctrine teaches that God is a physical being with a body of flesh and bones, making him a man. But the difference between God and man in LDS theology is that God is a much more advanced version of fallen and carnal man. Those who delve into the deeper LDS doctrines will find the teaching that the Elohim live on a planet that is nigh unto (near) a star called “Kolob” by the Egyptians (“Sirius” in contemporary language). The endowment story has it that the earth was not created, but organized. Moreover, plants and animals were brought here from other places (ie. other worlds). These ideas, of course, are not new ones at all. They did not originate with Joseph Smith, but are as ancient as man himself. They are also found in nearly all of the secret societies that exist among us today and are carefully embedded in our myths, traditions, and cultural customs.

Here, one might consider what they may have never considered till now. One might notice that these ideas are intricately interwoven into the symbolism of the endowment story, but apparently unbeknownst to those (men) who originally penned the endowment. After Adam eats from the tree (on the enticing of Lucifer, one of the Elohim) and becomes fallen, the Elohim rightly proclaim that *“MAN HAS BECOME AS ONE OF US”* (ie. Man is fallen like us)(These 'gods' KNOW good and evil). Moreover, when the Elohim proclaim to Adam that Eve is (truly) the ‘Mother of all Living’, it is no mistake in the endowment, though perhaps a mistake by man. It can best be understood in regard to the truth that the Elohim are as obsessed with the creation (Eve) as is Adam. The LDS rightly teach that the Gods of men are men, but do they know what this really means? This idea is written throughout the entire record of creation for anyone who wishes to see it. Moreover, it has everything to do with symbols and symbolism because this is the creation itself.

Some who are well steeped in the ancient traditions, especially in religious dogma, will have a hard time with the above suggestion because it completely pulls the rug out from under their belief system. These might be reminded of the idea of consecration and sacrifice. Although LDS hear that one must give up all one possesses (even one's life) in consecration, there is a reluctance to believe it because it is so hard to give up one's precious held dogmas (beliefs) long enough to see a new reality. Many who are would quickly offer up their material wealth in consecration would not even entertain the idea of giving up their pre-held notions because they are much too important to them.

Those that have made it beyond consecration may come to realize that it is not about not believing anything at all, but rather it is about seeing what one once believed in new ways. Ironically, it works into believing everything. And how does one do that? That seems impossible because it is inconceivable to the mind of us Christian religionists who (falsely) proclaim with our lips that we

believe all things, but really don't believe much beyond our own religious dogma. The answer to the riddle of how one believes all things will not become apparent until one gets out of the carnal mind. A new understanding will come as a result of a new way of seeing (perceiving) the world. Old beliefs are not to be transformed, so to speak, but the believer. That is, it is the believer that is (completely) transformed. After this transformation occurs, one finds that everything that failed to make sense before, now makes perfect sense and is in perfect order. To carnal man, it is a completely incredible idea that the world about him is perfect. It remains beyond his understanding (is inconceivable) because he still doesn't know what it is all about.

Again, the idea that the Elohim are fallen beings may be disturbing to those who are hearing it for the first time. To these, it may help to consider that one should be looking for higher things. In regard to God, it might help to begin asking who is the God of the Elohim? In beginning this voyage of discovery, it may be helpful to try to put aside preconceived notions so that they don't interfere. Later, one might find themselves coming full circle and seeing these same notions in different ways. To those who have gone beyond, they may even appear more glorious (glory is intelligence) than ever: Dynamic, ever changing, filled with life. In continuing this narrative, it may be helpful to comment briefly on the idea of higher things.

**Higher Things.** LDS doctrine has it that our universe is roughly divided into three kingdoms of glory (Telestial, Terrestrial, and Celestial) in addition to a condition (Outer Darkness) reserved for the most evil of beings. Moreover, entrance into these kingdoms are often perceived in the usual context of 'the future' and "out there" rather than the present time and place. One might consider that these are mistaken impressions and part of an illusory belief system that keeps fallen man from emerging from his state of spiritual death. Here, we might take time to leave the past, future, and "out there" mode of interpretation and bring it into the present time and place of being. We might begin to look at these things in new ways to discover new meanings. Moreover, we may discover new meanings that are more real to us because they are about 'here and now' rather than otherwise.

One might first notice that "Outer Darkness" is a redundant phrase (again, they are symbols, names, signs, tokens) which describe the fallen condition which is: (i) 'outward'; living by the physical senses alone; carnal; sensual; and, (ii) 'darkness'; the absence of light (intelligence; understanding); in the condition of being fallen; spiritual death. For most of us, that is the world (being) in which we live (are known) now (though we don't know it ourselves). True to form, carnal man's ego will tend to prevent him from considering himself as anything but righteous. However, one might take notice that endowment patrons are (correctly told) that the Telestial (lone and dreary) world is that one of 'death and hell' (redundant phrase; spiritual death) in which we (Adam and Eve; fallen beings) 'live now'. The word 'live' in the previous sentence has an accurate meaning as well as illusory one, but that is something that takes a long time to get.

But there is much more than the limited view of worlds (kingdoms of glory) and darkness.. What is meant regarding the other two kingdoms of glory (Celestial, Terrestrial)? Are these, too, meant to encompass all things in the present time and place? Thoughtful reflection will reveal that this is the case. So where are the higher things? We might consider that one of the barriers to finding higher things is thinking that all worth knowing is already known (by us; in our theology).

One might first notice that LDS are prone to proclaim that there isn't any kingdom higher than Celestial. But is that really true? Here we come full circle to revisit the topic of new names.

One might take time to contemplate the following passage in the LDS cannon regarding new names and the celestial kingdom:

*“... the white stone mentioned in Revelation 2:17, will become a Urim and Thummin to each individual who receives one, whereby THINGS PERTAINING TO A HIGHER ORDER OF KINGDOMS WILL BE MADE KNOWN; And a white stone is given to each of those who come into the celestial kingdom, whereupon is a new name written, which no man knoweth save he that receiveth it. The new name is a key word.”*  
(D&C 130:11-12) (capitals added for emphasis)

One might pay particular attention to two ideas that come out of this passage. First, it clearly points to kingdoms higher than the Celestial, since those celestial beings who have the white stone learn about ‘higher orders of kingdoms’. Secondly, it suggests how these (unknown) kingdoms are revealed to you. And it seems that new names are a key.

Here we come full circle back to the start of this narrative where we are trying to answer what is meant by new names, but perhaps only now getting to the heart of the matter. Carnal man tends to see new names as consisting of spoken words such as “Adam”, “Amos”, “Eleazar” or at best, a small paragraph of words like is spoken in the (name of the) Second Token of the Melchizedek Priesthood. Fallen man wrongly perceives these things in terms of how he defines (names) his own creation (carnally). He thus misses what it means to “get” ‘a stone upon which a new name is written that reveals a higher order.’ His literal mind thinks that there is a literal rock that he carries with him and on it is inscribed something, a (secret) name. In such a case, a celestial dweller would have to be careful not to forget it in the pocket of other pants when changing clothes and be caught without it! Well, perhaps there is profound symbolism in the LDS teaching that those below the celestial do not ‘get it’ (the stone)?

Well, I am hoping you are getting it now. Like getting a joke, the best another one can do is try to explain it. Getting it is something that one person can never do for another.

Back to the white stone and the new name. As has already been discussed at length, these passages are firstly allegorical and secondly literal, rather than the opposite. But, the opposite is also true since what already is preceded the allegory (creation). What is a stone or a rock? In Christian symbolism, ‘stone’ or ‘rock’ is synonymous with ‘Christ’ or ‘Spirit of God’. And what is the new name that is written thereon? Perhaps this has everything to do with the endowment experience? One might notice, again, that the Temple itself is a ‘name, symbol, token’ and so is its endowment. As symbols, it is what they represent that is important. They of themselves are counterfeits of what they represent.

LDS temple-goers are prone to proclaim that they’ve been to the temple and taken out their endowments. This is an error of seeing it as a past event rather than present. To them, it is a done deal, at least as long as one remains faithful to the church leadership. They have gotten their endowments. But maybe there is another way of looking at it? Perhaps it is helpful to consider the endowment is as an ongoing event in the temple, something that is continually taking place? Ye are the temple. Is that so hard to accept? So why is it that there is so much infatuation with the counterfeit (temple)? Well, it is perhaps because we are still playing that fallen act. And we continue in that perfection until we get frustrated and see the illusion that we, ourselves, have created.

Please take time to consider that the LDS endowment represents (symbolizes). In regards to the endowment act itself, one might correctly call it a symbolic endowment as well as a counterfeit endowment (and many other names). But, as a name and a symbol, it represents (symbolizes) something else that is real (a real endowment; a real temple). Inasmuch as ye are the true (living) temple, one might also consider the endowment as something that happens inside you as a continuous (living) event. This would mean that the LDS ritual is a meaningful symbol (token, name, sign) of a living endowment that is continually in progress, a real event that is meant to be happening right now in the present time and place (in you; the Temple). Many LDS now stand at the veil, but do so oblivious to it. Doesn't that make more sense than the popular way of understanding it?

In one respect, the true endowment comprises a name that cannot be spoken because it is dynamically occurring all of the time rather than something that is static (dead). We might consider that when one who is experiencing the real endowment (of which the LDS ritual is a symbol) is asked if they have had their endowment, they might reply "No, I am having it." If asked if they've received their new name, they might reply "I am discovering it."

Ye are the temple. And it all is continually happening. This is living the spiritual life and is what occurs after one emerges from the fallen condition. But there is a lot more because this has been going on all the time, though not known. More accurately, this is always happening, and understanding it (perceiving what is) is what happens after carnal man ceases his infatuation with his creation. In emerging from the fall, man will discover what already is and has been all along.

Ultimately, this is why the new name is one that cannot be spoken (or 'written', except on one's heart). It is because it is a living (dynamic) name. God is in the process of re-creating himself and discovering by experience who he is. That is the real purpose of creation and what living really is. Every one of us is doing that perfectly right now. At some point, we will perceive it (find it) and proclaim it glorious (meaningful, intelligent; perfect).

None can take you there. You must make the trip yourself, despite the fact that we are already there, but don't know it yet. All of these paragraphs are nothing but more tokens. They are, at best, like the fingers that point the way. Don't get caught up in them. Ultimately, we come to see that these fingers profoundly point right back at us (the true temple). That is what the names are about.

### ***Do you consider yourself to be a prophet?***

I hope not. We need to change our way of looking at prophets. It isn't a very flattering name because it is always connected to the preparatory gospel and its heavy burden of many laws. One might notice the profound statement that appears at the end of the Old Testament in the King James Bible: *The End of the Prophets*. That has some deep meaning. Whenever we see 'prophets' and 'the law', we can know for certain that we stand amidst the preparatory gospel. Prophets are not needed otherwise and that is what is symbolized in the phrase that Jesus is the 'last' High Priest.

The phrase "the law", of course, is inclusive to mean the million or so laws that come under it. In the LDS D&C (130:20), there is a passage about "a law" that is decreed in heaven. Of course, the phrase "a law" bespeaks a single law rather than many. The issue for most of us is to find out what that single law is. When that happens, prophets will make more sense than they ever did before, so to speak.

### ***Why do you fight against the church?***

The idea of fighting against the church comes from the view that there is a war going on. Again, this comes from a view that things are not perfect already and this is a very egotistical and carnal (materialistic) view. In reality, there is nothing to do except be. Getting our thinking (being) out of the heaven/world at war mind has everything to do with the phrase of 'entering into the Lord's rest'. Hopefully, I'm resting at this time.

There is no reason to change the church or fight against it because the church is indeed perfect (ie. 'true'). The outer church, as a creation, serves its intended purpose and will exist that way until it doesn't, at which time it will pass away on its own. I wouldn't flatter my ego as to think that I would have a purpose in a system that works fine without me. And I am no different than you.

### ***Were you LDS at one time?***

Yes, I played the part of a lock-stepping LDS for about 25 years. I joined the church at 18, went on a full-time mission (Japan) at 20, attended BYU, got married in the (Salt Lake) Temple, was a certified veil worker, and did too much praying but not enough obeying in the end. As explained above, I was a real Zealot. But, there is nothing wrong with any of this if that is what we desire. In fact, being the Zealot is what brought me to sufficient frustration to give up all the acting and then move on to being what I really am. But the Zealot is history now. At least, I hope so.

### ***I am LDS and have started getting into Freemasonry and its teaching by symbolism. Do you think that I should continue on this?***

Absolutely. Freemasonry is as perfect as the church. The fact that you are asking this question makes it clear that the right answer is to stay with them. Indulge yourself deeply in them until you don't need to anymore. When that time comes, you will know yourself and won't need to be asking me. They will have served their purpose and you won't have to find something else to do it instead.

### ***Do you think that the Book of Mormon is actual history or that it has a deep metaphorical meaning?***

It may be better to first see the Book of Mormon as a history about the present rather than the past. It has a deep and profound meaning that simplifies as it gets closer to reality. But, in regard to it being a literal history of the American Indian, it doesn't seem so. DNA fingerprinting has shown that the American Indian is a genetic descendent of East Asia rather than Israel and much older in the Americas than the Book of Mormon time frame. But the literal historicity of the Book of Mormon is not something that should be important to us, although it is to many who are deeply immersed in Mormon theology. It's mostly because of ego and traditions. There is a need to be right on former claims and many have a lot of emotional investment in their traditions so it is hard to give them up.

Ultimately, the meaning of the Book of Mormon is the same as it is for the Bible, Koran, and myriad other 'scriptures' as well as the temple, endowment, churches, leaders, names, symbols, tokens, and all of creation. We as fallen beings are always getting the tokens mixed up with what is real. At best, all are signs pointing to what is real. We need to stop focusing on them so obsessively that we

can't see where they point. The message of all of these signs can be summed up in nine simple words (yes, more tokens) to fallen man: "You have placed your faith in the wrong place." And where is that? In them; symbols and tokens, churches and leaders, doctrine and ritual: fingers pointing at the moon. All of these symbols will fail (you) because that is their nature.

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*"Illusion has more to do with what we act out than it does with what others do. In overcoming illusion, we will be the ones who have changed."* -- Po Tai

## **The Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil in the LDS Endowment**

**By Eleazar, 2004**

This narrative is written to those who are struggling to understand meanings behind the LDS temple endowment. The endowment ritual is a highly symbolic act about which patrons generally admit they have little understanding. This narrative will focus on the symbolic meaning of the *Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil*. The intention is to stimulate further thought by presenting possible ways that the symbols of the endowment might be understood. Other parts of the endowment ceremony will not be discussed, except where they are relevant to understanding the meaning of the Tree of Knowledge symbol.

As in other narratives written by this author, what follows comes with no claims of completeness, correctness, or authority. Readers are free to disregard any or all of the ideas that follow and there is no expectation by the author that any of it be accepted as wisdom. The author does not belong to any religion and the ideas presented in this narrative are not meant to be part of a belief system of any church, philosophical group, organization, or dogma.

In the simplest of terms, the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil symbolizes illusion. Partaking of the fruit of the Tree represents losing oneself in the illusion. Man consumes the illusion and is, in turn, consumed by it, so to speak, becoming carnal, sensual, and devilish. Partaking of the fruit brings us under an illusion of knowledge. This knowledge includes an illusionary belief in the opposition of all things that, in turn, brings about an experience of opposition, an unreal journey into the world of disharmony, bitterness, sorrow, and death.

As a result of carnal man's (Adam's) belief in the reality of opposites, illusions of death and hell become as real to him as does the illusion itself. This illusory knowledge brings Adam under the curse (given for his sake) of the Fall of having to sweat (work) for his bread (bread symbolizing love of God) and he (as Eve) brings forth children (symbolizing his creations) in sorrow. He continues in this bitter existence as one who is oblivious to what is truly going on, though he thinks he knows. The illusion is as a veil that covers the mind of Adam. It prevents him from seeing things as they truly are.

The LDS endowment tells patrons what is really happening through its symbols. These symbols tell patrons that they are the ones spoken of in the characters of the endowment. The story of

the Fall brought about by eating the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge is about the present time. Moreover, the creation parable is meaningfully symbolic of a process that is ongoing rather than part of our past.

Ultimately, carnal man is destined to pass from the curses of the Fall. In doing so, he will have achieved nothing because it was never about achievement. It was always about being. Adam was always doing that perfectly, notwithstanding having partaken of an illusion that had him thinking otherwise. Adam chooses, rightly. Notice the comma before rightly. Adam will come to realize that what he has been doing underlies the very purpose for his existence, to re-create himself and then discover by experience what that means. He will understand that his journey was not about achievement at all, but that it was about living, despite the experience of suffering, fear, and spiritual death that he has brought upon himself by choosing to partake of the illusion.

**Meaning and symbolism.** Although the subject of symbolism is covered in other narratives by this author, it may be helpful to make a brief statement on symbolism before proceeding with a discussion of what is symbolized by the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. Few people notice the profound symbolic meanings in the world surrounding them and this is also true in regard to the symbolism in the LDS endowment ceremony. To come to understand the meanings, one must first come to notice that the symbols exist. Next, one comes to ask what the symbols mean. Looking at the meaning of symbols is where we presently are with this narrative. Discovering the meaning of symbols is important because the endowment is filled with symbolic meaning.

Later, one will need to look beyond symbols and their meaning and begin to ask whence the symbols come. When one begins to comprehend the answer to this last question, one finds the doorway that leads to understanding the mystery of all of creation. Only then will carnal man come to discover himself and why he exists in the first place, notwithstanding he has been unknowingly discovering himself all along. In his understanding of whence the symbols come, he will finally be able to comprehend what it means to believe all things. As this occurs, such a person will no longer be bound by the illusion because he will be able to see beyond the lie to know what it is really about.

**All is happening now.** One of the barriers to comprehending the deeper meaning of symbols is misleading ourselves into believing symbols are about other times and places rather than here and now. During the enactment of the LDS temple endowment ceremony, patrons are explicitly told that they are to '*consider themselves as Adam and Eve.*' This is an important key to unlocking what the endowment parable means and it may be helpful to consider it further

Among endowment patrons there seems to be a tendency to perceive Adam and Eve as other people who lived in another time rather than see the endowment story being about them, the patrons. Moreover, when patrons take time to consider the notion that they are Adam and Eve, there is a tendency for male patrons to identify themselves with Adam and female patrons with Eve rather than each patron seeing the meaning of both Adam and Eve in themselves. A fuller meaning of the endowment will emerge when patrons begin to see the entire ceremony and all of the characters therein as meaningfully symbolic and relevant to themselves as individuals or, more specifically, individual temples. It is all happening now, '*in the temple this day*'. Ye are the temple spoken of.

There are several places in the endowment ceremony where the phrase '*this day*' is used. Each use of this phrase is important. Patrons may want to take time to notice each of them on their next time through the endowment. The phrase '*this day*' is meant to signify (symbolize) the present time and

what is happening in the (true) temple by representing it in parallel symbolic names, tokens, signs, and names (all of which constitute parables).

However, the endowment message is not one that is flattering to the ego and it shouldn't be. There is a profound reason for this that few come to see until they let go of that which blinds them. This is part of what the endowment message is about.

In perfect symbolism, the endowment tells patrons what is happening right now in a layer upon layer parallel. What is going on *in the temple this day* is perfectly symbolic of what is going on *in the temple this day*. That statement may sound foolish at first, but one might take time to notice that there are two temples being spoken of in parallel and one bespeaks the other. That is, the temple as a symbol bespeaks the meaning of the true temple. Ultimately, there is only one true temple and ye are the temple (being) spoken of. What is happening in the temple endowment this day is symbolic of what is happening in you (the true temple) this day or, rather, the present moment of time. It is a perfect parallel.

This is not without a lot of irony. Moreover, the irony is profoundly symbolic of itself in what might be called an inside-out manner. Patrons are truly meant to be '*in the temple this day*', but few are, notwithstanding they are in a temple (the wrong one). The entire point of it is missed. Again, there are two temples and we should remember that we are the true temple, those that are built without hands.

Because we as endowment patrons miss the (true) meaning of temple, the symbolism of the endowment points out our failure and plays us as hypocrites and (spiritually) dead in glorious fashion. Until the patrons come to understand what is going on and why it is this way, they will be rightly counseled to return to the temple often in to do the work for the dead. The *dead* refers correctly to those who are spiritually dead that includes those who are present in the (false) temple *this day*. The spiritually dead also includes many who are physically dead. It should be noticed that the spiritually dead are the ones who are in a position to benefit most from the endowment. It is all perfect in its symbolism and entirely appropriate, notwithstanding few will understand it at first and others may take offense at such a thought that it is meant for them, the patrons, as opposed to others not present. For many, such an idea is damaging to the ego. But, that is part of the problem. The ego of carnal man keeps him blinded to truth that is right in front of him, or more importantly, in him.

Ultimately, temple patrons will come to see the profound meaning in acting out of the endowment ritual and see that it is much more. Eventually, there is a realization that it is about them, here and now. They may also come to realize that is something that has been going on about them in their everyday lives which not only includes the time in the temple (this day), but the ever present continuance of their existence in the (lone and dreary) world. In regard to this, one might take time to notice that the endowment begins with a presentation of the creation parable that includes the Fall of Adam and Eve and being cast into the lone and dreary world that is rightly said to be *the one in which we live now*. Adam remains in this fallen condition throughout the ceremony and is said to enter the presence of the Lord only at the end of it, when Adam pierces the veil (of his own misunderstanding; illusion). Although all patrons take part in this veil ceremony, few ever make it that far in their personal lives outside of the temple.

In a profound sense, patrons enter the temple for their endowment, but return home afterwards in the same state of self-delusion as when they entered, sometimes worse. This is represented by how

the ceremony ends as well as in the new clothing being worn (eg. the garment; a symbolic veil). The endowment ceremony rightly ends at the veil because of the failure by patrons to pierce the real veil (ie. what it represents: illusion). As a result, what is merely symbolized by passing the veil in the temple will not occur for them in their personal lives until such a time when they, as individuals, are ready to proceed. When that occurs in reality, there will not be a need for them to return and do the work for the dead nor will they need to concern themselves with the symbols of the endowment. They will then be living temples, those made without hands, and the buildings called temples will be seen as for what they truly are: symbols, tokens, names, signs, images, and illusions. In truth, all symbols, tokens, names, and signs are counterfeits. They are not real, but only symbolize something that is real.

**Lying, Lucifer, and illusions.** Prior to moving onto a discussion of the meaning of the Tree of Knowledge as illusion, it may be helpful to discuss the idea of the character of Lucifer and lying. There seems to be a lot of confusion in LDS doctrine about Lucifer being a liar as opposed to Lucifer as a teller of great truth and a being of great insight. This latter idea is embodied to some extent in a popular LDS aphorism that '*Lucifer can tell nine truths and one lie*'. One might consider the possibility that this aphorism embodies a lie, especially since it presupposes that Lucifer is a being of great intelligence (glory). The truth is that Lucifer is just another spiritually dead being who doesn't understand himself (doesn't know himself) and is imprisoned by the same illusion that he merchandizes to Adam and Eve.

Adopting the idea that Lucifer tells truth in the temple keeps many from discovering the simplest secrets of the endowment. It may be helpful to realize that everything that Lucifer says in the temple is a lie. Another name for Lucifer is devil. It should be noted that in the New Testament, Jesus says of the devil that he "...abode not in the truth because *THERE IS NO TRUTH IN HIM ...he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar...*" (John 8:44) (capitals added for emphasis).

One must be able to see how everything spoken by Lucifer in the temple is a lie in order to begin unraveling what the endowment symbols mean. With this idea fresh in mind, we might now examine an interesting conversation that occurs between Eve and Lucifer in regard to the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil:

**LUCIFER:** *Eve, here is some of the fruit of that tree. It will make you wise. It is delicious to the taste and very desirable.*

**EVE:** *Who are you?*

**LUCIFER:** *I am your brother.*

**EVE:** *You, my brother, and come here to persuade me to disobey Father?*

**LUCIFER:** *I have said nothing about Father. I want you to eat of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, that your eyes may be opened, for that is the way Father gained his knowledge. You must eat of this fruit so as to comprehend that everything has its opposite: good and evil, virtue and vice, light and darkness, health and sickness, pleasure and pain--thus your eyes will be opened and you will have knowledge.*

**EVE:** *Is there no other way?*

**LUCIFER:** *There is no other way."*

Since everything that Lucifer speaks is a lie, then: (i) The fruit of the Tree is not delicious to the taste, nor is it desirable; (ii) Lucifer is not Eve's brother; (iii) Lucifer did say something about Father; (iv) Eating from the Tree will not open Eve's eyes; (v) Eating the fruit is not how Father

gained his knowledge; (vi) There is no such thing as opposition in all things; (vii) Eve will not have real knowledge (or wisdom) after eating the fruit; and (viii) There is another way.

Since an examination of each of these in detail is too unwieldy for the purpose of this narrative, only brief comments will be offered. However, even brief comments should suffice for those who are having difficulty seeing how all things claimed above by Lucifer are lies.

First, there is the promise (by Lucifer) that the fruit is ‘delicious to the taste and very desirable’. One might inquire how good fruit would come from a corrupt tree, since corrupt trees should only produce corrupt fruit (*see* 3Nephi 14:17-18). Maybe it is not good fruit at all. Moreover, the *fruits* (results) of eating the fruit seem to suggest that it is corrupt fruit. Eating the fruit brings about the Fall, a sojourn in the lone and dreary world, and curses from God (eg. earning bread by sweat of face; bringing forth children in sorrow). The true fruits of eating the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge are ignorance, loneliness, fear, sorrow, suffering, nakedness, and death. These are a part of the experience of the *Lone and Dreary World* which is characterized by bitterness and misery. Thus, the fruit from the Tree of Knowledge is not delicious to the taste, but far from it.

The rewards of eating the fruit can hardly be called *desirable*, despite the fact that Eve later proclaims it to be so in her statement that *"It is better for us to pass through sorrow that we might know the good from the evil."* Readers might want to take time to consider what is really going on in this drama. It should be noticed that Eve is making this statement after she has already partaken of the fruit and is therefore laboring under illusion. Eve appears to be sincere in her belief that the fruit is desirable (*ie.* she believes the lie), but that doesn't make the lie true. Moreover, it should be noticed that Eve, because of her belief that the fruit is desirable, offers it to Adam in the similar way that Lucifer tempts Eve. After eating the fruit, Eve, in effect, becomes Lucifer. But, she is more effective too because she gets Adam to do what Lucifer could not. In becoming fallen, Eve becomes a liar, so her claim that it is better to eat the fruit should also be taken as a lie.

Eve is not Lucifer's brother. Eve was created from the side of Adam, but Lucifer was not, meaning that he cannot be her brother in this regard. In symbol, Eve represents the tabernacle for the Spirit or, rather, the body creation (as well as creation itself). This is in contrast to Lucifer who, as a formerly great Spirit cast from heaven, represents the Fallen Spirit, the deceiver, or one who believes in illusion.

But, there's more. In LDS doctrine, Lucifer is portrayed as the brother of Jesus. The symbol of Jesus and Lucifer as brothers is intricately linked to creation itself, more specifically, the origin of duality (opposition; an illusion) and its subsequent war(s) between good and evil, agency and enslavement, yielding and force, life and death, Christ and anti-Christ. This is reminiscent of the same in regard to the creation of Adam and Eve and the Fall of man per the creation parable. In this case, Eve symbolizes the proto-typical Lucifer rather than his sibling. This is precisely why the representative color for Eve and Lucifer is red, the color of sensual passion and conflict. It is also why Eve tempts Adam with the fruit in a parallel to Lucifer tempting Eve.

After Eve partakes of the fruit, she looks at Lucifer in apparent recognition and proclaims: *"I know thee now. Thou art Lucifer, he who was cast out from Father's presence for rebellion!"* Again, it should be remembered that Eve is speaking after eating the fruit of the Tree, so this accusation she makes towards Lucifer is illusionary. In truth, Eve hasn't a clue as to who is Lucifer. If she did, she might first come to see Lucifer in herself. There is little question that is the role she was playing in

offering the fruit of Knowledge to Adam. But she is oblivious to that, having been blinded by partaking of the fruit of Knowledge herself.

In telling Eve that he is her brother, Lucifer communicated that they siblings from common parents. Since Lucifer did not say he was 'half brother', Eve could have rightly responded using the phrase '*our Father*' rather than how she did. It is interesting that in the statement immediately after Lucifer's denial of Father, he invokes the name of Father to add credibility to his claims.

Eve is promised that eating the fruit will open her eyes, she will have knowledge, and it will make her wise, but none of these occur. Rather than find the peace and joy of true knowledge and understanding, Adam and Eve become fearful. In their fear and lack of understanding, they hide themselves and make aprons to cover their nakedness. Nakedness is a lie that Adam and Eve are conned into believing and the aprons they create are symbolic veils to use as a covering. It may be helpful to notice parallels in what happens in the endowment. Appropriately, endowment patrons are conned into believing that they too are naked. They return from their work in the temple wearing garments that are meant to cover their nakedness. This is despite nakedness being a con in the first place.

Lucifer tells Eve that eating the fruit is how Father gained his knowledge and also tells her that there is no other way. This last statement is interesting in regard to passages in the scriptural cannon that Christ is the only true *way* to wisdom, understanding, and life eternal. This stands in direct contrast to the way of eating the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge that Lucifer uses to supplant it. Thus, eating the fruit of that Tree is not the way to knowledge, but the way to illusion. The (true) Father could not have gotten his knowledge by eating the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge because it is the wrong way.

**The illusion of opposites.** The Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil represents illusion. This illusion includes an illusory knowledge (a belief) in opposites. Despite this idea seeming obvious, there seems to be a universal acceptance by temple patrons that a reality of opposition in all things is one of the great and noble truths of the Mormon religion. To the contrary, believing in the reality of opposition is succumbing to the lies.

Here, it may be helpful to briefly examine the idea of opposition in all things. In examining proposed opposites, one might notice that opposition to truth can't be anything except a creation of the mind. This, in turn, can only manifest itself as more illusion, since what is unreal can never give rise to that which is.

It may be helpful to consider how opposition is an illusion. One might first accept that truth embodies that which truly exists and always has existed (*ie.* it is eternal). That is, truth (reality) comprises '*everything which is*'. Next one might inquire whether or not there can be an opposite to that. The answer is (really) no, but (apparently) yes. That is, there cannot (really) be an opposite to reality (what is), although there can indeed be an apparent (illusory) opposite to reality (what isn't). However, opposition in this case ('*that which isn't*') is illusion (not real) by definition. Thus, an opposite to truth cannot really exist in reality (since the opposite is illusion). However, there can be an *appearance* of opposites. Moreover, one can become bound (imprisoned) by illusion when one believes it is real.

At a risk of being too redundant, it may be helpful to state this again in another way. The opposite of truth is falsehood and the opposite of *'that which is'* is *'that which isn't'*. However, *'that which isn't'* doesn't really exist, except as an illusion. *'That which isn't'* is nothing. *'That which isn't'* doesn't exist in reality except as an abstraction created in mind and believed. When *'that which isn't'* becomes belief then a lie is born. Lies are illusions by definition and illusions are lies. They are not real, but they can be believed, making them appear real. Thus, there is not really opposition to *'that which is'*, but there can be a belief that there is. Believing in illusion is be-living a lie, which is what the symbol of Lucifer (false light-bearer) is all about. (Be)-Living in illusion is what is symbolized by partaking of the fruit of Knowledge.

In one sense, Lucifer is symbolically synonymous with the Tree of Knowledge. Metaphorically, the tree produces (creates) corrupt fruit (lies; illusion) of which others can partake (believe). If we partake of the corrupt fruit (illusion), then we in turn become corrupt trees bearing our own corrupt fruit. It is rightly said that we reap the *fruits of our labor*. Thus the fruits of eating corrupt (bitter) fruit is more corruption (bitterness) that returns to us as all things return to the creator. This is why the Lone and Dreary World (in which we live now) is one of bitterness. When we come to know ourselves, we will see why. But there is more to this because we will *come to know ourselves by our fruits*. Ultimately, we will come to know the world in which we live as our own creation. Eventually, we will come to see why.

The ideas presented in the above paragraph have everything to do with why illusion exists in the first place. It has a great purpose and that purpose is a continuing one, despite the appearance of it being divided (opposition). Belief in illusion can never change reality, notwithstanding it can change the appearance of it. This may be a difficult concept to fully grasp because one needs to get out of the illusion in order to see (perceive) it (the truth) clearly. That is, the idea of how illusion fills its purpose will be fully grasped only after one fully emerges from it. The illusion is not destroyed. Nor need it be, since it is unreal (illusion) in the first place. The illusion will continue to fill a purpose after Adam has emerged from it, but it will be a different one because opposition is not what it is really about. Moreover, what Adam has been doing after becoming lost in the illusion is the same thing that he will do after he emerges from the Fall: Re-creating himself. The illusion will not change, but Adam's knowledge of himself will.

One of the great truths to be discovered when emerging from illusion is that things eternal are not obtained by great effort or as a result of achievement. Anything eternal already exists right now, otherwise it would not be eternal. This is why (eternal) life is said to be *found* and also why it is said to be *free*. It's (a) present (*ie.* a gift) now, notwithstanding few believe it to be so because of the illusion brought about by eating the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge which results in a belief in death. One might notice the interesting symbolism in the word *'evil'* which is *'live'* spelled backwards, signifying death. *'Devil'* is *'lived'* spelled in reverse. These refer to spiritual death as a (Fallen) state of mind that has one not living now.

**The illusion of death.** An important concept symbolized in the creation parable is the entrance of death into the world. Death comes as a result of eating the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. Since death comes from eating the fruit of Knowledge, it is an illusion. But how so? Death is something that people sincerely believe in. But why? Where does the idea of death come?

We might rightly consider (the illusion of) death to be something that we have created ourselves. Carnal man has eaten the bitter fruit and produced bitter fruit of his own. In a sense, death

is a bitter fruit of eating bitter fruit. But, the good news is that corrupt (bitter) fruit is exactly what it is. That is, it's just another illusion (lie) believed by the mind of carnal and fallen man. Despite the sincere belief in death, it remains an illusion in reality, notwithstanding death takes on all of the pretense of reality in the carnal and Fallen mind which lives the illusion.

It is rightly said that there are two forms of death, physical and spiritual. Physical death is defined as the separation of the spirit from the physical body (a vehicle) and spiritual death is being separate from God. True to form, carnal man appears to obsess himself with the wrong form of death by thinking that physical death is his real enemy. However, this is entirely appropriate because carnal man is lost in the illusion and he thereby gets everything inverted. Carnal man obsesses himself with his physical body because he lives by the carnal senses that come through the body. Carnal man tends to judge his entire existence by that which he believes. But the reality of it is that carnal man believes in carnality so he is entrapped by the carnal senses. He believes in the body and identifies himself with it. This is the very definition of carnal, sensual, devilish, symbolizing an obsession with the world of the outer (carnal) senses.

The illusionary world of the senses is the only reality that carnal man *knows*. It might be noticed that this obsession with the sense-body is redundantly symbolized at many places in the scriptural cannon and is part of the message behind the symbols of man and woman. Eve symbolizes the flesh (body) which tempts Adam (symbolizing the Spirit) to eat the fruit (of creation). This entrapment of the Spirit by the material world of the carnal senses is symbolized by Eve enticing Adam to partake of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge . In the creation parable, she resorts to worldly reason as well as enticement.

However, there is something else that might be important to notice. Eve is fooled into partaking of the fruit, but Adam appears to do it knowing it will bring about a Fall (Spiritual death; illusion). Here it may be helpful to remember that Adam (Michael) symbolizes the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit cannot be deceived so it must make the choice to partake of illusion willingly. In looking at parallels in the symbolism, one might notice that the '*forgetting*' of Michael (*ie.* forgetting of who he really is) is accompanied by Adam's entrance into the Terrestrial world and his subsequent uniting with Eve (symbolizing the creation) in marriage. Here, Eve is Adam's companion and helpmeet (that he might not be alone). This coming of Michael to the Terrestrial world is in parallel to Adam willingly eating the fruit of Knowledge and subsequently being cast out into the Lone and Dreary (Telestial) world where he is imprisoned by the senses (carnality; represented by the symbol of the enticing of Eve).

At one level of meaning, there is only one Fall, at another there are two. But, what is important here is understanding that partaking of the Fall at both levels is an event that is done willingly. This has more to do with what is going on now than it has to do with what went on in the past. The point of this story is how it applies to us. It tells us who we are, where we are at the moment, and what we are doing. Our obsession with physical death has everything to do with our entrapment in the sense-world of carnality, an illusionary world in the first place. Physical death releases the Spirit from the tabernacle of the senses, but not necessarily from their bondage because the problem is really in his mind. One must get out of the carnal mind to see that physical death is illusionary. Adam will understand it when he starts to remember who he really is (Spirit). In rising from carnality, Adam will see death as something he willingly buys into.

To the immortal Spirit, physical death is meaningless. It merely separates from the body and lives on, being immortal. The only death that can threaten the Spirit is Spiritual death that is brought about by having forgotten who it is. Again, this is what the Fall is all about, buying into the illusion. In partaking of the illusion (having forgotten who it is), the Spirit I-identifies with the body and believes in the reality of (physical) death, oblivious to the Spiritual death that has just been created. Spiritual death, unlike physical death, is something that is happening to Adam right now, notwithstanding it too is an illusion.

Spiritual death is separation from the Spirit, but is that something that really happens? No. It is just imagined to happen and it is Adam's own (illusionary) creation. There are two reasons Spiritual death cannot be real: (i) God is unconditional love and unconditional love never abandons, and (ii) It is impossible for Adam to not be who he is, despite his pretending.

It might first be noticed that Spiritual death is a one sided event. That is, Adam cuts himself off from the Spirit, but it is not the other way around. God continues to speak to Adam in (the symbols of) all of creation. In reality, everything in creation is meaningfully about him (Adam). Adam is really Michael who has forgotten that he is the Holy Spirit. The Spirit cannot cut itself off from itself, notwithstanding it can believe so.

A profound idea that emerges from the endowment parable is that death, although illusionary, is a happening event. Patrons are told in several different ways that they are dead, which of course, refers to the state of spiritual death (living under illusion). That is a fundamental message of the endowment ceremony, but is almost universally missed by the patrons who return day after day to do the work for the dead, not realizing who's work they really do. The irony is that while the Eternal Spirit is speaking (from beyond the symbols of the endowment), few (patrons; Adam and Eve) appear to be listening. That by itself is the textbook definition of spiritual death. Again, it is a one sided event. Adam cuts himself off from the Spirit when he becomes fallen and carnal. Because of the illusion, he fails to hear what is really being said to him. It is as profound as it can be.

Moreover, these same ideas are redundantly found all through LDS teachings for anyone who will take time to notice. Here one might notice that LDS teachings say *"the Church is for the perfection of the Saints."* Yes, of course it is. And that is why the church is perfect; It is because it fulfills its purpose and the measure of its creation. But one might see a little more and ask if the Saints were perfect, then why is there a need for the church? No, there wouldn't be a need. This statement about the purpose of the church is, in effect, an admission of spiritual death about those whom it serves. It should be noted that it is because of (spiritual) death and its concomitant (dead) works that the church is given. As stated in D&C 22: *"For it is because of your dead works that I have caused this last covenant and this church to be built up unto me, even as in days of old."*

**Illusion and veils.** In trying to understand the meaning of the fruit of Knowledge, it may help to notice other symbols with similar meanings. The illusion symbolized by the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge is closely tied to the meaning of the veil of the temple. It might be noticed that there is a redundancy that pervades this symbolism. In the scriptural record there are a variety of names for the veil, all of which are synonymous in meaning: the veil of unbelief, the veil of forgetfulness, the veil of darkness, the veil of death, and the veil of the temple. These symbolize the separation of the bridegroom (Spirit) from the bride (creation), the Spirit from the Temple (which temple ye are), and spiritual death.

When passing through the endowment ceremony, one encounters several veils. Women (symbolizing the creation) wear a veil to cover their faces (representing a separation from the Spirit; their husbands; Adam), patrons wear aprons and garments (to cover their nakedness), and a curtain (veil) separates the patrons from the Celestial Room. These are tied together in meaning via symbolic parallel and redundancy. Although several veils are presented, their meaning is directly relevant to individuals as temples and what is occurring in the present time and place. Veils represent illusion by symbolizing barriers, coverings, and separation. Creation of veils, wearing them, or standing at them, are symbolic of the same illusion symbolized by the Tree of Knowledge.

Endowment patrons first become aware of the veil of the temple that covers the Celestial room, despite that not being the first veil to which they are introduced. The veil of the temple separates the outer court from the Holy of Holies (Celestial Room) as a symbol of the veil over the heart of the temple. Since ye are the temple spoken of, it is symbolic of the state of spiritual death and illusion of those in attendance and is meaningfully synonymous with a familiar statement that patrons are prone to apply to others rather than themselves: "... *their hearts are far from me.*"

More symbolism of veils is represented by the apron and the garment. In these, there are some interesting parallels. Adam and Eve make aprons for themselves after being conned into believing they are naked. Endowment patrons readily don these aprons upon themselves without question when they are told to do so. Adam and Eve sincerely believe that they are doing right by being obedient. This takes another turn when Adam and Eve accept garments of skins that are meant to cover their nakedness, never once questioning the idea that the need for these coverings are founded upon a lie (fear; of being naked). After all, God gave them the garment, so there is no reason to question that! In living fully under the illusion, Adam doesn't appear to have a clue as to what is really happening.

All of this is powerfully symbolic and perfectly appropriate. To those who might not yet fully comprehend this idea, an important question might be posed: Who is the God who gave you garments? The question might be phrased another way: "*Who told you that you are naked?*"

It may be helpful to notice that patrons obtain garments in a ceremony that is separate from the main presentation of the endowment. Patrons afterwards proceed with the main endowment to don aprons that they wear over the top of everything they are given. These are all profoundly symbolic, but the meaning of these things will not be discussed here because it digresses too far from the topic at hand. In trying to understand these things, it is important to notice the ties to other parts of the presentation, more specifically, partaking of the fruit of Knowledge and the bondage it brings about. One might especially notice that the symbols of the endowment are redundantly stacked inside one another in a fashion that is reminiscent of Russian dolls that have one doll stacked inside the other. There is a lot of repetition by parallels. As one considers the meanings of the endowment, one might take time to notice these repetitions, parallels, and redundancies.

In looking at the symbolism of the veil, it may help to notice that the many veils are relatively thin or constitute very poor coverings. This is part of the profound symbolism of the temple. In emerging from his fallen and carnal state of being, Adam is destined to part all veils. These veils will then fall back where they belong. When that happens, veils will become as meaningless as all symbols. It is not the symbols themselves that are meaningful, but what they represent. What will have changed is Adam, not the veil. Ultimately, Adam will lift the veil and recognize his own face looking back. This is part of the symbolic meaning of the veil over the face of the woman (his bride).

**The illusion of good versus evil.** As previously discussed, the Tree is called Knowledge of *Good and Evil* symbolizes an illusion of opposition, a lie that is believed. Carnal man lives under an illusion of having knowledge of good and evil so he doesn't understand what is going on in the world in which he lives. As a result of his belief in opposition, carnal man perceives the world about him in a context of conflict between good and evil.

To carnal man, the war between good and evil on earth is but a continuation of a *War* started long ago *in Heaven*. Carnal man needs to consider that he is wrong and that he doesn't understand the metaphor of a War in Heaven. Good doesn't need to war against evil because evil is an illusion in the first place believed to be real by evil. The wars of carnal man are his own creation; He made them in heaven. In reality, these wars are evil *versus* evil. The dead always do the work for the dead.

It may be helpful to first notice the premises that one must adopt in order to accept the popular interpretation of a War in Heaven. A popular view is that good and evil are two opposing forces of near-equal strength meeting in battle. But what is this premise really saying? Many who consider themselves true followers of God will proclaim that God is omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent (*ie.* all powerful, all knowing, ever present). The problem is that few will take time to consider that such a God can never be threatened by anything. In thinking that there is an equal opposing force (evil) to God, then what is one really saying about evil?

Part of the problem lies within carnal man himself. The blindness that comes from eating the fruit prevents us from seeing what *IS* in the *first place*. Carnal man thinks that since there is a conflict, there must be opposites at work. One side must be evil, so the other must be good; Good *versus* Evil, opposites. Carnal man has knowledge of opposites at work, or so he thinks. The truth is that he gets things inverted, putting first for last and last for first. He really doesn't have knowledge, as he believes he does, but un-belief (isn't-belief).

Carnal man's un-belief is compounded by thinking that he is the one representing good, standing up against evil. He may even perceive himself as the only thing that prevents evil from overcoming good. He believes that to win in a conflict, good must overcome evil by meeting it headlong in battle. Thus good must play the same game as evil to beat it. The perspective of carnal man might be summed up in the popular saying attributed to Edmond Burke that "*All that is required for evil to triumph is for good men to do nothing.*" Carnal man's failure to understand what is going on keeps him in a perpetual state of conflict (which he himself has created). This state of being is symbolized in the curse upon Eve that she will bring forth children (creations) in sorrow. The carnal mind is at work and it is under illusion. Adam is creating the world in which he lives, but he can't seem to understand what is really happening. Yes, Adam always chooses, rightly. Again, be sure to notice the comma before rightly.

As carnal man emerges from his illusion, he will remember the meaning of eternal. He will realize that whatever is eternal must be a part of him right now. If life is eternal, then how can it be taken? The real truth is that eternal life can't be given up, but it can appear to be. Adam has nothing to lose, except illusion. He was never naked in the first place.

**The illusion of victim-hood.** One of the truths that emerge from the story of eating the fruit is in regard to *victim-hood*. The descent of Adam and Eve into the Lone and Dreary World is popularly perceived as being victims of a greater mind (Lucifer) and a con that originates outside of themselves. Carnal man is always blaming others from what he has done himself. However, other symbols in the

endowment proclaim that the veil which blinds Adam's mind is his own creation. This is symbolized at least in three places, (i) Michael as a creator of the earth, (ii) Adam and Eve making themselves aprons (veils), and (iii) Adam knowingly partaking of the fruit. Endowment patrons are prone to see these events as part of a *Divine Plan*, a foreordained path that is traveled by those who are destined to meet all they are required to achieve salvation. Patrons might consider these notions to be a product of the carnal mind that interprets everything in worldly terms. Adam's own misconceptions lead him to a feeling of betrayal when he finally comes to realize that the church and its leaders have played the role of Lucifer and his hirelings in the worldly drama erroneously called *life* (which is really spiritual death). Adam will eventually stop playing the blame game because he will see that he himself is the originator of the illusion that binds him.

As carnal man begins to tire of the illusion he created, he will begin to *remember*. What is remembered is not so much as something that has gone on in the past as it is what is going on presently. *Remembering* means to put it back together (re-member), re-create, and heal. The meaning of re-remembering has everything to do with the symbol of resurrection and overcoming (the illusion of) death.

As carnal man emerges from illusion, he begins to realize that what he was doing is what he is meant to be doing, notwithstanding his (former) sorrow (suffering). He will begin to understand the purpose of the illusionary nature of creation and that it is perfect. Fallen man will emerge from his suffering to find life. Moreover, he finds that eternal life is not earned as a reward for his great effort, but that it has always been there waiting for him. Eternal life has always been a present (gift) in the ever-present (now). Carnal man never needed to descend into illusion. He chose to.

**The face in the mirror.** The LDS endowment is a highly symbolic act filled with deep and profound meaning. In coming to understand the endowment, there is a great truth awaiting: *The endowment is all about you.* When patrons fathom the deep meaning of that simple statement, they will come to find true knowledge rather than be bound by an illusion of having knowledge. As Adam comes to know himself, the creation parable will no longer be viewed as a past event of forgotten history. It will be seen as a process that is happening right now.

Ultimately, Adam will learn that *true knowledge comes from knowing himself*. Moreover, knowing ourselves is not an event as much as it is an ongoing process in which we are continually discovering ourselves. This is what eternal life is truly about. Michael, an individualized part of the Eternal Spirit, discovers who he really is through a process of re-creation. The true glory of the creation (illusion) is that it provides a means by which he can do this.

Metaphorically, creation is as a mirror in which Michael, as Adam, peers so that he can see himself. What Adam sees in the mirror is a reflection of his own face, which face he cannot see otherwise. The purpose of the mirror is that Adam may find (see; discover) himself. Discovering oneself anew doesn't require getting lost in the mirror's image, although some may choose to do that to experience what it means. Eternal life is meant to be an ongoing event of re-creation and discovery. Michael (God; Spirit) forgets who he is so that he may re-create himself anew and then discover by experience what that means. It is not about what '*was*' at all, but about what '*is*'. Eternal life is not something that is bestowed upon Adam at some future date, but it is something he, as Michael, already had. It is an ongoing process of discovery. Eternal life is happening to you (Adam/Eve) right now, even if it is disbelieved.

As Michael/Adam re-creates himself, the world around him changes. It is in similitude of the image in the mirror that moves when we do. We are faced with what we have created which is a reflection of what we are. It is not so much about others as it is about us. When Adam tires of what he has created, he changes (recreates) himself. There is a surprise in the process that can only be discovered by experiencing it. In recreating himself anew, Adam always discovers more than he imagines. This is the life more abundant.

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*“Learn the meaning of the creation which surroundeth you and ye will perceive the mysteries hidden from your sight, for the Eternal Truth is recorded on all that existeth. Verily I say unto you, there is nothing hidden which shall not be revealed to him who can read the creation of God” – The Sayings of Jesus*

## **The Meaning of the Kirtland Temple and Beyond**

**By Eleazar, 2004**

This narrative is written to those who are interested in understanding the meaning and purpose of Mormon temples and will focus on the temple built at Kirtland, Ohio. Temple buildings, like all symbols, tell stories. There are powerful messages written in their structures, rituals, and histories for anyone to read who is willing to decode the message.

This narrative comes with no claims of being complete, correct, or authoritative. The sole purpose of these writings is to offer ideas in the spirit of free thinking and freedom of expression. There is no expectation by the author of this narrative that any of it be accepted as gospel. Nor is it the intention of the author that any of what follows be part of a belief system of organized religion in any of its forms.

The Kirtland Temple has a different floor plan and endowment ritual than is found in LDS temples today. Compared to today, the Kirtland endowment was the higher endowment. A major thrust of its symbolic message is about the very thing that carnal man as a religious zealot seeks the most, but which always seems to elude him: Zion.

The Kirtland Temple comprises a portion of a larger parable told in the structure and the evolution of temples as the church moved from its eastward place in New York to its westward location in Utah. The movement of the church and its people westward is an integral part of the message, symbolizing a loss of spiritual ideals and a journey into materialism.

Subsequent temples were built at Nauvoo, Illinois, and Salt Lake City, Utah. As alluded to in the previous paragraph, the parable being told in the evolution of the structure and ritual of these temples is a familiar one, though few will recognize it at first. Ironically, it is the same story being told in the LDS endowment ritual today. It's nothing less than the familiar story of the Fall of man and his imprisonment in illusion, bringing about a state of spiritual death. To find the true meaning of

the temple and its symbolic parables, one must go beyond them and discover what is being represented.

**Temples and Parable.** Before proceeding with a discussion of Kirtland Temple symbolism, it may be helpful to make a few general statements about symbols and parables in regard to the outer structures of temples. It should be fairly evident to students of the endowment that the inner ritual is a highly symbolic act that communicates profound messages through parable, allegory, and metaphor. However, few may have taken the time to notice the symbolism that is contained in the outer structures of temples such as their floor plans, utilization, and history. To understand the message, one first needs to notice that the symbols exist. Afterwards, one will need to read them.

In decoding temple symbolism, it helps to notice that there is a great redundancy in message. Different symbols and parables that may appear to be unrelated at first glance are really highly interwoven into communicating a single idea in different ways. For example, in contemporary LDS temples, endowment patrons are treated to a story of the organization of the earth, the placement of Adam and Eve in the Garden, and the subsequent imprisonment of Adam and Eve by illusion represented by partaking of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. This is called *the Fall* in the popular vernacular. Those who are paying attention to symbols of the Fall might first come to notice that this same story is retold over and over throughout religious culture. One of the more obvious places for a retelling of the Fall is in the parable of Noah and the flood. After emerging from the ark, Noah drinks wine and is found to be naked in his tent. His sons walk backwards to cover him with a garment. It should be noticed that the symbolic motifs in the story of Noah are redundant with those found in the creation parable. Like Adam, Noah is a first man on a new world. His drunkenness carries synonymous meaning with eating the fruit of illusion and his tent is symbolic of the Garden residence of Adam. Like Adam, Noah receives a garment to cover his nakedness. These stories are about the same thing, not opposites. Both tell the story of the Fall, though in a different way.

Again, the story of the Fall is the same story being told in the evolution of temples from Ohio to Utah. To recognize this parable, it is important to notice the symbolic motifs of earliest temples compared to temples today. One will also need to notice symbols in regard to their order of appearance in temples and what each of them represents. To uncover the meaning of these symbols, we might first discuss the structure of the Kirtland temple and its allegorical message. The structure of the Kirtland temple will be compared to the Nauvoo Temple and finally to the Salt Lake Temple in order to see how the message evolves into a meaningful parable.

**Gathering in the Holy Place.** One of the more obvious symbolic messages of the Kirtland Temple is in regard to gathering to Zion. Gathering is symbolized in the two assembly floors that comprise the bulk of the Kirtland temple space. This is quite different from LDS temples of today which are primarily used for ritualistic ordinance work. There are two assembly halls in the Kirtland Temple, one at ground level and another that is a second story above the first. The third floor of the Kirtland temple is an attic floor used for administrative offices and classrooms. One thing that is very important to notice about the Kirtland Temple is that there is no basement. The symbolic message of a basement will be discussed later as will the significance of three floors. But first, it may be better to briefly discuss the two assembly halls in terms of their symbolic significance.

The two assembly halls are symbolic of a place for the *gathering of saints*. Many LDS of today are familiar with the topic of a *Holy Place* or a *Center Place* as a site for gathering. It should be

fairly obvious that the *Holy Place* for gathering refers to the temple, more specifically inside the temple. However, few seem to remember that they are the Temple being spoken of. Since it is we who are the true temple, the Holy Place for gathering to God is within us.

Because it is such an important concept to understand, readers may want to take additional time to contemplate the idea of gathering in regard to the symbolism just mentioned. Although the meaning of the symbolism might appear obvious, few seem to get it. Popular notions of a gathering place for the saints seem to lie in terms of a literal-physical proximity of a lot of other people. The Holy Place is sometimes thought to be in the Temple building itself. The Center Place is often seen as a place set aside for a future homeland, again in terms of a physical address. Even today, highly devoted LDS or those from offshoot groups have moved to Missouri in an effort to establish Zion. It is widely believed in LDS culture that central Missouri is the original site of the Garden of Eden as well as a place for the establishment of a future ecclesiastical system of government delivering a *law* unto all. However, few seem to take time to consider that these outward and carnal interpretations may be wide of the point. Any such gathering would result in a lot of crowding and living conditions reminiscent of cities under siege. Being locked into such a physical address is not representative of freedom at all, but its opposite.

It may help to consider other possibilities in regard to what gathering means as well as what is meant by *Holy Place*. The temple is a symbol. Again, we are the temple spoken of, therefore the holy place for gathering is within each of us. It may be rightly said that the *Holy Place* is the place of the heart. This is why Zion is said to be *the pure in heart*. All true saints gather unto God. This gathering is done by going deep within oneself and *meeting God in the Holy Place*, so to speak.

Some may have already noticed that the message described in the above paragraph is the same one being described in the Missouri gathering place and Garden of Eden metaphors. Missouri lies at the approximate center of this continent and is often referred to in the Mormon vernacular as the *center place*. In terms of metaphor, the center place is the heart. This is synonymous with symbols of the Holy Place, the Garden of Eden, and others. It can rightly be said that this symbolism is about you. Moreover, it is the same message as told in the Kirtland Temple metaphor, only using other symbols.

The entire point being made in the above paragraphs is that the outward interpretation in regard to gathering and establishing Zion is highly misleading and dead-ended. Zion is established by purifying the heart and mind, not some spot of dirt. Moreover, those who are purified in mind and heart are all gathered unto God in a very real way, despite where their physical bodies are at any given moment. This is part of the powerful message of Kirtland Temple symbolism. It is a message of freedom by going within. This is despite the fact that most of us, being carnal and fallen, totally miss the point of what is meant.

**The Triune Being.** It may be helpful to notice the symbolism in the Kirtland Temple having three floors, two gathering floors and an attic for offices and classrooms. These symbolize the triune nature of man.

Symbolism of man as a triune being is found throughout gospel teachings. Man is popularly said to be comprised of *body, mind, and spirit*. Although this phrase is allegorically correct in its symbolism of Fallen man, it is backwards in its presentation of Spiritual man because it places body first and Spirit last. It may be better to say that man is *Spirit, Mind, and body* or, to use other terms, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, Celestial, Terrestrial, and Telestial, God the Father, Jesus the Christ, and

church, or awareness, perception, and action. The triune nature of man is symbolized in the three floors of the Kirtland Temple with the attic floor representing the Spirit or awareness, the middle floor representing the Mind or perception, and the ground floor representing the body or manifestation.

This triune nature of man is also symbolized in the contemporary LDS endowment in the personages of Peter, James, and John. Again, the phrasing is, appropriately, backwards. Peter in the endowment represents the *body* or physical creation, James the *Mind* and John the *Spirit*. It may help to remember that the church is (allegorically) built upon Peter. That is why the church is often called the body as well as the bride in other symbolic representations. Peter, as the symbolic representation of the creation, also symbolizes the proto-typical Lucifer. It may help to remember that in the New Testament it is Peter that Jesus called Satan and told to get behind him as well as Peter who denied the Christ thrice.

To comprehend the symbolism of the role of Peter in the endowment ceremony, it is important to notice what is happening. It should be noticed that Peter is the one who speaks to Adam after the Fall and it is Peter who is the *de facto* narrator of the endowment. As narrator, Peter symbolically represents the leaders of the church. It might help to notice the parallel in the Catholic Church, which claims their foundation on Peter as the first Pope and founder of the church. A major clue as to the role of Peter in the endowment emerges when Adam makes himself an apron in obedience to Lucifer's suggestion and immediately afterwards the narrator's voice booms over the loudspeaker telling patrons to put on their aprons. It's a perfect parallel with all present performing the same way as Adam and Eve.

So, what's so great about Peter? Well, that is part of the symbolic parable. Carnal man, because of his nature, is prone to get everything inverted. He mistakenly places that which is first, last and *visa versa*. That is why it is appropriate for carnal man to see himself as a triune creature of *body, mind and spirit* as well as why he sees Peter as the first in the trio of *Peter, James, and John*. To carnal man, the body comes first. Although he doesn't know it, that is the problem. Carnal man identifies himself with the body rather than the Spirit. It is this identification with the body, creation, or church, that is symbolized in the endowment with Peter being placed in front of John and James and why Peter occupies the position of the talking head in the endowment ritual.

James and John do not utter lines in the contemporary endowment ceremony except to say that "*I am James*" or "*I am John*". These lines are profoundly symbolic, but time will not be taken to discuss the symbolism here. John is, appropriately, the one whom Jesus is said to have loved the most and this has everything to do with the meaning behind the symbolic metaphor. John is symbolic of the Spirit and thus synonymous in symbolic metaphor with the Father as Eternal Spirit. To the Christ figure, it is Spirit that is always placed first, then follows Mind, and body, these being the proper order. In the same way, the proper order for appearance of the three messengers is John, James and Peter rather than Peter, James and John. In the mind and heart of (w)Holy man, Peter comes last rather than first. The popular way of having the order inverted is meaningfully symbolic of what is happening in the temple this day. Again, ye are the temple spoken of.

At a risk of being overly repetitive, it is important to see the symbolism in the floors of the Kirtland Temple in their proper order. The top floor, the highest from the earth, is the attic. Again, the attic of the Kirtland temple was used for administrative offices and classrooms. The attic floor is synonymous with the Father, Spirit, Celestial, or Awareness. The next floor of the Kirtland Temple, going down, is representative of the Son, Terrestrial world, Mind, or perception. This second floor is

also symbolic of the Christ as the mediator between the Spirit and body. The ground floor represents all things Telestial and is synonymous with such things as Holy Ghost, creation, body, or church.

All of these symbols are representative of carnal man and his spiritual counterpart, Father and Son. The word ‘*man*’ is short for *manifestation*, an appropriate term since carnal man infatuates himself with appearances and image. However, the body creation and all of manifestation is that which does not have life in and of itself. Despite this being the case, carnal man erroneously interprets his world in terms of the illusory outer image and this is why he thinks in terms of a reversed order of body, mind and spirit, rather than the other way around. Carnal man loves man. It is truthfully said that carnal man obsesses himself with the manifestation, himself. Since that is his nature, it is appropriate that man be given a name that shows it: Man. *Fallen man* and *carnal man* are each redundant phrases because the name ‘*man*’ is sufficient to communicate what he is about without adding *fallen* or *carnal* as adjectives to *man*.

**Spiritual Death and the Baptismal Font.** One important difference to notice when comparing floor plans of the Nauvoo Temple with the Kirtland temple is the presence of a basement. Other than the basement, the floor plans of the Kirtland and (original) Nauvoo Temples are virtually identical. It may also help to notice that all temples built after Nauvoo contain a basement. The reason for this becomes clear after the symbolism of basements is fully understood as well as what temples from Kirtland to Utah represent in terms of symbolic parable.

The primary fixture in the basement of the Nauvoo Temple was a baptismal font resting on the backs of twelve oxen. The font is a place of baptisms for the dead. *Baptism for the dead* is a redundant phrase and highly symbolic. In truth, all baptisms are for the dead. The dead are those who are spiritually dead, carnal, sensual, or Fallen. The dead are the only ones in need of baptism since the (spiritually) living (symbolized by children) have no need for it. This is despite a widespread misunderstanding of the teaching in LDSism that Jesus needed baptism despite being perfect. The topic of perfection and its relationship to our experience in the Telestial world will be discussed in a later narrative.

The basement of the temple is appropriately constructed below ground level, symbolizing spiritual death. Among other things, the baptismal font symbolizes a way out of this state of being (spiritual death) which is by passing through death of the old way of being and a birth into the new. In a way, it represents death to death and birth to life, notwithstanding the baptism ritual is merely a symbol of what is really to happen and can never substitute for the real event. In actuality, baptism has no real meaning because what is meaningful is beyond the ritual.

The twelve oxen beneath the font represent the twelve tribes of Israel. The tribes of Israel are popularly looked upon as positive religious symbols. However, it is quite the opposite. The tribes of Israel represent what needs to die in symbolic sacrifice to free carnal man from the mindful illusion that holds him in bondage. Separation of Israel into twelve tribes symbolizes a destruction of Israel, not the building of Israel. Tribes do not symbolize the establishment of Zion, but represents its opposite of disunity. A keyword in this symbolism is ‘*tribes*’. Again, the separation of men into tribes symbolizes division and disuniting of men, not the opposite. The phrase “*lost tribes*” is a redundant phrase since *lost* and *tribes* symbolize the same thing. In emerging from the state of spiritual death, man will need to stop thinking that tribes are good. In the process of gathering all things into one, tribes will cease to exist.

The baptismal font resting on the backs of the oxen is integral to the symbolism of what is represented by tribes. It may help to notice that oxen are beasts. As beasts, they carry a heavy burden, represented by the baptismal font. The symbolism of oxen facing outwards in four different directions is representative of carnality (looking outward) as well as their state of disunity. The oxen hold the font on their backs, symbolizing them being burdened down with the sins of the world.

It is important to remember that the Kirtland Temple lacked a basement and its attendant baptismal font to do work for the dead. The presence of the basement in the Nauvoo Temple, most especially with its font for baptism for the dead, the beasts of burden, and tribal symbolism, represents a state of disunion and spiritual death accompanying the descent into illusion. Prior to building of the Temple at Nauvoo, these symbols were not present. It should be noticed that these symbols have persisted from Nauvoo up to the present time, at least in regard to the latter-day church.

Latter-day temples, being buildings, are built with wood and stone, symbolizing the nature of carnal and fallen man as the proverbial polluted temple. Metaphorically, the head of carnal man is wood and his heart is stone; He is unable to hear (comprehend) the Word of the Lord. These are the reasons why carnal man gets temple buildings (symbols in creation) such as those seen today. Unbeknownst to carnal man, the church and temples are perfect. Carnal man receives these because he fails to understand what they mean, not because he understands. As carnal man begins to understand his error, these symbols will pass away because they will no longer have a purpose.

**The Kirtland and Nauvoo Endowments.** It is important to notice that the Kirtland Temple did not utilize an endowment ritual as it is practiced today. Activities in the Kirtland Temple included the School of the Prophets, the sacrament, and the washing of feet. These are meaningfully symbolic of the triune nature of carnal man as well as other things that will not be discussed further at this time.

Despite the (original) Nauvoo Temple being built on the same floor-plan as the Kirtland Temple, it was never utilized for the same purpose as the Kirtland Temple. The assembly floors in the Nauvoo Temple were never completed, despite the dedication of the structure in 1846. This by itself is part of the symbolic metaphor. At the time of the murder of the three Smith brothers (Hyrum, Joseph, and Samuel) in 1844, the Nauvoo Temple was still under construction. After 1844, the outer design of the Kirtland Temple was revised to include symbolic motifs of sun, moon, and star stones. The star stones were inverted pentagrams, the common occult symbol of the fallen star from heaven and these decorated the temple at the level of the attic floor where the main activity in the Nauvoo Temple was carried out. It should be noticed that the attic floor of the Nauvoo Temple, originally meant for offices and classrooms, was never used for the purposes for which they were originally designed. Instead, the attic floor was retrofitted for an endowment ceremony similar to what is given today.

The last-minute co-opting of space originally planned for offices in the Nauvoo Temple and its use for endowment ordinance work seems to reflect a lack of foresight and planning in regard to building the Nauvoo Temple. Again, the two main floors were never completed and never used. This prompts the question of what is going on? Could it be that God could not foresee how this temple was going to be used? Readers might consider that all things are in perfect order and this is no exception. The symbolic message of this (as well as other things in creation) are what carnal beings are prone to miss. Ironically, this is why they exist. In reality, all is perfection.

To understand what is going on, one needs to be able to read the symbolic metaphor. It is important to remember that the leaders of the church unsuccessfully attempted to sell the Nauvoo Temple. Shortly after, the Nauvoo Temple was taken over by non-Mormons and destroyed by fire before the temple stones were carted off to be used in foundations of homes of Nauvoo residents and to build a local school. All of these events are part of the symbolism of the Nauvoo Temple and comprise a profound parable. As explained above, the Nauvoo Temple was never used for the purpose originally designed. Being such, it comprised a temple that is polluted, so to speak. The scriptures say that the *unclean temple will be destroyed* and this is fulfilled in the Temple at Nauvoo. The real meaning of this parable is how this is fulfilled in us, except it is in real time. It is not so much that an unclean temple *will be* destroyed as much as it *is* destroyed. This destruction of the temple is synonymous in meaning with spiritual death. We are the temple spoken of in these parables.

Many are aware that the Nauvoo Temple was rebuilt a few years ago, or so it would seem. Although the outside of the rebuilt Nauvoo Temple resembles the earlier structure, it is not the same temple at all because the inside of the rebuilt Temple is quite different from the former. Again, the earlier structure consisted of an attic story for administrative offices, two assembly floors, and a basement: Four levels total. Four is related to the number of levels of understanding per the ancient Egyptian endowment as is the same in regard to symbolism here. But, the modern Nauvoo structure was built to administer the contemporary endowment so they added a level, making five. This is an interesting symbolic feature, since five is a number that symbolizes carnality, being the number of the senses, the five wounds of Christ, and so forth. Among other things, the dressing room (third level) is above the assembly room (first level), representing an inversion in regard to the proper order. These are symbols that contain parables of a profound order. Although such messages are not flattering to us with inflated personal egos, they are powerfully instructive.

A major point to notice is that the modern Nauvoo Temple is not the same on the inside as the earlier one. That is, the newest Nauvoo Temple looks like the former structure on the outside, but it isn't like it on the *inside*. Again, these are parables. At the minimum, one must admit that the appearance of the rebuilt Nauvoo Temple does not accurately reflect the reality since the inside differs from what was before.

**The Relationship of the Kirtland and Salt Lake Temples.** The Salt Lake Temple is one of the most recognized icons of Mormonism and represents one of the greatest achievements of early Mormon effort and endurance. But, what does it mean? Part of what is meant is symbolically illustrated in its floor plan, decorative motifs, and utilization.

Those who have been patrons or workers in the Salt Lake Temple know that the endowment ceremony proceeds through several rooms including the creation room, the garden room, and the world room, before the ceremony ends in the Celestial room. The ceremony starts out below ground level, symbolizing spiritual death, and passage from one room to the next is often accompanied by steps upward that seem to represent a progression forwards and upwards as one moves from one room to the next. However, this doesn't seem to make sense. That is, it doesn't appear to make sense unless the Fall represents a step *forwards* in progression, a belief that most Mormons seem to hold true. Before unraveling the meaning of this apparent anomaly, one might ask a harder question of why it is that the Creation Room and Garden Rooms are below ground level? Why is it that Adam *Falls* and is not cast downwards into the next room representing the *Lone and Dreary World*? These apparent anomalies are meant to attract the attention of those who are passing through the ceremony in an apparent state of walking sleep. In many ways, the contemporary endowment is a messed up story, though at the same

time, perfect. It is upside down, inverted, or that which is first being placed last. In going beyond the anomalies, one finds great truths in the symbolic representation, much of which is very unflattering to those who are patrons of the ceremony.

An important feature to notice in regard to the layout of the Salt Lake Temple is in regard to the rooms appearing near the top of the structure. The Celestial room is not on the highest floor of the Salt Lake Temple, despite that being where the contemporary endowment ends. Even the room considered more important and sacred than the Celestial room, the *Holy of Holies*, is off of the Celestial room and it too is not on the highest floor in the temple. Looking from the outside of the building, the highest floor in the Salt Lake Temple is the one that is behind the highest row of oval-shaped windows and this room is an assembly hall that is identical in its design to the main floors found in the Kirtland Temple. This, by itself, is an important symbol not to be overlooked.

In symbolic metaphor, the Celestial room should be at the highest floor of the temple if it was true that the Celestial is the highest level of attainment as popularly believed in LDS doctrine. The presence of an assembly hall as the highest floor in the Salt Lake Temple, seems to suggest that what it represents is higher than what is symbolized in the contemporary endowment ritual. There are more teachings beyond. Moreover, higher teachings were given at Kirtland compared to those given in the Salt Lake Temple.

**Summary and Final Thoughts.** Most LDS view the history of the church from the Kirtland until now as a gradual evolution from a low spiritual state to a high one. However, the symbolism of temples say that it is exactly the opposite. The Kirtland Temple consists of three floors with no basement. These symbolize the triune nature of Adam, the true temple, and the idea that gathering is within the temple, which temple ye are. The arrival of a basement with baptismal font in latter-day temples started with the building of the Nauvoo Temple. It is in the baptismal font of temples that work for the dead is performed. The arrival of a basement and font symbolize the arrival of the state of spiritual death that continues until the present. Again, these symbols are not about what went on as much as about what is going on now. This too is the same message of the current endowment ritual, though told in a different way.

In the contemporary endowment ritual, a parable is told about the creation of the earth, the entrance of Adam into the garden, his fall into illusion, and his subsequent journey in the lone and dreary world. Again, this same story is redundantly told in many other symbols that surround us. It is a fundamental message in the symbolism of the establishment of the church in New York, its movement westward to Ohio, Illinois, and Utah. East is a common symbol for that which is Spirit and west is a symbol for things which are material. The movement westward is symbolic of the movement of the church into materialism and spiritual death. This reliance on materialism is also symbolized in popular phrases like *Peter, James, and John*, or *body, mind, and spirit*. Each of these place that which is material first rather than last. This Fall into materialism and spiritual death is also symbolized in the evolving structures of the temples and their rituals from Kirtland to Utah. Readers might notice that the Egyptians built pyramids on the west side of the Nile River which they rightly called the *land of the dead*. It is the same with the modern *Egyptians*, so to speak, since Egypt too is a symbol for the worldliness in parallel to Babylon.

These same parables are revealed in modern church structures as well. For example, the newly constructed Conference Center in Salt Lake City is primarily underground. Being below ground represents that which is hidden as well as that which is (spiritually) dead or earthly. What small part

of the Conference Center that does appear above ground is a concrete re-enforced building covered by a thin layer of natural stone (granite). In symbolic metaphor, concrete represents man-made stone and granite as natural stone, represents God-made stone. The thin façade of granite over a building of concrete symbolizes the deception of appearance. What appears to be God-made is really man-made or what appears to be heavenly is really earthly.

The newest temples being constructed today often consist of a single floor and a basement, representing the spiritual state of carnal man as a consummate single dimensional being who is (spiritually) dead. It should be noticed that this is the same story being presented in the current endowment ritual. Again, there is a great redundancy in these symbols. One might notice that the story of the Fall is told first in the outer symbols (the structures), then later in the symbols inside the temple (its ritual).

Devout LDS may find the ideas above to be offensive because of an interpretation that they denigrate the church and its leadership. It is not the intention of this author to give offense to those who believe in the church, but to offer ideas that some might find valuable at some point in time. The idea being offered in these writings is that one must go beyond all things that are believed to find what belief really means. The Kirtland Temple indeed had a higher endowment than is given today, but will one find meaning by going back to Kirtland? No, one must go beyond Kirtland. It is suggested that it is the same with the church. One must travel beyond all symbols to find what they really mean.

In symbols lies a profound irony. The irony is that truth can never be found in symbols because all symbols are meaningless. The word *symbol* is synonymous with other words (words are more symbols) like *tokens*, *names*, and *signs*. At best, symbols can point the way, but *they are not the way*. In truth, one can truthfully say that tokens, names and signs are counterfeits of that which they represent. It is what symbols represent that is real, not the symbols. Moreover, it is not through symbols that one comes to understand meaning, but the opposite. It is after one finds meaning, then one comes to understand symbols, notwithstanding symbols can help to see things in new ways. That is the profound message that is beyond the latter-day temples. One needs to let go of them and then look beyond.

Some may find this narrative to be incomplete because many questions have been left unanswered and relevant issues not discussed. This is perhaps appropriate because true meaning is always beyond the message. At best, this narrative is merely another symbol. Too many of us get caught up in symbols even though that is not where we will find the truth. To those who find these writings helpful, it is suggested that you hang onto them only as long as needed, then let go of them.

The LDS endowment embodies a powerful symbolic message that proclaims our failure to understand. Adam descends beneath the creation in the Fall and becomes immersed in the illusion. It is only after he rises up above it again and travels beyond it, can he look back on it and comprehend it for what it is. When Adam emerges from his fallen condition as a carnal being, the endowment will pass away because it will no longer have a purpose.

As Adam begins to remember himself, he will stop naming the creation. He will eventually comprehend why he doesn't need to. Adam will understand that the creation is already named and he will come to see what it means. He will come to understand how everything has been perfect from the beginning.

Adam will understand that all he needs to do is live. In coming to life, it will be Adam who will have changed, not the creation. However, when Adam changes himself, then the creation that surrounds him will also change because the creation is all about him.

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*Symbols constitute the language of creation. All creation is eloquent at speaking truth to us through its symbols. But, it is important to remember that symbolism is a language, nothing more. It is by looking beyond language that we understand.* -- Po Tai

## **Symbolism in the LDS Endowment: The language of tokens, names, and signs.**

**By Eleazar, 2004**

This narrative is written to those who are trying to understand the message of the LDS endowment. The endowment contains a profound message that is conveyed using a universal language that crosses all places and all time. The universal language that exists in all things created is symbolism. The purpose of this narrative will be to assist in the discovery of the symbols used in the LDS endowment ritual and, hopefully, assist in moving beyond the symbol to discover the reality of what is being (re)presented.

Carnal and fallen man, the subject of the endowment parable, infatuates himself with a sensual and material world. Unbeknownst to him, it is his own infatuation with these things that comprise the barrier to his understanding. He misses the point, so to speak, and obsesses with the image rather than what it represents. Carnal man wears out his existence seeking knowledge, thinking that is what he lacks, when the truth is that he lacks understanding.

It is obsession with knowledge that keeps carnal man in the state of being fallen. In the end, carnal man will give knowledge up in frustration, but only after he finally comes to know by experience that gaining knowledge yields nothing back of what it promises. It is understanding that will prevail over knowledge. Ultimately, patrons of the endowment ritual will have passed by the knowledge it conveys to them and find a true understanding of how and why it is.

One of the barriers to understanding the world around us is failure to notice what is being conveyed to us in its symbols. In truth, creation exists as an immense and cohesive metaphor. It is said that no truth can be hidden from one who is able to read (the symbols of) creation.

Few temple patrons appear to notice the presence or importance of symbolism in the endowment ritual, much less come to understand the message that is being conveyed. This narrative is intended to make a first step by suggesting what the endowment symbols might represent. These are meant to be a starting point from which individual searches can begin, most especially because symbols are not subject to precise definition and meaning can best be comprehended by experience rather than by words.

What will follow is a list of endowment symbols followed by comments on each in regard to what they might represent to the endowment patron. Since symbols may be interpreted on multiple levels, these suggestions are not to be taken as the only interpretation or the correct one(s). This list of tokens is not meant to be exhaustive in scope, nor is this list arranged in any particular order in regard to topic treated or order of presumed importance. After the first entry of ‘Tokens, Names, and Signs’, the entries are arranged alphabetically. It is hoped that exposure to these suggestions will assist the endowment patron in the discovery of meaning beyond the temple experience.

## Symbolic Language of Tokens, Names, and Signs in the Endowment Ritual

**Tokens, Names, and Signs:** Tokens, names, and signs are symbols. In the endowment, numerous tokens, names, and signs are redundant with each other at conveying meaning through symbolism. When an endowment patron hears and sees tokens, names, and signs, something should immediately come to mind: *‘There is symbolism here. What does it mean?’*

Tokens are objects representing something else, as in the example where subway tokens represent money used to pay a fare. Money is also a token, so a subway token is a token of a token. It is important to remember that tokens themselves represent something else that they are not. That is what the word ‘token’ means. Since the LDS endowment itself is a token (as well as name and sign), it is important to come to fully appreciate what tokens are in order to begin to see beyond the endowment.

Names are words taken to represent something else through symbolism in the same way that tokens are objects symbolic of something else. Each of us has what is called a ‘legal name’ which we use to symbolize us in legal matters such as on birth certificates. However, it should be remembered that names are not us, but merely sounds or written words used to symbolize us. Names may describe, point to, or represent us, accurately or inaccurately. Like tokens, names are symbols.

Signs are also symbols. Signs along a road can symbolize an idea being communicated by the traffic authority, such as to not exceed a certain speed. Since signs are symbols, signs are redundant with tokens and names. In the endowment, tokens, names, and signs are grouped together. In many ways, it is like having several witnesses saying the same thing.

It is the patrons of the endowment that do the ‘signing’, so to speak, at least in regard to the endowment tokens. ‘Signing’, which may mean to show a sign, is a visual appearance meant to convey ideas in the same manner as language communicates ideas through the symbolism of word sounds. Signs in the endowment are used as *‘sign language’* to convey ideas redundant with and in addition to tokens and names.

It is important to notice that ‘signing’ is acting out. Signing is also a conveyance of approval, such as when one signs their name to a legal document. This ‘acting out’ (signing) is an integral part of the sum and substance of what the endowment symbolizes. Endowment patrons are rightly told that they are to consider themselves as Adam (and Eve). As the endowment proceeds, patrons *act out* as Adam (and/or Eve). Appropriately, this is done in approval of who Adam is being. These symbols convey the idea that the temple and its endowment is about them, the patron. Moreover, since the patrons are inside of the temple building doing this ‘acting out’, the temple is literally ‘about them’ (ie. it surrounds them; the symbols are redundantly stacked upon each other).

However, the truth of the endowment is that it is a token, name, and sign, since symbols represent reality rather than comprise reality. If symbols were real, so to speak, they wouldn’t be symbols.

Tokens, names, and signs are also synonymous with other terms like ‘image’ since they are representations of something else in the same way that images are representations of something else. Those who find themselves infatuated with tokens, names, and signs become, in effect, *image-worshippers*. Unfortunately, this is the state of mind and heart of most, if not all, devout LDS temple attendees. Being an image-worshipper is the endeavor and attitude of fallen and carnal man who obsesses himself with the world of appearances and fails to see what is going on. This includes Adam (see *Adam; Patron*) who is the universal endowment symbol of fallen man and subject of the endowment parable.

Again, tokens, names, and signs are not the real thing, but symbolic of something else that is (real). To truly understand what is conveyed by the LDS endowment, it is important to be able to see beyond appearances (symbols) to discover what is going on, why they exist, and what is being represented.

(also see Temple; Endowment)

**Aaron:** The meaning of the symbol of Aaron is redundant with that of other symbols, such as Adam, Eve, creation, marks on the veil, and the preparatory (carnal and fallen) state of existence.

Aaron was a *spokesman* for Moses. The symbol of spokesman is redundant in meaning with symbols as symbols, each of which convey the truth via representation. A symbol is, in essence, a ‘spokesman’ for reality. At one level of understanding, Aaron is a symbol of a symbol. Since the endowment speaks to us through the conveyance of symbols, Aaron is also a symbol of the endowment itself and all tokens, names, and signs, including the symbolism of creation and any other symbol that points the same way.

The symbol of Aaron is also about ‘idol-making’, since this is what Aaron does for the children of Israel when Moses is on the mountain receiving the law. It should be noticed that Aaron was the maker of monuments for the Egyptians in addition to the creator of the golden calf for the Israelites. These symbols are redundant with each other. The symbol of Aaron is synonymous with other symbols of the endowment parable such as Melchizedek and Peter (see *Melchizedek; Peter*).

Fallen man lives out his existence in a state of existence where he is (metaphorically) placed under curses for his own sake. These include receiving numerous and myriad laws which he (carnal man) fails to comprehend. The Law of Moses is a symbol representing the preparatory state of existence that is also embodied in the symbol of Aaron.

In the endowment ceremony, Adam (the patron) is given five laws for him to live by: The Law of Obedience, Law of Sacrifice, Law of the Gospel, Law of Chastity, and Law of Consecration. It should be noticed that the number five is a common symbol for the senses because it is the number of the outer senses of taste, smell, hearing, touch, and seeing. These are important symbols conveying what the (preparatory) law of carnal commandments is about.

The Aaronic Priesthood is tasked towards the outward administration of the law through carnal commandments which offer to man that which he chooses to express, but in his fallen state fails to understand. The preparatory gospel eventually breaks the heart of carnal man through frustration at its impossible demands and total failure to give back what it promises.

The scope and purpose of the Aaronic Priesthood is intimately connected to the same in regard to the Melchizedek Priesthood, the latter of which devout LDS tend to view as a ‘higher priesthood’. The truth is that higher and lower are relative terms and illusory ideas originating from the same place: Knowledge.

(see Knowledge; Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil)

**Adam:** Adam is probably the most obvious endowment symbol of the patron, most especially since patrons are overtly told in the endowment ritual to “...*consider themselves as Adam (and Eve)*”. The

story of Adam and his journey to the veil is given in symbolic parallel to what the patron experiences, but doesn't understand. The patron first watches a theatrical drama (an *act*) that is played out by individuals portraying Elohim, Jehovah, Adam, Eve, and others, then the patron is asked to act out various roles themselves, most specifically Adam (men) and Eve (women).

It should be noticed that when Adam is to pass the veil, the patrons (both men and women) act out this role without first having seen Adam do it as is done in the beginning of the endowment. It is important to notice how the ceremony makes a transition from (apparently) being about Adam to (obviously) being about them (patrons). All of these events and details are important to notice when trying to unravel what is being conveyed via the symbol(s).

It is also important to notice that Adam is Michael, the third in a trio with Elohim and Jehovah. The message being conveyed by these symbols is overlapping and redundant with other trios of Adam, Eve, and Lucifer or John, James, and Peter. Redundancy is found throughout these symbols, but there is an added dimension because each retelling of the story adds new perspectives of the same event.

In addition to the symbolism of trios, there is also important symbolism being conveyed by duos. In the more obvious pairing of symbols, Adam and Eve represent the Spirit and the body, Heaven and earth, creator and created. These comprise symbols of dualistic opposition as well as an embodiment of both into one composite being represented by both of these symbols. When trying to see what is meant, it may be helpful to try to see all symbols as intricately related and interwoven into a single story that is being repeated many times, though in different ways. Again, the story has a very fundamental message about one person, the very one who is the center and subject of the endowment parable (Adam; the patron).

It may help to notice parallels and redundancies in regard to the entrance of Adam into the garden with the Fall of Adam into the Lone and Dreary world. Some may notice that Adam is co-creator of the world and enters into it as a result of forgetting who he is. Adam's state of forgetfulness is redundant with the story of his partaking of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil which, interestingly enough, Adam does willingly.

Throughout the endowment, Adam remains a fallen being, subject to misery and suffering of the lone and dreary world. This is also true of patrons, all of which await redemption, so to speak, yet without comprehending what that means.

(see Patron; Eve)

**Apron:** Adam makes himself an apron after he has partaken of fruit from the Tree of *Knowledge* (of Good and Evil). Soon after, Adam 'hears the voice of God', so to speak, becomes fearful that he is naked, and then is stampeded by his fear into making an apron to cover himself (*ie.* his supposed nakedness).

At the time this drama is being enacted in the endowment ritual, patrons are told by the officiator to "*put on your aprons*" in a direct parallel to what is played out before them. Of course, this begs the question of why Adam (representing patrons) thinks he is naked to begin with. There is also a second question of why patrons seem to be totally oblivious to what they are doing.

In the endowment ritual, Elohim asks Adam who told him that he is naked? This is a question for patrons too. Who is it that told you to don aprons? What these symbols represent seems so obvious that a child could decode them, but few do. Why? It's because patrons are operating under the same hypnotic daze that is being portrayed in front of them in the symbol of Adam.

On the arrival of Elohim and Jehovah on the scene, Jehovah is instructed to make Adam a garment (of skins) to cover his (Adam's) nakedness. Few notice the similarities between receiving a garment (of animal skins) to cover their nakedness with (their) receiving an apron (of leaves) to do the same. In truth, the symbolism of the garment is redundant and intricately interwoven with the

symbolism of the apron. The apron is also redundant in its message with other temple symbols such as the temple veil, the veil over the woman's face, and the outcome of partaking of the fruit of knowledge.

(see Garment; Veil; Necktie).

**Baptismal Font:** Baptism is a seminal symbol (sign) of the preparatory gospel and the need to escape the fallen condition. The baptism ritual of dunking in water symbolizes a cleansing event as well as a death to the old life and resurrection into the new. The need for baptism is redundant with a variety of other temple symbols such as (a need for) the Law of Sacrifice and Law of Consecration, the former of which symbolizes the killing of one's own beastly nature and the latter a giving up of everything that one (as a carnal being) holds dear.

It is important to come to realize that baptism, at its profound level of symbolism, represents a (change in the) state of mind and heart rather than an outward act. Carnal man is prone to place more importance on the carnal act than what it represents.

In the temple, the baptismal font is always located in the basement and utilized exclusively in doing *work for the dead*. This, of course, is symbolic of the nature of all baptisms; Baptisms are always for the (spiritually) dead, never for the living, and that is why it is taught that baptizing children is an error.

Here, one might remember that Jesus admonished his followers to become (as) children. The presence of the baptismal font conveys this is yet to be accomplished. Again, baptism is always for the dead, never for the living. The 'dead' are those who are spiritually dead and may include those who are physically dead, or not.

The baptismal font in the temple rests on the backs of twelve oxen. These oxen are rightly said to be symbols of the twelve tribes of Israel. Tribes represent division and oxen represent beasts (of burden), pointing to the preparatory state of existence and a state of spiritual death.

It may be helpful to notice that the misunderstanding of the symbol of baptism as a *dead work* is integral to the reason why the latter-day church was restored (*cf.* D&C 22: 3).

(see Preparatory Gospel; Aaron)

**Cap:** The cap is an integral part of the endowment ritual clothing and is tied in symbolism to the Priesthood robe. Conceited patrons are prone to view the cap as symbolic of crowns in the worldly definition. The cap is viewed by worldly men as an emblem of power and priesthoods, a sign that one is of God's *chosen*, a link in a great pyramidal hierarchy of righteous dominion. This is the carnal interpretation of the symbol. It should be noticed that the endowment cap is given its shape a piece of cardboard, symbolizing a paper crown in regard to the carnal interpretation of (royal) power, authority, and dominions.

All male patrons receive a cap. Moreover, all temple patrons are told they are (to be) Kings and Queens, Priests and Priestesses (unto God). It is important to notice here that *all* are Kings (and Queens); To borrow from the common vernacular: '*All Chiefs, but no Indians.*' There are no subjects in the Kingdom of Heaven.

The cap is tied to the robes of the Priesthood, but it may be helpful to consider it both ways, that is, also consider it as robes tied to the cap. When the robes are on the left shoulder, the string tied to the cap is on the left side (of the patron) with the small bow (on the cap) on the right side. The placement of these symbols suggests that the symbolism of the bow is more important than the string tied to the Priesthood robes.

Bows represent authority, most specifically sealing authority. The cap covers the crown of the head, which thing (head; crown) man was born with.

The placement of the endowment cap on the head symbolizes a variety of ideas, one being *understanding* reigning over (carnal; sensual) *knowledge*. This is tied to the symbol of the robe of the Melchizedek Priesthood which covers the heart (a symbol of understanding). The cap, robe, and sash point the way to the true ‘being-ness’ of Adam.

The passages in the New Testament that man ‘ought not to cover his head’ (*cf.* 1 Cor 11:7) should be noticed as an apparent contradiction that elicits the question of what is the truth, since the Biblical passage suggests that it is not appropriate that the endowment cap covers the head. In truth, these are merely apparent paradoxes that point to the same meaning, communicating the same idea by different means. In truth, man comes into the world endowed with a crown that is merely being represented by the endowment icon. In reality, Adam doesn’t need another crown for the head any more than he needs an apron, a robe, or more light and knowledge. Man was endowed with these when he was born. God made man perfectly, despite man’s own failure to understand why or how.

Unfortunately, patrons passing through the LDS ritual fail to understand meaning, as evidenced by the fact that they are seeking understanding in the wrong temple (place). This idea is part of the symbolism of the apron being placed in a position of ascendancy over the Priesthood robes. If one cannot fathom the symbolism of the apron or the temple experience, then it is unlikely that one will be able to understand the meaning of the cap.

(see Celestial; Left and Right Sides; Apron; Sash)

**Carnal and Fallen:** Carnal and Fallen are redundant terms referring to an obsession with (illusionary) knowledge of the senses as opposed to the true knowledge (understanding; comprehension) that comes through experience of our true selves. Carnal man erroneously looks outside of himself for understanding. This he does in vain until he gives up his false notions of sensual knowledge and turns within. In going within, he is faced with the task of cleansing the temple (which temple ye are), and in finding the door of understanding, comprehends glory and perfection of what already is.

(see Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil; Lone and Dreary World; Telestial)

**Celestial:** Celestial existence symbolizes the one true and only reality as opposed to the illusory worlds embodied in the symbols of Telestial or Terrestrial existence. Illusory worlds are symbolized inside the celestial room of the temple (building) by what is viewed in mirrors, a reflected world that doesn’t exist in reality, but appears real.

In truth, we have always been here in the Celestial, yet living under the illusion of the senses that has us imprisoned within the illusionary worlds represented by the symbols of Telestial and Terrestrial. “*There is no place, but here*” might be a statement made in redundant parallel to that of Dorothy in the (illusory) world of OZ that ‘There is no place like home’ (*ie.* at home in the one true reality). The temple veil symbolizes a veil over hearts and minds of patrons (as temples) that prevent carnal man from seeing (*ie.* perceiving) and knowing (comprehending; understanding) the one and only reality of celestial existence. In truth, all things are perfect and it has always been so, notwithstanding the misunderstanding of appearances.

In truth, all are endowed with everything they need. There is nothing to be gained, except the realization of the ever-presence of the Eternal Spirit and perfection in all things. All things are not only free, but here, now. In reality, one need not labor for them or earn them through work, but merely accept them as they (truly) are.

The Celestial world is often called the ‘Celestial Kingdom.’ Carnal man is prone to make a mistake of thinking that Kingdom is defined after the worldly order of having a King-ruler presiding over a gaggle of subjects. The Celestial kingdom, however, is one where all are ‘kings and queens,

priests and priestesses' (unto themselves), all individualized expressions of the universe that surrounds them.

A Celestial being would not dream of placing himself in between another individual and God, nor let others do the same to him. The greatest in the kingdom is the least. LDS doctrine has it that some in the Celestial kingdom go there as servants, a truth that seems widely misunderstood. Servant is a term that carries a dual meaning, one of which refers to an oppressed state of servitude that is connected to slavery. But servant is also about those who are masters. In truth, all Celestial beings are servants (to others) as well as masters (unto themselves; their own worlds of individualized being).

It may be important to notice that the Celestial room is where the endowment terminates. Patrons are allowed to remain in the celestial room for as long as they desire, but all eventually leave and return to the world they left before entering the LDS temple. This metaphor carries with it important symbolism.

(see New and Everlasting Covenant; Endowment; Veil Ceremony)

**Creation:** Creation is one of the central themes of the endowment parable and significant in regard to conveying to us what we are about. One might say that we can re-create ourselves anytime we decide to change ourselves. We might consider that recreation is what true living is about. However, this use of the term does not refer to its hedonistic context known by carnal man, but rather to discovering who we are by living with and experiencing our creations. This is one reason for the universal law of restoration which is that all creations return to the creator.

Some might notice that the creation story comprises seven days with the seventh being a day of rest from labor. Each of the first six days of creation in the Biblical account includes the phrase "... *and the evening and the morning was the first (second, third, etc.) day*" defining beginnings and ends for these (six) days. Such a phrase is conspicuously missing from the seventh day, suggesting that creation is still going on now as a part of the seventh (unfinished) period.

In truth, creation is an ongoing process in which we are continually participating, despite our realization of it, or not. Man is a creator of his (own) world(s) which he experiences first-hand and, in doing so, discovers who he truly is.

(see Earth; Veil Ceremony)

**Deep Sleep:** A deep sleep comes upon Adam after he has entered into the Garden. Entering the Garden is symbolic of individual incarnation. Sleep is a symbol about forgetting.

At deeper levels of understanding, the creation parable can be understood to be about our beginning as individualized offspring (sons) of God. This individualization occurs before the creation of the earth (*ie.* before the creation of physical bodies).

While Adam is asleep, a rib is taken from his side to make woman. The symbolism in this has little to do with our individual gender and more to do with Creator and created. Here, Adam represents God with man-kind as the individualized presence (figuratively) made from the rib. At a profound level of understanding, each of us is the woman and bride who is created from the side of God. This is part of the universal symbolism of Christ as the Bridegroom and the church as the bride.

At another level of understanding, the symbolism of the sleep that comes upon Adam is repeated in the story of the Fall. Adam (willingly) partakes of the fruit of Knowledge and thereby suffers spiritual death. In this case, sleep and death are redundant symbols.

(see Creation; Adam)

**Dressing Rooms:** Dressing rooms are normally located on the main (ground) floors of the temple buildings. The act of changing from street clothing into temple clothing is symbolic of cleansing oneself before entering the temple as one who is clean from the world. In entering the true temple (which temple ye are) it is necessary to first rid oneself of all pre-held beliefs and worldly notions in order to continue in the (living) endowment which is an ongoing event taking place in the present moments of now.

(see Endowment; Law of Consecration).

**Earth:** The symbolism of the earth can be understood as being relevant in several levels of context. The creation of the earth is relevant to the creation of the body of Adam which is synonymous with the symbol of Eve, the woman, wife (bride), or creation. At deeply profound levels of meaning, the earth is symbolic of the act of creation being carried out as an ongoing event by the endowment patron (Adam; Michael) who, so to speak, creates out of himself in the same way that all of us are created out of the substance of the Spirit.

The meaning of 'earth' can sometimes be conveyed by 'world', such as in the phrase 'lone and dreary world' (Telestial World). It may be helpful to consider the lone and dreary world to be Adams re-creation of the earth or, rather, his state of (fallen) being.

(see Adam)

**Elohim:** Elohim is a symbol of the All-That-Exists, the First-Cause, the Over-Spirit, That-Of-Which-All-Things-Are-Created, God-Almighty, or any other name re-presenting the same. Elohim in the duo of Elohim and Jehovah or, alternatively, in the trio with Jehovah and Michael symbolizes the same Spirit that is in us. In one sense of the term, man is made in God's image (likeness) because he is endowed with self-awareness, agency, and creative power. These three attributes are represented in the symbols of Elohim, Jehovah, and Michael. Each individual is also a dual being symbolized by Father and son or Bridegroom and bride.

Elohim is also a plural term which is associated with the demigods from the Sirius (Kolob in Egyptian) star system that terraformed the earth and created man in their physical likeness by interbreeding themselves with root human races. At this level of symbolism, Elohim as plural term symbolizes the man Adam. The trinity of Elohim which includes Jehovah and Michael symbolize the triune nature of Adam as a being of Spirit (awareness), Mind (mediator) and body (material creation).

The Sirius (Kolob) star system figured prominently in Egyptian religious culture and sometimes a small way in mystical religions that descended from it; The ancient Egyptians worshiped the Elohim as their creator-Gods. Modern Egypt (a symbol of Babylon; reliance on the carnal and sensual) does the same, though few seem to know what they do.

Some claim that the Elohim are still with us today, secretly ruling the earth from behind the scenes as the creator-gods of the Earth, proprietors, and self-proclaimed owners of the earth and all creatures thereon. Some claim that the myths of a war-in-heaven are stories of actual historical events where a falling out occurred within the Elohim shortly after the creation of humans. Some of the Elohim desired to keep man in a state of ignorance and servitude, but others desired to set man free. Whether or not these myths are part of a factual history is not as important as their embodiment of a powerful metaphor about the individual as a composite being.

(see Messengers; Peter; Lucifer)

**Endowment:** The LDS temple endowment is a symbol for receiving experience and understanding within oneself, the true temple. At a deep and profound level of understanding, the LDS endowment is not a story about the past or future, but about the present. It's relevant to the individual, who is said

to be “*in the temple this day*”, that should be understood to be synonymous with the patron himself (or herself). Ironically, the patron, being carnal and fallen, is in the temple (*this day*), yet at the same time, not within the temple because the relevant temple in the patrons mind is not the true temple. This is a fundamental message conveyed by the endowment parable.

Temple patrons tend to view the endowment wrongly as an event in one place in time rather than a dynamic ongoing *process* that is continuous. This misunderstanding derives from a failure to comprehend oneself as the true temple being represented by endowment symbols.

In reality, the endowment symbolizes an ongoing process that is never meant to end. This means that the true endowment is a *living* endowment (ie. ongoing; changing, adapting; growing) as opposed to one that is *dead* (static; not growing; having an end).

The popular misunderstanding of the (LDS) endowment is why the endowment is said to be for the *dead*. Dead refers to a state of spiritual death more than physical death, notwithstanding it can apply to both. The (spiritually) dead are the patrons, represented by Adam, the subject of the endowment. Those who are (spiritually) dead are redundantly symbolized in other endowment symbols such as Lucifer and Eve. Although it may not be obvious at first, the dead includes those who are custodians of the endowment, represented by the personages of Aaron, Melchizedek, Peter, and Lucifer.

Here, one might also notice that the LDS endowment ritual has changed periodically, usually about once in a generation when church leaders (custodians of the endowment) are moved to alter the ritual. The symbolic meaning of each of these changes is important. However, what they might convey in their symbolism will be left for personal discovery, since further discussion here will not contribute effectively to the purpose of these narratives.

(see Temple; Peter; Aaron).

**Eve:** Eve represents creation, the (bearer of the) seed, the body, the enticing of the senses, and all things material or created. The symbolism of Eve is synonymous and interchangeable with the symbol of the woman, Lucifer, Peter, the church, and others.

At one level of symbolism, the metaphor of Eve being created from the side of Adam is symbolic of things material being made from that which is spiritual. Carnal man, who tends to get everything inverted, obsesses himself with that which is material, placing it in importance over that which is spiritual.

Adam and Eve together represent the individual patron of the endowment with Adam symbolizing the Spirit and Eve the body. As a fallen and carnal creature, Adam (the Spirit, having forgotten who it is) is held captive to the enticing of the woman (Eve, the world, the body-senses), thus living in bondage to the creation. Again, this is about the patron as a single embodiment of both Adam and Eve rather than being representative of two separate individuals.

It is important here that the symbolism of Adam and Eve, or man and woman, are not confused with male and female genders of the patrons. Those who misunderstand what is being conveyed by symbolism are prone to confuse the symbol with its literal substance. The symbol of Eve should not be taken to mean that females are different than males when it comes to who they truly are. Patrons are even told by the officiator that it is ‘*figurative as far as the man and woman are concerned*’, but few patrons seem to take notice, nor come to fathom what is truly meant.

In truth, Adam symbolizes the female patron as much as the male patron. The veil over the face of female patrons is a redundant symbol with the veil of the temple, the apron, garment, and other things that are not to be confused to be uniquely specific to female patrons.

This confusion over the meaning of Eve should not extend to other LDS symbols either. The symbolism contained in the popular interpretation of patriarchal priesthood conveys a severe misunderstanding of who we are. In truth, we are neither male nor female or, looking at it another

way, each of us are both male and female. Matriarchal societies are as much in error as patriarchal societies in completely missing what the symbols in creation mean.

(see Earth; Creation)

**First Token of the Aaronic Priesthood:** The first token of the Aaronic Priesthood is a handclasp where the giver places the joint of the thumb over the first knuckle of the person receiving it. The name is the new name given to the patron in a separate ceremony and the sign is made by raising the right arm to the square. The sign is accompanied by a promise to never reveal the token, its name, or sign.

The handshake is a common symbol for friendship and fellowship. Clasp hands is a motif decorating some of the older temples. The first token of the Aaronic Priesthood is a partial handshake, symbolizing partial fellowship with God. The name of the first token of the Aaronic Priesthood is the name of the patron, in this case, the new name, suggesting to the mind that the token is directly reflective in its meaning with the patron himself (or herself). Since the patron is acting out as a carnal and fallen being, the token of partial fellowship with God is appropriate.

The sign of the square constitutes a sign of righteousness, but it is a lie, since the token denotes partial-fellowship with God rather than full-fellowship. The patron promises to never reveal the token, but that is exactly what (s)he does, since we are always revealing ourselves to others through our words and actions. Carnal man cannot help but reveal his true nature (of partial fellowship) to others.

It is important to remember that when Adam receives this token, he is fallen, having eaten from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. Again, it is appropriate that the token accurately symbolizes his condition. It is important to notice that after Adam has received this token, he does not emerge from his fallen condition, nor does it help him in passing the veil.

The first token of the Aaronic priesthood is part of a series of tests at the veil where the veil-worker asks ‘*What is that?*’ and the patron responds with the proscribed answer. What few notice is at no time at the veil is the patron told that he is right and at no time do his responses get him past the veil, except where he arrives at the name of the Second Token of the Melchizedek Priesthood. The first token of the Aaronic priesthood is therefore symbolic of a test which we fail because we do not know what it is that we are doing or revealing.

This failure in the veil tests is symbolic of what is happening to temple patrons in the present moment of time. In effect, we stand at the veil right now and fail to pass it because we are carnal and fallen beings who fail to comprehend what is really going on. If we understood it, there would no longer be a need for the veil ceremony because it would have already accomplished its purpose.

(see Second Token of the Aaronic Priesthood; Preparatory Gospel; Veil Ceremony)

**First Token of the Melchizedek Priesthood:** Although not obvious to patrons, the tokens of the Melchizedek Priesthood are synonymous in meaning with the tokens of the Aaronic Priesthood. Adam is given the Melchizedek priesthood tokens after he is carnal and fallen and while he remains so. Because of his own (fallen) nature, carnal man is prone to mistake these tokens as a sign of his own righteous obedience rather than his *failure* in understanding what is going on.

The person receiving the token brings his right hand forward with the thumb extended and the fingers together. The one giving the token places the forefinger in the center of the palm and the thumb opposite on the back of the hand.

This token, like the others, has several names. One name is the First token of the Melchizedek Priesthood. It is also called ‘The Sign of the Nail’ and patrons are told that it has a third name: *The Son*. Since Adam is God’s son, the name is Adam’s. The token symbolizes Adam’s fallen and carnal state of being and the curse of the law that accompanies it.

The sign of this token is made by placing the left palm forwards and upwards in cupping shape with the left elbow in a square and the right hand is opened with the palm downward and the thumb placed over the left hip.

The Sign of the Nail represents the preparatory gospel and the demands of the law which carnal man wears himself out in trying to obey. Nails are universal symbols of the law, more specifically the demands of the law. The nail symbol also represents the demand of the law for the blood of Christ, that it be shed for Adam's benefit.

The hand in cupping shape is the sign of the beggar. Carnal man mistakenly sees himself lacking (*ie.* naked) and beholden to another for what he needs. The (left) arm in the square is a synonymous symbol with that of the Aaronic Priesthood signs. In the pre-1990 endowment, the right arm was extended in front with the palm down when making the sign, but this was changed after 1990 such that the right thumb was placed over the left hip. Alterations to the endowment are made from time to time. These alterations do not alter meaning, but they do alter symbols to be more relevant to what is happening now our dynamic culture that changes over time, yet at the same time, never changes. In this case, the palm downward is an expression (sign) made in contradiction to that being made by the sign of the beggar (left hand).

(see Aaron; Second Token of the Melchizedek Priesthood; Preparatory Gospel)

**Five Points of Fellowship:** The Five Points of Fellowship is an enactment at the veil in the prior endowment and was removed when revisions were made to the endowment ritual in 1990. The Five Points of Fellowship are "*inside of right foot by the side of right foot, knee to knee, breast to breast, hand to back, and mouth to ear.*" It was upon the Five Points of Fellowship through the veil that patrons of the earlier endowment received the name of the second token of the Melchizedek Priesthood from the veil worker (who stands for the Bridegroom).

The symbolism in the five points of fellowship is tied into the symbolism of the veil and the obsession of carnal man with the world of the senses. Five is a symbolic number, nearly always referring to the world of the (five) carnal senses.

Because carnal man is unable to hear any other way, he is taught by God through the veil (of illusion) via the five points of fellowship or, rather, the symbolism of the sense-world in which Adam is imprisoned.

The symbolism of 'foot by the side of foot...' and so forth, refers to the intimate relationship of God to man as well as the mistaken tendency of carnal man to view himself as being separate from God. When the mind and heart of carnal man ceases to be bound by the veil (of illusion) he will comprehend how he is the same being and, thereby, one with God. The five points of fellowship is not how a Celestial being receives the new name because it is unnecessary for one who lives in the new and everlasting covenant to get it that way; Receiving the name through the veil is for those who are not living the covenant.

(see Marks on the Veil; Knowledge)

**Garment:** The garment as a symbol is closely tied to a variety of other symbols in the endowment. In one sense, the symbol of the garment is synonymous with the veil of the temple. In others, carries the same symbolism as the apron or the veil over the faces of the women. In still other ways, the garment can represent the physical body itself as a 'coat of skins' or 'covering-for-the-Spirit'.

In his state of ignorance and (spiritual) death, carnal man places great emphasis on his own physical body, thinking that without it he is not a complete being. Carnal man thinks he is 'naked' without the physical body. His own intoxication with the material world causes him to think that Spirit must be embodied in flesh in order to be complete and in its embodiment, the two have

ascendancy over Spirit alone. In his ignorance, carnal man fails to consider that body came after Spirit, not before, or that the physical body is a nothing more than manifestation of Spirit.

Part of the confusion about the importance of the body is due to a misunderstanding of scriptural passages referring to resurrection of the body. It may help to first consider that the term 'body' has several meanings, not always referring to the physical vehicle of material flesh. In truth, the restoration that occurs during resurrection refers to a body that has always been present and does not die (*cf.* D&C 88:27).

The garment also represents a veil that covers the earth (body). It's symbolic references are synonymous with the veil of the temple.

(see Veil; Naked; Apron; Marks on the Veil)

**Jehovah:** Jehovah represents the mediator, mind, and spiritual body. In symbolic context of a triune being, Jehovah symbolizes the Mind as mediator between Spirit (Awareness) and the material creation (body). During the presentation of the endowment, Jehovah is often (but, not always) the one that carries out the instructions of Elohim, the symbol of the Eternal Spirit.

Mormon doctrine teaches that the characters of Jesus and Jehovah are the same individual. This has more to do with the metaphorical representation than historical reality. In one sense, however, all of us are the same being, so it is true from that (symbolic) perspective.

(see Moon; Terrestrial; Elohim).

**Knowledge:** Knowledge is the poisoned fruit offered to Adam by Eve. Partaking of the fruit of knowledge binds Adam into a state of carnality, or reliance upon the senses. Here, Eve symbolizes the senses of the body, the infatuation of which imprisons Adam, a symbol for the Spirit, in the world of the senses (carnality).

According to the world, knowledge can come only through the senses. The basic message of endowment symbolism is that this worldly view is an illusion. Moreover, this is the very illusion which, relied upon, results in spiritual death and imprisonment in the lone and dreary world. Living under the illusion of knowledge is the root cause of carnal man's misery and suffering.

Carnal man (symbolized by Adam; endowment patrons) views progression as a gradual building of knowledge upon knowledge. Getting more knowledge is what patrons expect from their endowment experience. When Adam is presented at the veil, it is said that he seeks 'further light and *knowledge*', an expression of his failure to understand. In the endowment, this (*ie.* more knowledge) is exactly what patrons are given, but it fails to help them progress. Instead of moving on to new understandings, they go back and are offered the same knowledge all over again. This is despite patrons having acted out the passing of the veil (of illusion) in the temple ritual. However, after they *act out* this last part, the endowment ends for them and they are told to return to do it again (for the dead). A key word here is *act*. For the patrons, it needs to cease to be an act to pass the real veil.

Progression appears to be a widely misunderstood concept by mainstream LDS. Most view progression as a gradual increase in knowledge until one knows about everything. This is popularly thought to be a part of becoming perfect. After knowing all things and becoming perfect, then one 'progresses' by gaining more progeny and worlds over which to preside and rule as a God. These are mistaken ideas. In truth, it is quite the opposite.

Progression comes after ones gives up their reliance on knowledge and thereafter lives life as a continual experience of re-creating themselves. This has always been happening, even when one forgets (dismembers) oneself in order to experience ignorance and suffering. Progression comes after giving up all worldly possessions, not the other way around. Knowledge is a hard thing for carnal man to consecrate. He finds it too delicious and desirable to see (perceive, understand) it for what it truly is (an illusion).

(see Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil; Carnal and Fallen; Adam)

**Law(s):** The preparatory gospel is characterized by many laws which, in their entirety, are burdensome and impossible to live in their fullness. The law is both a blessing and a curse. The law is given for those who fail to understand.

The preparatory gospel is a curse because it will ultimately lead its adherents to frustration at the impossibility of living it and its failure to yield back what is promised. The law is a blessing because carnal and fallen man is ultimately brought by frustration to give up his (carnal and fallen) way of living.

In truth, the myriad laws of the preparatory gospel are symbolic of higher things of which carnal man seems oblivious, or if he is remotely aware, doesn't understand how or why it is so. The myriad laws of the preparatory gospel are redundant symbols, all pointing back to the same thing. In the endowment ritual, there are five laws given to the patron, The Law of Obedience, The Law of Sacrifice, The Law of the Gospel, The Law of Chastity, and the Law of Consecration. All of these symbolize the same thing.

(see Law of Sacrifice; Law of Consecration)

**Law of Chastity:** The symbolic meaning of the law of chastity is synonymous with the meaning of *the new and everlasting covenant*. The law is that Adam is to have no sexual intercourse with anyone except those to whom he is legally and lawfully wedded. These are metaphors of a higher nature than popularly taken by patrons. Fidelity in spousal sexual relationships is a universal symbol for the proper spiritual relationship of the endowment patron to God.

Endowment tokens suggest that Adam is not being true to what is symbolized by the law of chastity. Adam's infidelity to the new and everlasting covenant is symbolized by the tokens of the priesthood given during the endowment ritual, the first two of which are partial handclasps.

The Law of Chastity is given in the endowment ritual when patrons enter the Terrestrial world and are given the First Token of the Melchizedek Priesthood. The tokens of the Melchizedek priesthood symbolize the same ideas as those of the Aaronic Priesthood, which are all about Adam's existence as a fallen being.

(see First Token of the Aaronic Priesthood; First Token of the Melchizedek Priesthood)

**Law of Consecration:** When given the Law of Consecration, patrons are told that it is '*in connection with the Law of the Gospel and the Law of Sacrifice which you have already received.*' This is a profound statement since the meaning of all these symbols are redundant by pointing back to the same thing.

Patrons are also told that this law means '*that you do consecrate yourselves, your time, talents, and everything with which the Lord has blessed you, or with which he may bless you, to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, for the building up of the Kingdom of God on the earth and for the establishment of Zion.*' It should be noticed that the symbolism in this statement can be considered synonymous with symbols in the other laws such as chastity, obedience, sacrifice, and gospel.

It is important when trying to understand these symbols that one considers all of them to point to a complete revision of Adam's being. They are figurative, not literal in their meaning.

The bestowal of the five laws upon Adam in the endowment should not be taken as incremental steps of evolution which comprise a gradual progression. This is the carnal and worldly interpretation. Progression by incremental advances through effort is about work and reward. But, reality isn't really like that. Reality is much more than another *rat race* as seen on earth.

This mistaken notion of progression is embodied in a popular LDS aphorism of ‘*line upon line, precept on precept*’ which carries profound symbolism that is widely misunderstood. ‘Line upon line’ and ‘precept upon precept’ is a reference to the redundancy of symbols upon symbols, all pointing to the same thing.

The priesthood tokens, their names, and signs convey to Adam the idea that he is living in a fallen condition where he has partial fellowship with God, but he believes and acts out hypocritically that it isn’t that way. To change that, Adam needs to do an about-turn that requires a complete (100%) change of his (carnal) mind and heart. This is important to comprehending what consecration is about as well as recognize the redundant themes of other symbols (*eg.* law of sacrifice; baptism; resurrection).

(see Law)

**Law of the Gospel:** The law of the gospel is given to Adam (patrons) with the explanation that the law is ‘as it is contained in the Holy Scriptures.’ In being given this law, Adam is charged to ‘avoid all lightmindedness, loud laughter, evil speaking of the Lord’s anointed, the taking of the name of God in vain, and every other unholy and impure practice.’

Patrons are prone to take these symbols literally and thereby miss the profound meanings they represent. Individual phrases used in the law are redundant in meaning with each other phrase as well as those given in the laws of obedience, sacrifice, and consecration. Lightmindedness is a symbol of the carnal mind; evil speaking of the Lord’s anointed, taking the Lord’s name in vain, and other unholy and impure practices are all symbols for the separation of carnal man (Adam) from God. Appropriately, all point to Adam’s carnal nature and need to undergo a complete change in being to emerge from it.

(see Law)

**Law of Obedience:** Carnal man erroneously interprets his failings to be as a result of imperfect obedience rather than imperfect understanding. As a result, he tries and tries again to be perfectly obedient without ever receiving what is promised by it. His failure to understand is why Adam continually fails. This is why Adam’s promise (covenant) to be perfectly obedient to the Law of Obedience is immediately followed by being cast out of the garden into the lone and dreary world.

When given the law of obedience, Adam covenants to obey the law of Elohim. Interestingly enough, Eve is asked to be obedient to the counsel of Adam (her husband) ‘as he hearkens unto the counsel of Father.’ This is profoundly symbolic. Part of the symbolism here is relevant to Adam as a symbol of the Spirit and Eve as a symbol of the body. But, it may also help to consider that ‘obedience’ is a symbol that points to something else more profound than the popular definition of the term. Obedience as a symbol also refers to the perfect marriage relationship where we are one with (*ie.* married to) God in the *new and everlasting covenant*.

(see Law of Chastity; New and Everlasting Covenant)

**Law of Sacrifice:** Carnal man is prone to mistakenly take the symbol of sacrifice literally to mean that God is pleased when man brutishly kills an animal in obedience to the Law. The true meaning of the law of sacrifice is synonymous with the law of consecration which is carnal man giving up his own beastly nature in sacrifice.

What is most important to carnal man is his own sensual (beastly; animalistic) interpretations, his *knowledge*, and his infatuation with creation. The carnal mind of fallen man is the beast which

should be slain in sacrifice. Again, this symbol is synonymous with consecration and other symbols presented throughout the endowment and scriptural record.

The bloody sacrifice of animals as done in the Law of Moses is an outward manifestation of man's own beastly nature and his inability to understand. The true sacrifice is that of a '*broken heart and contrite spirit*' which slays the beastly nature of carnal man's being.

Time might be taken to consider that having a broken heart and a contrite spirit is the sacrifice symbolized in the story of the death of Jesus. The shedding of Jesus's blood on the cross is a symbol of giving up the old way of nourishment (blood) so that a new way (spirit) can begin.

Temple patrons are rightly told that the coming of Christ ended the bloody sacrifice of animals as required by the Law of Moses. Patrons should remember that this historical reference in the endowment ritual is a part of the overall symbolism about what is to happen in the present time and place. Again, all of these symbols are relevant to the patron in the here and now.

Those who proclaim after the popular fashion that 'Christ *will* come' are manifesting their misunderstanding of reality, their partial fellowship with God, and their carnal mind. In truth, Christ *is* come. Yes, Christ is here, now. Carnal man rejects him and ignorantly accepts (or even demands) a bloody sacrifice from God (of the Christ) in place of his own, in effect crucifying the Christ (unto) himself in fashion of the proverbial shedding of innocent blood.

The second coming of Christ is rightly said to occur at the 'last day', a symbol of the time that carnal man gives up his carnal and mind and heart (in sacrifice; consecration).

(see Law of Obedience; Law of Chastity)

**Left and Right Sides:** In Biblical symbolism, the lambs go on the right side (of God) and goats on the left. The right side is that of the female, initiate, son, wife, or (spiritual) creation. The left side (of God) is illusion, symbolized by goats.

It is easy to get mixed up here, because left and right are relative terms. Try not to get mixed up when thinking about left and right sides.

On the left of the bride is the Bridegroom. In truth there are only two, not three. The two are symbolized by Father and son, Bridegroom and bride, or Spirit and body. Moreover, the son, bride, or body are always on the right side of Father, Bridegroom, or Spirit when in the holy order.

On the far left side of the Father is that which is represented by illusion, symbolized by the woman, material creation, and the goat (Lucifer).

One place in the endowment that left-right symbolism arises is in regard to which shoulder the robes of the Priesthood are hung, right shoulder for the Aaronic Priesthood and left shoulder for the Melchizedek Priesthood. It is not so much that the robes of the Melchizedek Priesthood are on the left as much as it is that the patron is on the right. The patron is symbolic of the bride (or Son) who has a proper place at the right hand of God. Here, the robes symbolize the Spirit(ual) side of the true being which occupies the place of the Bridegroom or God. It is thusly appropriate that the robes are on the left shoulder as opposed to its inverted position on the right shoulder as Aaronic Priesthood.

It may be important to notice the *inversion* of left and right sides in regard to how men and woman are arranged on the endowment room floor. Women sit on the left side of the men, rather than the right side, the true side of the spouse or wife. This inverted symbolism has to do with men and women being single (unmarried) in the Telestial and Terrestrial worlds, a sign of the failure to abide the new and everlasting covenant by fallen man.

In a similar way, the placement of women on the left of males in endowment seating is symbolic of the state of carnality where the woman (a symbol of the enticing of the senses; creation; world) being placed in a position of ascendancy by the (Fallen) man (Adam; a symbol of Spirit) binding him down into carnal and sensual imprisonment.

It may also help to notice the inversion in one of the marks on the garment (the compass) which symbolizes the male. This symbol conveys the same idea as represented by the seating arrangement of men and women on the endowment floor. It represents the fallen state of the Spirit through its imprisonment in the sense world.

(see Marks on the Garment; Marks on the Veil)

**Lone and Dreary World:** The lone and dreary world is the Telestial world of death and hell. As a symbol, it represents Adam's re-creation of the world in which he lives as a carnal and fallen being.

The Lone and Dreary World is an illusion of Adam's own making which he chooses to believe is real for a wise purpose of which he is oblivious. One might notice parallels of Adam coming to earth as a being who has forgotten, Lucifer cast down to the earth for rebellion, and Adam being cast into the Lone and Dreary World after he (willingly) partakes of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. At one level of symbolism, these represent the same story told in different ways. The message is directly relevant to the patron who is the subject of the endowment parable and represented in the parable as Adam (and others).

Ultimately, these parables trace to the birth of each of us as individualized spirit sojourning into the matter of our own creation so that we might know ourselves by experiencing our own (re)creation(s) of ourselves. This is an ongoing process which brings us suffering and (spiritual) death when we (re)create ourselves as fallen beings, but joy and life when we re-create ourselves as (w)hol(e)y beings who have emerged from the bondage of the fall.

One might say that the 'fruits' of partaking of the Tree of Knowledge is living in the Lone and Dreary (Telestial) World of death and hell. D&C 76:106 clearly refers to the Telestial world as hell. Temple patrons are told that the Telestial world is the 'one in which we (patrons) live now' and LDS teachings have it that Lucifer is the 'God of this world'. Despite these clear references to (us; patrons) being in the depths of hell now, few seem to accept these as true representations of their being.

In truth, hell is a creation, our own. Hell is a condition willfully and knowingly entered into by Adam, notwithstanding he has forgotten why because that is a part of its purpose. Patrons should notice that the state of Adam throughout the endowment ceremony is as a carnal and fallen being. This is despite the apparent progress of moving to Terrestrial existence during the endowment ritual or passing the veil (of illusion) into Celestial existence, which is where the endowment ritual appropriately ends. The endowment ceremony ends here because none have yet truly passed the veil (of illusion) because none get it (*ie.* what it means).

Again, patrons are correctly told that the lone and dreary world (Telestial; hell) is 'the one in which we live *now*'. Please notice the emphasis in the preceding sentence on the word 'now'. Few will consider that '*this means us*' or that '*we are the ones who do not understand*', the very ones 'who pass the veil as an act, but not in reality.' The patrons will be able to pass the veil only after their old dogmas of knowledge are yielded up for new understandings.

(see Telesial; Terrestrial; Celestial)

**Lucifer:** The symbol of Lucifer is overlapping and redundant with a variety of symbols found in the endowment and religious lore. Lucifer translates as 'light bearer' which has a double meaning. Lucifer's light, so to speak, represents the false light of sensual knowledge. At the same time, the name Lucifer symbolizes the idea that there is true light within (all), despite ones (own) oblivion to its presence.

Lucifer is a member of the Elohim who is cast down to the earth for rebellion. The symbolic metaphor of Lucifer falling (rebellng) from heaven carries a lot of redundancy with the story of Adam becoming the canonical fallen being through (his willing act of) partaking of the fruit from the Tree of

Knowledge. At this level of symbolism, Lucifer represents Adam. The endowment tells the story of Adam as the prototypical fallen being who formerly was a being of light (Michael), now imprisoned by that which is earthly (the Lone and Dreary World). Since Lucifer symbolizes Adam and Adam symbolizes the patron, patrons are also represented in the symbol of Lucifer.

Some may find it confusing that LDS teachings have it that Adam has a body, yet Lucifer does not. These symbols are nothing more than apparent paradoxes; In truth, they convey important ideas.

Body is a symbol that can refer to a variety of things. For example, a body of (true) believers comprise the symbol of the church, the 'body' of Christ. Lucifer's lack of a body refers primarily to the illusory nature of carnal existence which is not real or, rather, is as temporal as physical flesh.

In truth, Lucifer is embodied within creation as the prototypical carnal being, a star fallen from heaven. Well, that includes us. Metaphorically speaking, we are among the third who are cast down. Our sojourn in the world is typified by the symbol of Lucifer in the endowment ritual.

In other portrayals, Adam and Lucifer are not synonymous symbols. Adam symbolizes the Spirit when in the duo of Adam and Eve or Adam and Lucifer. Here, the body of the Spirit is synonymous in symbolism with the church or, rather, what is represented by the church of the Firstborn. That is a way that Adam (Spirit) is with body. Body has to symbolize much more than the material flesh or these parables convey little of anything of a profound nature. Despite the (hidden) truth in the LDS teaching that Lucifer lacks a body, LDS ought to consider the possibility of truth in Lucifer being embodied in flesh (the material creation).

(see Carnal and Fallen; Earth; Lying)

**Lying:** Lucifer is said to be the 'Father of lies'. Confusion arises in the minds of endowment patrons when they think they see deep and profound truth being conveyed through Lucifer's words. This confusion stems from a misunderstanding of what are lies and reflects a misunderstanding of perfection and what are messengers from God.

Lies originate in the carnal mind and heart, within us. They are conveyed upon the lips, then to the ears, then into the heart of the hearer. If the latter has a pure heart and is able to see through the lie, then a lie has no effect. If no one listened to a lie, then it would be meaningless. If everyone saw through the lies of Lucifer, there would be no illusion, except in the mind and heart of Lucifer himself.

It is important to know that lies originate within us. Truth, taken wrongly, is an illusion (a lie), despite it being presented rightly. If we hear a lie, so to speak, it is no one's fault, but our own. Lies are our own creation. Lucifer speaks lies because he doesn't know the truth that is within. In truth, infinite intelligence (Spirit) is within Lucifer as it is within us. Despite the (true) light within, its presence goes unnoticed by Lucifer and all who are like him.

To comprehend how Lucifer's words can convey great truth, one needs to understand a few simple things about messengers and symbols. Some seekers concern themselves with testing messengers in order to see if they are from God or not. This exhibits a great misunderstanding of messengers.

In truth, one never needs to test messengers because all of them are from God. Even devils are bearers of important messages, providing one is able to see beyond the lie to understand the truth being conveyed. All things are symbolic. All symbols are messengers, including devils.

*"All that is about us is like a river. The river never lies, but a man who stands on the bank hears untruth. Why is that? It is because untruth is within man himself." -- Po Tai*

(see Messengers; Tokens, Names, and Signs – the first entry in this list)

**Marks on the Garment:** Garments have four symbols on them called marks of the Holy Priesthood. These are the symbol of the square over the right breast, a compass over the left breast, a slit over the navel, and a slit over the right knee. Inasmuch as the garment is a symbol, these marks are symbols located upon another symbol. One can rightly call these symbols upon symbols, lines upon lines, and precepts on precepts. They are arranged in a redundant order, often where one is stacked upon (or within) the next.

Marks on the garment are identical to those on the veil of the temple, suggesting that the meaning of the two are intimately connected. It is through symbols that the Bridegroom puts forth his hand, so to speak, to test the endowment patron. If you haven't yet noticed, this is happening right now. These words I write are symbols. I too, am a symbol. Everything you are doing right now is symbolic. You are surrounded by symbols. The Bridegroom is putting forth his hand in all (the symbols of) creation to speak to you.

With respect to the marks on the garment, the square is a symbol of the bride, son, or initiate. Patrons are told in the endowment that the square represents "*exactness and honor in keeping the covenants entered into this day.*" Ideas conveyed here are synonymous with the New and Everlasting Covenant or spiritual life as opposed to spiritual death. The New and Everlasting Covenant is all about us (as the bride) being one with the Bridegroom. Symbols of earthly marriage, including plural marriage are more symbols of the same.

The compass is a symbol of the male, Bridegroom, and Father and is placed over the left breast, over the heart. Patrons are told that the compass represents "*an undeviating course leading to Eternal Life, a constant reminder that desires, appetites and passions are to be kept within the bounds the Lord has set, and that all truth may be circumscribed unto one great whole.*"

One of the apparent oddities regarding the compass is its *inversion* in regard to how it is normally presented. Compasses are used to draw circles. The compass in the act of drawing a circle represents heaven circumscribing earth or, the heavenly encompassing the earthly as well as dualism as a sibling offspring of creation (*ie.* notice that a compass, like the letter A, symbolizes divergence; a creation of dualism).

The inversion of the compass, as portrayed on the garment, is a symbol of the opposite idea related above and typifies the dominant characteristic in the thinking of carnal and fallen man that earth circumscribes heaven. This inversion of the compass is also tied to the symbol of inverted pentagrams (stars) placed on latter-day temples, such as those at Nauvoo and Salt Lake City. Five pointed stars in their regular orientation symbolize a man on his feet. Inverted stars symbolize a man on his head, the proverbial fallen and carnal being, or one who is cast from heaven.

Symbolism of navel mark is redundant with the endowment itself. Patrons are told that the navel mark symbolizes "*the need of constant nourishment to the body and spirit.*" The word 'constant' in that sentence conveys a key idea. The endowment itself is meant to be an ongoing process of nourishment, taking place continuously in the temple (which temple ye are).

The knee mark is said to symbolize the idea that "*every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall confess that Jesus is the Christ.*" Patrons tend to see this in literal terms of bowing down in *an act* of submission after the worldly pattern. However, as common for the language of creation, the obvious worldly interpretation is the carnal one. The carnal mind tends to view this act of presumed submission as a future event when everyone will bow down in submission to a Kingly figure. In truth, it is about something else which is happening right now.

To help understand the symbol of the navel mark, it may help to first notice the symbols of *tongue* and *confess* in the endowment explanation. Tongue and confess are obvious references to language (communication). The language of creation is symbol. In essence, everything (all symbols) in creation testify (confess; speak) to what is being represented by the symbol of Jesus the Christ.

The terms *knee* and *bow* are also important to understanding the meaning of this (and all) symbol(s). Knees function by bending (bowing). Bending is the proper function of the knee and required for walking (also an important symbol). If we didn't walk, knees wouldn't be needed. The pun was intended.

Dogmatic rigidity does not lend itself to understanding the language (meaning; tongue) of symbol. Carnal man will need to remove the shoes (preconceived beliefs, notions) when he comes to stand upon holy ground. When he does so, the meaning becomes clear.

*“As man walks upon the path, he does so perfectly, though he fails to comprehend it at first. Eventually, he sees that the destination is always right, no matter where he goes.”* -- Po Tai.

(see Marks on the Veil; Garment; Creation; Slippers).

**Marks on the Veil:** The veil contains marks on it that are identical to marks on the garment except that the veil has three more. It is through one of the additional marks that the Bridegroom puts forth his hand, through another he asks questions, and through the last that patrons give their answer.

Marks are symbols. Therefore, the act of the Bridegroom speaking to the patron through the marks on the veil is symbolic of the same in regard to the Bridegroom (Christ) speaking to man through the symbols of the material world. The veil ceremony is symbolic about what is going on right now. In truth, all things are symbolic and nothing can be hidden from one who can read the symbols of creation. Few are able, however, until the carnal being is cleansed from the temple. When that happens, symbols are seen for what they truly are: Illusions.

In a sense, each of us stand at the veil (of illusion) in the present moment of time. Symbols surround us. It is through these symbols that the Bridegroom speaks to us. Man can take these symbols several ways. Carnal man foolishly takes the symbols at face value and, in doing so, fails to understand (what they are about).

(see Matron; Marks on the Garment; Left and Right Sides)

**Matron:** A matron in the temple functions by pointing the way to patrons, tasked generally to help the female patrons, most especially during the enactment of the ritual at the veil. Matrons never go through the endowment ceremony because if they do so, they are not called temple matrons, but temple patrons. The male counterpart of matrons are called officiators.

The symbol of matron has to do with the symbolism of the Spirit *versus* the material creation. In truth, that which is material (*ie.* temporal) has no life of its own. Matrons do not go through the endowment as matrons because they are symbols of material creation.

It is the Eternal Spirit that gives life to the material creation by its embodiment within it. Carnal man errs when he views his physical body as something that has life. In reality, the body is dead without the Spirit. Here, the symbol of matron and body of flesh are synonymous.

The symbol of the matron also has to do with symbolism as the fundamental communication device of the created world: Symbols. Matrons are symbols symbolizing symbols. It should be noticed that the function of the matron is to assist and ‘point-the-way’ to (sister) patrons going through the endowment ritual. In the same way, symbols point-the-way to man (who is symbolized by the female or bride).

(see Marks on the Veil; Aaron)

**Melchizedek:** The symbol of Melchizedek is redundant with a variety of other symbols of the endowment, such as Aaron, Peter, Eve, and creation. Melchizedek is generally accepted to be Shem,

the son of Noah, in the Biblical account. In the Bible, Melchizedek is recorded to have received tithes from Abraham and administered unto him (Abraham) bread and wine (sacrament). These point to Melchizedek being the *de facto* church leader of the time or chief administrator of the (preparatory) gospel.

The name of Melchizedek, like Aaron, is also associated with a line of Priesthood which in the LDS canon of scripture is said to have once been called after the name of the Supreme Being (*cf.* D&C 107:4) which symbolism carries great meaning of what is going on.

The name of Melchizedek being a line of priesthood (*ie.* person-hood) is important in regard to the meaning of the symbol. The Melchizedek Priesthood could be more aptly referred to as Melchizedek's Priesthood. In truth, the Aaronic Priesthood and the Melchizedek Priesthood are one and the same. The receiving of tithes and administration of the 'emblems (*ie.* symbols) of Christ' to Abraham in the Biblical record point to Melchizedek as being representative of the church leaders as well as the chief conduit of the preparatory gospel (law).

(see Aaron; Peter; Priesthood; Preparatory Gospel)

**Messengers:** After Adam partakes of the fruit of knowledge, he proclaims that he seeks messengers from his Father. In his carnal state of being, however, Adam is unable to recognize messengers. In truth, messengers are all about him. Put another way, Adam is surrounded by tokens, names, and signs in all of their myriad forms, but he fails to see them because he is blinded by knowledge (of the senses). Adam's claim to seek messengers from Father is a foolish act, given the fact that when he says it the messengers are standing right in front of him.

In truth, all messengers come from God. Thus, there is no need to test messengers. Even devils bear great truths, notwithstanding they are oblivious to it. To see the truth, one needs to see past the illusion of appearances to understand what it means.

Carnal man erroneously thinks that testing messengers is what helps him discern which ones are Godly or not, but this always fails. The problem is that Adam is consumed with messengers or, rather, symbols. Because of his obsession with symbols (messengers), Adam fails to understand what they represent. To emerge from his fallen condition, Adam needs to give up his obsession with messengers.

Not only does Adam make the mistake of testing messengers, but he is prone to be fooled by his own tests and erroneously gets the message wrong. The problem here is his (unclean) state of mind and heart. Adam is under the illusion of knowledge, but fails to realize it.

Part of the idea above is played out when Peter is instructed to go down to the man Adam in true character. The idea that we always are in our true character is an entirely separate subject. The true character of Peter is as the *de facto* leader of the church. When Adam meets Peter, he asks Peter how he can know Peter is a true messenger. Peter then gives him the first token of the Aaronic Priesthood, which symbol represents the fallen and carnal condition of partial fellowship with God. The act of giving (revealing) the token to Adam is symbolic of Peter's own condition as a fallen being. Yes, Adam has his messenger, but he fails to understand what is going on.

After receiving the token from Peter, Adam turns to the patrons and proclaims "*These are true messengers, I exhort you to give strict heed to their counsel and teaching, and they will lead you in the way of life and salvation.*" It should be remembered here that Adam is operating under the carnal and fallen mind. Patrons, like Adam, fail to see through the illusions borne by messengers and, in doing so, fail to see what is truly being represented.

It should be remembered that Adam partakes of the fruit of knowledge which is offered to him by Eve who is operating under the instructions of Lucifer. This story is redundant with patrons (Adam) being in the temple (garden) receiving an endowment (knowledge) from Peter (Lucifer). The endowment story parallels what is going in the present time and place, yet unnoticed by the patrons. It

should be remembered that Lucifer has an important message for Adam, despite Lucifer's own inability to perceive it. To get the (true) message, Adam merely needs to be able to see beyond the lie (illusion, appearance, symbol). The true message is represented by all symbols, waiting to be discovered.

(see Tree of Knowledge; Lying)

**Michael:** Michael is Adam before he has forgotten who he is and therefore represents the hidden being or hidden spiritual side of Adam. The story of the creation of Adam (by the Elohim) carries a lot of redundancy with the story of Eve being made from Adam's side and is meant to convey to us who we truly are and what we are doing (here, now).

Michael is Adam, notwithstanding Adam has forgotten. Eve is created from the side of Adam or, rather, out of Adam's own existence, representing not only the creation of the material from the Spirit, but primarily and firstly the creation of the individualized Spirits (*eg.* Michael) from the substance of the Father.

Each of us as individuals are embodiments of the Spirit (Father) separated from itself so that we (each of us and the only one of us) are not alone. In truth, each of us are the same being, both Father and Son, an appearance of the Father so that we might have joy and rejoicing in our posterity (*ie.* re-creations).

Thus, at one level of meaning, Michael represents Elohim. At another, Michael represents Adam.

Christ is rightly said to be both Father and Son. Each individual is the same, notwithstanding our forgetfulness. The metaphor of the sacrament at a profound level of understanding is to *remember Christ* or, rather, bind up that which is broken, referring to the state of mind of being separate rather than one. In a manner of speaking, we remember ourselves or, rather, who we are by living as Adam (Michael).

The sojourn of Michael (Adam) as a carnal and fallen being has a great purpose which is (being) conveyed in the creation parable. Adam is here so that he might continue to re-create himself (*ie.* his being) and from his experience of recreation, discover who he (truly) is. This discovery is not meant to end because the act of doing it is the end thereof and sole (soul) purpose (of creation). All things are perfect. We are living in eternity right now, doing that which we were created to do, notwithstanding there is a lot of complaining about suffering and death, our own creations.

The creation parable is thus a metaphor about what is going on about us right now in the present. Man is exactly where he chooses (to be) and all things are perfect (*ie.* properly fulfill the measure of their creation). Suffering, joy, and all things in between are experiences of ourselves (*ie.* what we have created) despite appearances which have us thinking otherwise.

(see Adam; Creation)

**Moon:** The moon is a symbol of the terrestrial world, the paradisiacal state of existence, and a symbol of the mediator between God and man. It is said that Christ presides over the Terrestrial Kingdom which symbol has relevance to man as an individualized world of which Christ is the head, a symbol of the anointing of the Spirit which already is upon carnal man, but not realized.

It should be noticed that the moon has no light of its own, but reflects the light of the Sun. In truth, man cannot live on borrowed light as symbolized by the light of the moon. The so-called paradisiacal state of terrestrial existence or, rather, the mindful state of blissful ignorance, cannot endure because it is a counterfeit of reality that always returns one to more overt forms of suffering, symbolized by the Telestial world of death and hell.

The Terrestrial world symbolizes a form of suffering that escapes the understanding of carnal man who sees it as his final destination, a state of bliss. One can take drugs to achieve that too, but all such actions will eventually bring one back to the reality of its failure to provide what it promises.

It is taught that a sign in the last day that ‘the moon shall be turned to blood’, which symbol represents coming to a true understanding of the carnal mind that once imprisoned us. When one comes to perceive by experience what the symbol of the moon truly means, then it is a sign (symbol) of ‘the second coming of Christ’, the anointing of Spirit (understanding) which has always been, though forgotten.

(see Sun; Star; Second Anointing)

**Moroni:** Moroni was the last prophet in the Book of Mormon and the one who stands on the Temple spire blowing his horn to announce the restoration of the gospel.

Moroni as a symbol is synonymous with Noah, Adam, John the Baptist, Nephi and others who represent the (apparent) reemergence of the preparatory gospel, a *restoration* of a prior preparatory state as described in the Old Testament record..

Many of these symbols are redundant. In the Book of Mormon parable, Moroni presides over a world in which everyone was (spiritually) lost. Like Moroni, Noah was a prophet to a world that was (spiritually) destroyed and he captained an ark to repopulate the destroyed world with animals (beasts) and men. The ark is one of many symbols for the temple.

The symbol of Moroni as a messenger or bearer of the (preparatory) gospel is very important to his position on the temple spire, signifying what the temple building is. Patrons who enter the temple, captained by Moroni, are entering the preparatory temple (ark). However, it is you who are the true temple (being represented). Those who fail to understand, patrons, enter the temple (building) to do the work for the dead, even when it is their own work they are doing, yet not realizing.

The name of Moroni comprises an interesting anagram that can be rearranged to ‘I Moron’, an unflattering symbol of carnal man and his illusory world of knowledge. Thus, the man (symbol) on top of the (false) temple toots his horn in proclamation of himself (revealed by his name): I (am) Moron. Moroni symbolizes each of us as captains of the true temple, now unclean, yet failing to understand what we do. Here, one should be cautioned to not follow the usual course of carnal man who is prone to allow his precious ego get in the way of understanding. Reality is, in fact, a very amusing place and it is best that we get rid of our precious egos and learn to laugh at ourselves. We are the best comedians and the jokes we play are on ourselves. In time, laughing at ourselves brings great joy.

(see Messengers; Lying)

**Naked:** Naked is how Adam found himself after he had partaken of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge. Knowledge represents carnal knowledge which is succumbing to the enticing of the senses of the body, represented by the woman, Eve. In this carnal state of mind, Adam is convinced that he is naked. To cover his nakedness, Adam makes himself an apron of leaves and accepts a garment of skins, both of which are synonymous in meaning, representing a veil (of illusion) that covers his mind and heart (and *loins*).

Naked is symbolic of not having what is needed. Thinking that one is naked is about thinking that one is lacking (something). Adam thinks that he lacks authority, so he makes an apron (emblem) to cover it. He also accepts the wearing of a garment which has the marks (signs; emblems) of the priesthood upon it, which priesthood (authority) Adam thinks that he lacks (*ie.* is naked) and must acquire. Acquiring authority is subsequently mistaken to be synonymous with acquiring knowledge and power rather than understanding.

Adam's nakedness is an illusion that Adam buys into. In truth, Adam has all that he needs and lacks nothing, notwithstanding he is oblivious to it. Loins are symbolic of the power to create, a key part of man (being) in God's image.

(see Apron; Carnal and Fallen)

**Necktie:** Neckties play a prominent role in LDS culture and is an important symbol in regard to LDS theology. Neckties have no function except as an emblem of secular power and secular authority (priesthood). In this regard, the symbolism of the necktie is synonymous with that of the apron.

When Adam asks Lucifer "*What is that apron you have on?*", he receives the reply that "*It is an emblem of my power and Priesthoods.*" The necktie plays a similar role in Western culture and the business world. Other emblems of power and priesthods in our culture are such things as gavels, badges, and certificates.

In truth, the power and priesthods spoken of are temporal and illusory. They have no hold upon the (spiritual) being except to the extent that they are believed to be what they represent.

The world requires fealty to be paid to these emblems on the penalty of punishment or banishment from society. Fallen man pays fealty to them. Holy man does not reject these emblems, but rather sees them for what they truly are, symbols of illusion. In truth, they are as meaningless as carnal existence. Being so, there is no more of a need to reject them as there is to accept them. They are illusions. Rejecting these emblems is as much an act of belief in their reality as worshipping them.

As one emerges from the carnal condition, there is an understanding that brings one into a new existence (reality). This includes a realization that everything one needs is already given (*ie.* there is no nakedness) and all things are perfect as they are (meant to be). The task at hand is to choose who to be and express it. Illusions will come and go as needed for that activity.

(see Apron; Naked)

**New and Everlasting Covenant:** The new and everlasting covenant is representative of marriage between Adam and Spirit, the bride and the Bridegroom, individualized Spirit and the All. The marriage here is likened to that of plural marriage since all individuals (brides) are married to the same Bridegroom.

Carnal man confuses the meaning of plural marriage (the New and Everlasting Covenant) with taking more than one wife (polygamy) which is an outward manifestation of a failure to understand. The taking of several women as wives is itself a symbol of the descent into carnality, since woman is a sign (symbol) of the world of the senses. The practice of polygamy creates an unholy caste system, which thing is illusory, unjust, and characteristic of the carnal world.

In practicing polygamy, carnal man usurps the position of the Bridegroom by putting himself in the place of God. In doing so, he plays out the role of Lucifer.

In truth, each individual is to be married to God in monogamous fidelity. It is not really about differences between gender at all, but about mankind, male or female, and the Spirit (God). Man is the bride in the metaphor of the new and everlasting covenant (of marriage). Earthly marriage is merely the metaphor (appearance; symbol) of that which is heavenly or, in the case of polygamous practice, an unholy manifestation of the true (spiritual; heavenly) order. The true order of marriage is meant to be carried out in the present (time and place) as a way of (true) living, breathing, and understanding. It's a new state of being that these symbols point toward.

(see Law of Chastity; Law of Obedience)

**New Name:** The new name is given to the patron as a part of an endowment naming ceremony and is used as the name of the First Token of the Aaronic Priesthood in the endowment enactment. These new names are not really new at all, but are names of persons from religious history, often from the Biblical record. These names are also not unique to the patron because all male or all female patrons get the same new name on a given day unless their own given name matches the new name, in which case they are given the name *Adam* (males) or *Eve* (females). All of these aspects of the new name are deeply symbolic.

Names are symbols of who and what we are and symbolic of our being or, rather, what we are acting out in the present moment of time. All are told to take upon themselves the name of Christ, but few come to know what that means. Getting old names in the endowment is a symbol pointing to where the heart of the patron is at the time and the manifestation of it into being.

In truth, man will emerge from being fallen when he comes to have one name or, rather, one essence. This is part of the symbolism of the stone upon which a new name is written of which no one knows (*ie.* experiences) except the one who receives (*ie.* lives) it. Receiving the stone upon which the new name is written is not meant to be a far off future event, but symbolizes something that is meant to happen here and now.

Names in the endowment are related to each of the four priesthood tokens. The names of the tokens of the Aaronic Priesthood are the names of the patron. These symbolize the self-centered nature of the preparatory gospel as well as the synonymous nature of the symbols of token and patron.

The names of the tokens of the Melchizedek Priesthood (The Son; The Patriarchal grip or Sure Sign of the Nail) carry profound means that are redundant with their tokens and signs. Comments on what these represent will be discussed under their respective listings.

(see First token of the Aaronic Priesthood; First Token of the Melchizedek Priesthood; Tokens, Names and Signs)

**Officiator:** Peter is the *de facto* officiator in the endowment ceremony and administrator of the gospel. Peter symbolizes the earthly custodians of the LDS endowment ritual (*ie.* church leaders). Embodied in the symbol of Peter is the idea that church leaders are the *de facto* custodians of (Godly) authority. It may help to go to Black's Law Dictionary and look up the legal meaning of *de facto*.

The officiator stands in the place of God as a representative. The officiator is therefore a *symbol* (of God). Here lies a key to unraveling many of the mysteries of what is really going on.

Peter is also a symbol of creation. Leaders of the church (representatives; symbols) are often idolized by those who can't tell the difference between symbol and meaning.

(see Peter; Peter, James, and John; Knowledge; Carnal and Fallen).

**Patron:** The patron is the subject and center of what the endowment ritual is about. The ritual itself starts off with the story of creation of the earth, then proceeds to the placing of Adam in the garden, the Fall of Adam, and the journey of Adam that brings him to the veil and beyond. There is a great redundancy and repetition built into the symbols contained in this parable. In truth, Adam is symbolic of the patron himself (herself), showing him (her) through these symbols who (s)he is and what (s)he is doing (here). Some may notice that the creation of the world is replayed again in the symbol of Eve being created from the side of Adam. These are essentially the same story being told in different ways. In truth, Elohim, Jehovah, Michael, Adam, Eve, Lucifer, Heaven, earth, temple, and endowment are all about the same thing: the patron.

(see Adam; Eve; Creation)

**Penalties:** The acting out of penalties accompanied the signs of the first three Priesthood tokens in the endowment up until 1990 when they were removed. The making of the sign included an oath to ‘*never reveal the sign... or (that one would) suffer (their) life to be taken.*’ The reciting of the oath accompanied an acting out of having ones throat (Sign of the First Token of the Aaronic Priesthood), chest (Sign of the Second Token of the Aaronic Priesthood) or bowels (Sign of the First Token of the Melchizedek Priesthood) to be cut. Inasmuch as these have been removed from the contemporary endowment ceremony, newer temple attendees are often unaware of their prior existence.

These penalties carry a profound symbolic meaning as does their removal from the endowment ritual. Carnal man cannot help but reveal to the world through his words and actions that he is not in full fellowship with God, therefore (s)he suffers the penalty of doing so, which penalty is representative of the ultimate outcome of living the preparatory gospel. In becoming clean, the patron gives up his old way of thinking and feeling for a new one. It is important to understand that this is a complete death of the old way and resurrection of the new. Metaphorically, there is a new heaven and earth or, to use different symbols, a new heart and mind.

The removal of the penalties from the endowment constitute both a blessing and a curse. The blessing is that their removal makes the endowment more palatable to the sensibilities of the patrons so fewer will abandon it in personal offense. The curse is that having a more palatable endowment causes fewer to ask questions that may lead to understanding.

(see *Preparatory Gospel*).

**Peter:** Peter is symbolic of church leaders as messengers from God. It should be noticed that Peter is one which the Catholic church claims as their first pope and the rock upon which Christ would build the church. In the LDS endowment, it is Peter who is the chief officiator, narrator, and presiding personage. As officiator of the endowment, Peter represents the LDS leaders of the church who are the custodians of the temple endowment ritual.

In trying to comprehend the symbol of Peter, it is important to remember that it was Peter who denied the Christ thrice and Peter who was called Satan by Jesus and told to get behind him (*cf.* Matt 16:23). Here, Peter symbolizes the body and Jesus symbolizes the Spirit. The body is that which usurps the rightful place of the Spirit which is in front of the body. This is why Jesus told Peter to get behind him.

It may also help to remember that it is John who is said in the scriptures to be the one whom Jesus loved. This is a metaphor of the holy one (Christ) loving the Spirit (symbolized by John) over the body (symbolized by Peter).

(see Peter, James, and John; Officiator; Matron)

**Peter, James, and John:** Peter, James, and John are a symbol of the triune being of carnal man as body, mind, and Spirit. The order of names here is inverted, according to the custom of carnal man in putting the body first.

The true order of names is John, James, and Peter, representing Spirit (John), Mind (James), and body (Peter).

In trying to understand the metaphor of Peter, James and John, it may help to read the Fifth Lecture on Faith which states that the Godhead is composed of two beings rather than three. This conveys the idea that not only does the body (representing materiality) come last, but the body is not a part of reality or *that which lives*. Carnal man identifies with the physical body and thinks that it has its own life when the truth of it is that it is a vehicle without life. In the absence of the Spirit (and Mind), the body is dead, but it is not true the other way around. Spirit was before the body and lives in the absence of it.

The metaphor of a car and driver may help to understand the meaning conveyed by the symbols above. A car is merely a vehicle and conveyance for the driver of it. Without the driver, a car is not alive. Nor is the car alive with the driver. It is merely a conveyance. The driver, on the other hand, is not more or less of a being with or without a car, despite the world having it otherwise. A driver can cast off the car and get out and walk.

Peter is symbolic of the physical body or material conveyance for the Spirit. This conveyance should not be confused with the meaning of the Temple. Ye are the (true) temple. Since you are not the physical body, the material body is not the true temple.

(see Messengers; Michael; Moroni)

**Priesthood:** Priesthood is a symbol of *person-hood* or *being-ness*. The four tokens of the priesthood given in the endowment are symbolic of the carnal and fallen being, as evidenced by the nature of their tokens, names, and signs.

The first two tokens (Aaronic priesthood) are partial handshakes, representing a state of partial fellowship (with God) and are named with the first names of the patron, the new name given in the temple and the given name used in the world. The fact that both are called by the patron's names suggest the meaning of the tokens are redundant with the patron (*ie.* his *being-ness*).

The first and second tokens of the Melchizedek priesthood are signs of nails, representing the demands of (preparatory) law. The signs of these tokens show them to be reflective of the fallen and carnal state of (Adam's) being (-ness).

It may also be important that the Aaronic and Melchizedek priesthoods are named after men, suggesting that they symbolize a fallen state of being or person-hood. All are told to take upon themselves the name (essence; nature; being) of Christ as opposed to that of the world (man). It is the (Spirit) in you that is being spoken to, which is why there is a symbol of priesthood being conferred upon men, but not women. This has little to do with whether one is male or female, since these symbols are figurative (symbolic) and apply to mankind as a whole.

In trying to understand priesthood, it is important point to notice the enigmatic name of the second token of the Melchizedek priesthood given through the veil. The symbolism in this name is about being-ness and person-hood. For those who have forgotten it, here is the name: "*Health in the navel, marrow in the bones, strength in the loins and sinews. Power in the priesthood be upon me and my posterity through all generations of time and throughout all eternity.*"

There are several important symbols to notice in the name of the second token. Words like *loins* and *posterity*, for example, point to creative power and creations. Words like *navel* and *bones* refer to the proper order of being and is synonymous with the symbol of marriage (to God) in the new and everlasting covenant. The name of the second token is symbolic of a state of being in which (all) sons live after the eternal order, embodied in the symbol of (being) oneness with the Father (Spirit), true *Priesthood* or true *person-hood*.

It is important that the name of the second token is given through the veil and must be repeated back correctly for the patron to pass through the veil. It should be noticed that this is what gets the person through the veil as evidenced in the veil worker's words afterwards that "*Adam, having spoken to the Lord through the veil, now desires to enter his presence.*" This speaking through the veil by the patron is an important symbol of the true endowment.

Repeating back the name correctly (through the veil) is symbolic of an embodiment of it (the name) within ones being. It is becoming what is represented by the name.

LDS are rightly told that priesthood is *authority to act in the name of God*, since the symbol of *name* is a symbol of being. Acting in the *name* (essence) of God is a reflection of the Godly being, which is what the discoveries of creation are all about.

(see New and Everlasting Covenant; Aaron; Melchizedek)

**Preparatory Gospel:** The purpose of the preparatory gospel is to bring Adam to a state of remembrance of who he truly is. It is given to Adam at the time he partakes of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil which is that ‘*the world is cursed for his (Adam’s) sake*’ or benefit. If there were no enmity placed between Adam (*ie.* who he acts out), then he would be lost (in his state of being fallen) forever.

Students of the scriptural record are prone to mistakenly look at the preparatory gospel as a relic of the past described in the Old Testament and Book of Mormon. Since the people described in these scriptural records were generally unaware of their (preparatory) state of existence, it is entirely appropriate that it is the same today.

In truth, the scriptural record comprises a powerful metaphor in the same way as embodied in the endowment ceremony. This is also the same for all things in creation. The metaphor is meaningfully symbolic of the present time and place, including the centerpiece of the creation parable, Adam (*ie.* the temple patron).

The scriptural record is predominately a story of those who failed to comprehend what is happening and their sojourn as carnal and fallen beings. This is the same in the endowment parable. Those who are subjects of scriptural stories (*eg.* Adam, Abraham, Jacob) are often seen as heroes to be emulated, when in reality it is their fallen and carnal condition that is mistakenly being emulated by those who fail to see what it is really about.

(see Aaron; Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil)

**Robes of the Priesthood:** The robes of the priesthood play a key role in the endowment ceremony, symbolizing knowledge, understanding, and being. The symbolism of the robes is tied to the cap and covered by the sash. The robes are also clothing in which Adam dresses himself as well as clothing which he is given.

In many ways, the robes of the priesthood represent then endowment itself and the carnal understanding of the endowment by patrons. The endowment is both carnal and holy or false and true, depending on how it is taken. Ultimately, the endowment only embodies truth as do all things in creation. All things are perfect, though misunderstood by carnal man. Truth, taken wrongly, is a lie. This idea is integral to understanding the meaning of all symbols.

In many ways, the robes of the priesthood (person-hood; being) are synonymous in meaning with both the apron and garment of the priesthood, the first of which Adam makes and places upon himself and the second is given him (by God). Thus, the robes symbolize both carnal knowledge and understanding, the first of which comes by (Adam’s) choice and the second which comes from somewhere beyond (Adam’s) knowledge.

When the robe hangs on the left shoulder, it represents the Aaronic Priesthood, carnal knowledge, the fallen condition, or preparatory gospel. When it hangs on the right shoulder, the robe represents understanding of the true reality of Celestial being.

It is important to notice that Adam is given the robes of the priesthood before he enters the Celestial room of the temple. It should be asked why this is so. In truth, Adam already wears the robes from the beginning, despite his fallen condition in the endowment ritual and concomitant failure to understand meaning. Adam was not naked when he came to earth. It was merely an appearance.

In truth, Adam is already present in (*ie.* being presented with) the Celestial kingdom, despite his own infatuation with illusion he sees in the mirror(s) of carnal existence (being). All things are perfect and as they should be. Adam chooses, rightly. The purpose of this is to discover who he truly is. Adam can be no other than who he has always been, but at the same time he can discover what it means by his sojourn in the illusory world of creation, creating a new comprehension which he paradoxically could never have had otherwise.

Adam's choice to live carnally is not a divergence from the true path because Adam has chose it to begin with. Moreover, choosing is an ongoing process or a key part of why things are as they are, perfect, though Adam as a fallen being cannot comprehend it.

(see Priesthood; Endowment; Left and Right Sides)

**Sash:** The sash represents binding (sealing) power and authority. It rightly occupies a position above the apron, but does not cover it. It truth, all are born into the world as perfect beings, therefore all are endowed with all authority at birth.

Many go to LDS temples to get *sealed* to a spouse, only to experience that one of the couple, or both, decide later that they will not abide the marriage. This is despite the pronouncements of the attendant Temple worker that the deed is done, it is an eternal marriage. The truth is that no one can force one to love or live with another. The one with the highest authority in this case is not the priest, but the patron. Marriages are sealed when both spouses have decided in their own minds and hearts that it is done, no matter what happens. True marriage is sealed in the heart and mind, the symbolic altars of the (true) temple.

The symbol of the sash not covering the apron is important to notice. The person wearing the apron is the one with the highest authority to determine whether or not they will wear it. The patron's authority to wear the apron by their own choice is symbolized by the sash which covers the apron. What is sealed on earth will be sealed in heaven and what is sealed in heaven will be sealed on earth. The placement of the words *in* and *on* in the previous sentence could be the subject of a new conversation.

All authority is to be returned (by carnal man) to Adam in the last day, notwithstanding he already has it.

Carnal man uses his God-given authority to lend his own authority to other(s) who fain to be the rightful owners, but who are usurpers of authority not their own. This is the story of the world, but it may not be necessarily a bad thing, since pretense is a foundation stone of re-creation.

(see Cap; Robes of the Priesthood)

**Scriptures:** The scriptures play a vital role as endowment symbols. Patrons are given the Law of Sacrifice and the Law of the Gospel and told that they are to keep them as contained in the Holy Scriptures. At this time, they are shown the Bible and the Book of Mormon, which are placed upon the altar. Later, patrons are shown the Doctrine and Covenants when they are given the Law of Consecration and told that they are to receive it as contained therein. Patrons are told to receive the Law of Consecration along with the Law of the Gospel and the Law of Sacrifice they have already received.

The truth in the scriptures is written in metaphor and symbol. To understand, it is necessary to take them *figuratively* rather than literally. True to form, Adam (patrons) fail to see (perceive) the meaning of these symbols. The symbols of the scriptures are about one thing, one meaning, that is meant for Adam (patrons) to receive (comprehend) in its fullness, even though Adam fails to do so as a carnal being.

The Book of Mormon contains a profound parable that most LDS will recognize as the Dream of Lehi. This dream includes a reference to the meaning of the scriptures in the symbol of the '*iron rod*' which Nephi later explains is symbolic of the '*word of God*'. The *word of God* is popularly mistaken by LDS to symbolize the scriptures, but this is the carnal and fallen interpretation.

Jesus is also a symbol of the Word of God, which is to mean that the Word is Christ. These are symbols upon symbols, so to speak, all of which are redundant in (one) meaning. Restating it, the iron rod, scriptures, Word, Christ, Law of Sacrifice, Law of the Gospel, and Law of Consecration, are all symbols about one thing.

So, what does it mean? Well, to rephrase using another symbolic metaphor, *The Word is* (to be) *written within us upon hearts of living flesh*. *Living* is a key word (symbol) in this last metaphor. Carnal man lives as one who is dead, having a heart of (dead) stone. This is also why Adam built an altar of stone(s) when he left the Garden. It's a metaphor about the patron himself (symbolized by Adam; the Temple). The altar of (stones) represented Adam's own heart as a (spiritually) dead being. It should be noticed that the scriptures lay upon the altar of the temple (building). The altar of the temple is symbolic of the heart of the true temple, one that is meant to be living rather than (spiritually) dead.

(see Temple; Priesthood).

**Second Anointing:** The second anointing is a temple ceremony of which many LDS are unfamiliar. It is privately given to a chosen few of the leaders and some consider it to be synonymous with having a *calling and election made sure*. In truth, it is merely an outward (carnal) symbol of that. The symbol of calling and election, as well as second anointing, is synonymous with the symbol of the second coming of Christ.

Anointing is a foundational symbol which refers to an anointing of Spirit. It is synonymous with being *Christed* (the one who is anointed) which is why Christ is called *the anointed one*.

One might take time to ponder why the first anointing failed or why the first coming of Christ was insufficient? In brief, it is because the hardness of the hearts of (carnal) men. Thus, at another level of symbolism, those receiving the LDS second anointing are replaying out the same act of misunderstanding the first anointing and the first coming of Christ. If they truly knew what it meant, they wouldn't be in the wrong temple receiving the symbol of it rather than the real thing. When there is a comprehension of the first, then there is no need for a second, third, or fourth (*act*).

(see New and Everlasting Covenant)

**Second Token of the Aaronic Priesthood:** The meaning of the second token of the Aaronic Priesthood is fully redundant in meaning with the *first* token of the Aaronic Priesthood. Differences between the two are in how the handclasp (token) is performed (in this one, the thumb being placed between the joints of the first and second knuckles of the right hand), the name (the persons given name rather than new name), and the sign (the sign of the square as made with the left arm rather than the right).

In the earlier (pre-1990) endowment, the penalty for revealing the second token of the Aaronic Priesthood was made by a sign of cutting the chest. This meaning of this symbolism is tied closely to the penalty for revealing the first token of the Aaronic Priesthood, the cutting off of the head as well as the same for the first token of the Melchizedek Priesthood which is the cutting of the bowels. All of these are symbolic of cleansing the mind, heart, and bowels of carnal man, as well as the state of (spiritual) death being conveyed by the relevant tokens, their names, and signs.

(see First Token of the Aaronic Priesthood)

**Second Token of the Melchizedek Priesthood:** Like the other tokens of the priesthood given in the endowment, the second token of the Melchizedek Priesthood is a handshake, this one carried out by grasping the palm, interlocking the little fingers, and placing the forefinger on the other person's wrist. This handshake has two other names besides the Second Token of the Melchizedek Priesthood. The Second Token of the Melchizedek Priesthood is also named 'The Patriarchal Grip' and 'Sure Sign of the Nail'.

The *Patriarchal Grip* is sometimes mistakenly understood to be about the Patriarchal Order, or a *third priesthood* called the Patriarchal Priesthood. Well, it can be is about a third Priesthood

(person-hood), but not how it is popularly supposed. The popular interpretations reveal a misunderstanding of the token and what it truly represents.

The true meaning of the Patriarchal Grip can be found by looking at what is conveyed through the symbolism of this token, its sign, and accompanying name (the name of which is given during the veil ceremony) all of which carry double meanings, the first of which symbolize Adam as the proverbial fallen being and the second which symbolize Adam as he should be.

It should be noticed that the sign of the second token of the Melchizedek Priesthood is raising the hands above the head and while lowering them, saying: *'Oh God, hear the words of my mouth'*: Prior to 1990, the words in this sign were recited in Hebrew as 'Peh La El', often mispronounced by patrons as "Pay-Lay-Ale", translating literally as 'mouth-to-God'. It is unknown why the LDS leadership decided to change the phrase in 1990, but critics of the church charged that Joseph Smith originated 'Pay-Lay-Ale' as a cryptic reference to money (pay), women (lay) and drink (ale).

The sign of the second token of the Melchizedek Priesthood of *'Oh God, hear the words of my mouth'* is symbolic (a sign) of the unholy prayer which is one that is spoken from the mouth (lips) as opposed to one which has real intent (*ie.* from the *heart*). The fact that Adam (see *patron*) makes a sign of an unholy prayer indicates his continued existence as a fallen and carnal being who has not yet arrived at an understanding of what he does.

The symbolism in the name of the second token of the Melchizedek Priesthood will be discussed elsewhere (re: Veil Ceremony).

(see Priesthood; Sign of the Nail; Veil Ceremony)

**Sign of the Nail:** The sign of the nail can also be called the *symbol* of the nail since sign and symbols are synonymous things. The nail is a symbol of exactness, carnal commandments, and (preparatory) law. The nail is therefore a universal symbol of the demands of the law or, to use another phrase that is the same: preparatory gospel.

The nail is rightly associated with the story of crucifixion of the Christ. In symbolic terms, carnal man escapes the law after it has nailed him to the cross, so to speak.

The symbolism of the sure sign of the nail is redundant with that of the sign of the nail in symbolizing the impossible demands of the (dead; preparatory) law which crucifies the (living) Christ.

(see First Token of the Melchizedek Priesthood; Preparatory Gospel; Law)

**Slippers:** Footwear, as coverings for the feet, symbolize the beliefs that guide our journey upon a particular path or, rather, state of being. At one point in the endowment ritual, patrons are told to remove the slippers from their feet and put them on again as a part of their (endowment) clothing. This represents a renewal of beliefs associated with the same in regard to putting on the endowment robes.

In the Bible, Moses is told to remove the shoes from his feet when he meets God upon the mountain. This is a symbol to Moses that he is to put off all of his preconceived notions when he walks upon holy ground (symbolized by the mountain). Mountains are universal symbols of holy ground and often re-presented as symbols of the Temple or Holy Place.

(see Robe of the Priesthood; Temple)

**Spire of the Temple:** The spire of the temple symbolizes the connection of the Spirit to the Temple and carries the same symbolism as the symbol of Father and Son as one (being).

To come to understand the meaning of what is being symbolized by the spire, it is important to first understand what is meant by the phrase *'Ye are the temple of God.'* Temple does not mean the

physical body, which material creation has no life. The true temple has reference to the individualized presence of God or, rather, the individual being. The temple is said to be a place or abode of God.

Carnal man is prone to confuse the higher meaning of temple symbol with the physical body. This comes from a failure to by carnal man to know who or what he is as well as his (carnal) obsession with his physical body of flesh. Are we the body? No, especially since the body is a material creation that has no life. If we are the body, then we (true to form as carnal beings) proclaim that we too have no life. So, how could the physical body be the temple?

When God is individualized, it creates a place (a temple). In truth, there are many temples. When Brigham Young prophesied that *temples will dot the earth*, the words were profoundly true about the here and now since individuals are on the earth, notwithstanding he was speaking a lie of his own creation because he meant it to be about temples as buildings, creations of the hands of men, and an event that exists at another time and place.

The symbol of the spire of the temple has a man (Moroni; angel; messenger) standing on it, tooting his horn. Moroni is said to symbolize the angel described in the Bible (Book of Revelation) who blows his horn in announcement of the coming forth of the (restored) gospel. This is indeed correct, except the gospel that has been restored, so to speak, is the preparatory gospel.

The appearance of Moroni on the spire of the temple is also symbolic of the unholy act of placing a man between oneself and God.

(see Moroni; Messengers)

**Star:** Stars are symbolic of the host of heaven and the light of the Telestial world. One might notice that stars are suns, just like the sun that lights this earth, yet in the day their light cannot be seen.

Day is symbolic of living in the reality of Celestial existence and night is symbolic of (spiritual) death. Those who are (spiritually) dead, walk by the light of the stars and moon. These are metaphors about the (carnal) mind and heart of Adam.

As a sign (symbol) of the last days, 'the stars will be cast (*ie.* fall) from heaven' (*cf.* D&C 88:87), representing the realization that one is not to live on the borrowed light of another (star). Seeing (perceiving, understanding) the stars falling from heaven is the beginning of the transformation of carnal man into a holy being. 'Last day' refers to the near-end of Telestial and Terrestrial existence or, rather, the beginning of the end of imprisonment in carnality.

The scriptures offer some powerful metaphors that are redundant with the idea that man as a holy being will no longer look to the stars (*ie.* other individuals) for their light. D&C 1 has it that, at that time, '*man will not counsel his fellow man... nor trust in the arm of the flesh*' (*cf.* verse 19). '*Every man shall sit under his vine*' (and eat the fruit thereof; *cf.* Micah 4:4) is another one of the many metaphors that represent the same thing as the New and Everlasting Covenant.

(see Telestial; New and Everlasting Covenant)

**Suffering:** "*Suffering is a food that we create, partake of eagerly, then out of ignorance proclaim has a foul taste and is of no use.*" -- Po Tai.

(see Preparatory Gospel)

**Sun:** The symbol of the sun is found on decorative carvings on the outside of some temples. It is often accompanied with symbols of the moon, stars, planets (*eg.* Saturn) and constellations (*eg.* Ursa Major, the Big Dipper, Big Bear). Ultimately, the sun symbolizes Celestial (being), but can also symbolize ideas redundant with others in which it is found (*eg.* Saturn; the Big Dipper).

It is important to notice that the sun is a *star*. Stars symbolize the host of heaven. It is also important to notice that the light of stars are visible only at night when the sun is not present.

In many ways, the sun represents the man Adam as a sun (star) of God and the transcendent light which lights Adam's world. Here, the sun is symbolic of the Spirit and the earth symbolic of creation. The light of the sun nourishes all life upon the earth, the latter of which would be dead without it. These symbols are meant to represent the patron in his true form, an individualized presence of God who gives light unto his own earth in the same way that stars do the same to their own respective earths. These symbols (of creation) tell Adam who he truly is.

(see Moon; Star; Celestial)

**Sure Sign of the Nail:** The symbol of the sure sign of the nail is redundant with sign of the nail. The nail is a symbol of the demands of the law which characterize the preparatory state of existence which occupies the attention and effort of carnal and fallen man.

(see Second Token of the Melchizedek Priesthood; Sign of the Nail)

**Telestial:** The telestial world is synonymous with (spiritual) death and hell, the lone and dreary world, fallen state, and outer darkness. Outer darkness is a redundant phrase since *outer* means to look outward (*ie.* live carnally; live through the senses) and *darkness* symbolizes spiritual death (living in a state of darkness; lack of light).

(see Lone and Dreary World)

**Temple:** The temple building is a token of the true temple (of God). You are the true temple which is merely symbolized by the building.

(see Spire of the Temple)

**Temple Cafeteria:** All of the larger LDS temples have cafeterias located in the basement. When temple workers get hungry, they can buy food in the temple cafeteria and not have to leave the temple to do so. Buying one's food is a symbol of the curse given to Adam that he must sweat for his bread. The symbolic meaning of *bread* refers to spiritual bread and is synonymous with understanding. Carnal man erroneously thinks that he must earn his bread when, in truth, it is free. Moreover, the labors of carnal man do not yield back the bread of God because it offers knowledge to Adam without understanding. In trying to earn his bread, Adam goes about it the wrong way.

The basement location of the cafeteria is symbolic of death, more specifically spiritual death. Since the temple building is a symbol, this has to do with the state of being of the endowment patron and worker, both of which are in the wrong temple.

Since the temple cafeteria is a symbol of the true temple (which temple ye are) an idea being conveyed in this symbolism is that one need not go out into the world (*ie.* be of the world) to obtain bread (understanding).

(see Knowledge; Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil)

**Terrestrial:** The Terrestrial world represents the so-called paradisiacal world of the false appearances where the inhabitant exists in a state of damnation (interrupted progression) and spiritual death brought about by an incomplete conversion to the Spiritual state of being.

In many ways, the Terrestrial world is an extension of the Telestial world of death and hell, notwithstanding the inhabitants are mired in a state of blissful ignorance, so to speak, rather than an overt form of suffering symbolized by the lone and dreary world. Like Telestial existence, the Terrestrial world is one characterized by illusionary knowledge and limited experience.

The partial relationship of Terrestrial inhabitants with the Spirit is symbolized by the concept of eternal marriage or, in the case of the Terrestrial worlds, the lack of it. Terrestrial inhabitants are not

married (to the Spirit in the true covenant). The inhabitants of Terrestrial existence, like those in the Telestial world, live out their existence in the preparatory state as also evidenced by the symbolism of the Melchizedek tokens, names, and signs.

The way out of the Terrestrial world is via doorways at the bottom rather than the top. The blissful world of ignorant satisfaction are chains that bind. Escaping the illusionary world of Terrestrial existence occurs after one gives upon on its failure to provide what is truly desired and re-enters the world of (overt) suffering. This suffering is caused by frustration and eventual weariness of the shallowness and vain repetition that characterizes the experience of Terrestrial existence.

(see Moon; Tokens of the Melchizedek Priesthood; New and Everlasting Covenant)

**Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil:** The tree of knowledge represents a state of mind and heart where one is obsessed with the world of the senses rather than the spiritual. Partaking of the fruit of the tree of knowledge represents the experience of the tree and its fruit (knowledge) which is (spiritual) death.

The tree of knowledge occupies a central role in the endowment ritual. Patrons are shown a theatrical drama in which Adam partakes of the fruit of knowledge and thereby suffers spiritual death. Patrons are told that they are to consider themselves as Adam (and Eve) which symbolizes their own state of being (spiritually dead).

The problem is that Adam, after he has partaken of the fruit of knowledge, doesn't realize what he has done to himself. He fails to realize that by partaking of the fruit of knowledge, he is living under an illusion. This is the same with patrons, despite the fact that most patrons will admit that they do not understand what the endowment is really about.

In partaking of the fruit of knowledge, Adam thinks that gaining knowledge is what he needs. True to form, Adam says that he seeks is 'further light and knowledge' when he is asked what he wants. This request for (further) knowledge is always granted, despite that being the very thing that keeps him from understanding.

The symbolism of Adam partaking of the fruit of knowledge is intricately tied to the veil ceremony where Adam's request for further knowledge is granted. As a carnal and fallen being, Adam fails to see through the veil (of illusion). The worker offers Adam further knowledge by interacting with him through the marks on the veil. Inasmuch as marks are symbols, this is representative of symbolism being the language by which God speaks to carnal man (us; patrons) now. Of course, few seem to be able to understand because our own knowledge is in the way. Knowledge without understanding is what most patrons take from the endowment ritual.

At several places in the endowment ritual, Adam claims that he is looking for messengers from Father to bring him the 'further light and knowledge' he seeks. Unfortunately, Adam is unable to see that the messengers he seeks are right in front of him. It is firstly that he can't understand what the symbols mean.

Passing the veil (of illusion) requires that Adam stop partaking of the fruit of knowledge. It will require that Adam completely put off all of his own preconceived notions. As this happens, Adam will give up his search for messengers because he will realize that they have always been here. Adam will also give up on his search for further knowledge because he will realize that understanding is what he lacked rather than knowledge.

(see Knowledge; Law of Sacrifice; Messengers)

**Twelve Oxen:** The oxen under the baptismal font in the temple represent the twelve tribes of Israel which symbolize a division, separation, and dispersion of Israel. The symbol of 'lost tribes' is a redundant one since *lost* and *tribes* connote the same idea. The attitude of many LDS towards the

tribes of Israel is that they are holy representations of Godliness. This view represents a carnal and mistaken understanding of what the symbols truly mean.

Of the twelve tribes, ten are lost and two are not (Judah; Benjamin). The symbolism of two tribes not being lost is redundant with symbols of Father and son, Bridegroom and bride, Spirit and creation. Here, Judah represents the Bridegroom and Benjamin represents the bride.

The return (or restoration) of the ten lost tribes in the last days refers to the reuniting of Israel into one(ness) and is relevant to the emergence of carnal man (Adam) from his illusory (fallen; divided; spiritually dead) state of existence and entrance into the one and only true reality of being (being-ness; life; living; priesthood).

(see Baptismal Font; Priesthood)

**Veil:** The symbol of the veil represents a barrier to understanding. More specifically, it represents the illusion that Michael (Adam) willingly believes (partakes of) so that he might live out the (true) purpose of creation which is that God might have a place (temple) to  *dwell*.

Veil symbolism is found throughout LDS temples, the endowment ritual, and LDS iconography. There is a veil in the temple that separates the celestial room from the lone and dreary world(s), the veil over the women's faces, the apron, the garment, and the illusion brought upon Adam by partaking of the fruit of Knowledge. One might notice that these symbols exist throughout all of creation, such as in the atmosphere comprising a veil over the earth and forgetfulness of mind comprising a barrier to remembrance of what we did in our (nightly) dreams.

The piecing of the veil is symbolic of Adam's emergence from forgetfulness or, to use a better phrase: Adam's remembrance. Re-member means to 'put back together' which idea is synonymous with symbols like 'return of the lost tribes', 'fixing that which is broken' (done by the Christ), or the 'remembrance of Christ' as a key in the enactment of the sacrament.

When the veil is 'rolled back as a scroll', so to speak, it is because it is no longer needed and no longer serves its purpose. Adam then lives in remembrance of the new and everlasting covenant. Adam, as the bride, will have returned from his infidelities (whoredoms) of the carnal world, re-entering into the true marriage (with the Bridegroom) to re-emerge as a Celestial being. His calling and election is made sure, so to speak, by the understanding of perfection, which thing has always existed, but he never comprehended.

(see Carnal and Fallen; Veil Ceremony; New and Everlasting Covenant)

**Veil Ceremony:** The veil ceremony in the endowment consists of a series of tests given by the Bridegroom to the patron which culminates in the patron passing through the veil and entering the Celestial room. The veil symbol is representative of the veil of illusion brought about by Adam's partaking of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge. The Celestial room is symbolic of a state of being where one lives in the one and only true reality of meaning. This has everything to do with what is represented by a variety of temple symbols and has everything to do with the purpose of creation. It is through creation, or rather re-creation, that Adam discovers who he is. It is by living in the new and everlasting covenant that he understands. This is an ongoing process. God re-creates himself and re-discovers who he is by experiencing his own creations. This experience occurs (is occurring) through the veil or, rather, through an interaction between the Spirit (reality) and creation (illusion) in the true (perfect) form. It is something that is occurring right now of which carnal man is unaware.

Passing through the veil in the endowment ceremony is symbolic of seeing through the illusion of knowledge brought about by the experience of carnality. The experience of carnal existence is valuable to the Spirit and undertaken willingly by the Spirit (symbolized in the endowment by Michael/Adam). However, once the experience of imprisonment and suffering has served its

intended purpose, it is necessary that Michael/Adam move onto new re-creations and new experiences. To do that, he must break free of the chains of carnal knowledge. This is what the endowment story is about. Breaking free from the bondage of the Fall is what the veil ceremony is about. The fact that patrons are in the temple (building; symbol of the true temple) receiving the symbol rather than what is real shows that this is yet to be experienced.

In the veil ceremony, the patron is tested by being given each of the four priesthood tokens and then asked what they are. It is important to notice that nowhere in this exchange is the patron told that his responses are correct except for one place. This occurs after the patron correctly repeats back the name of the second token of the Melchizedek Priesthood, one that he (the patron) says he has not yet received when asked if the token has a name. This admission by the patron that he has not yet received the name is also an important symbol, representing the divergence from the bondage of the carnal mind which piously and conceitedly thinks that it knows (*ie.* possesses knowledge).

It is also important to notice that after giving back the name of the second token through the veil that the Bridegroom responds with telling the patron “*That is correct.*” At this point the testing process ends. Afterwards, the temple worker summons the Bridegroom to proclaim that Adam, ‘*having spoken to the Lord through the veil, now desires to enter his presence*’, at which time the Bridegroom puts forth his hand, parts the veil, and pulls the patron into the Celestial room.

There are many other aspects of this ritual that can be discussed, but cannot be addressed in detail due to limitations of this communication medium. It may be important to contemplate some of the more salient aspects of the veil ritual, most especially in regard to entrance into the Celestial room. One important aspect is the putting forth of the hand of the Bridegroom in pulling the patron into Celestial existence. In truth, this hand is always extended. Yes, right now. This extended hand is redundant in symbolism with the second coming of Christ. What is represented by the symbol of the second coming of Christ has occurred, is occurring now, and will occur. It is not so much that ‘Christ will come’ as it is that ‘Christ *is* come.’

It might also be important to notice that patrons, after entering the Celestial room, sit about and contemplate their experience, primp themselves in the mirrors, or speak to friends in hushed voices, before leaving the Celestial room to return to the dressing rooms, change into their ‘street clothing’, and return to the world. It may be important to notice that the Bridegroom is nowhere to be seen in the Celestial room. He is still back at the veil ushering in other patrons. When patrons pass the veil, their own enthrallment at the prospect of entering the room causes them to let go of the hand of the Bridegroom. In a few words (symbols), that is why they go home.

Eventually, patrons see (perceive) what is going on and thereby go back as a bride to grasp the hand of the Bridegroom. In its simplest expression, this is what the endowment is all about. The entire LDS endowment is encompassed in the last few minutes of the veil ceremony, from the receiving of the name through the veil, forward. This, simple act of letting go of the Bridegrooms hand encapsulates the entire story of the Fall (of Adam).

The only exception to the usual enactment for the dead is in the so-called ‘live endowment’ of a couple to be married (in the temple). In this case, the groom stands in the place of the Bridegroom at the veil, parts the veil with his hand, and then pulls his spouse into the celestial room. Afterwards, both enter together as a symbol of the Bridegroom and bride living the new and everlasting covenant (eternal marriage).

Please remember that these are symbols about what is to occur in the true temple experience (which temple ye are) and that the true temple experience is already occurring, despite carnal mans inability to understand it.

(see Priesthood; Veil; Celestial)

**Washing and Anointing:** The washing and anointing rituals are synonymous in meaning with that of baptism. Washing is symbolic of being cleansed of the old and anointing is symbolic of putting on the new. Both water and oil are symbols of the Spirit as are the symbols of blood and wine, although blood can also symbolize that which is illusory and earthly rather than heavenly.

In the washing and anointing ceremony, various body functions and parts are washed (or anointed), each of them symbolic of an important aspect of this process. For example, the mind and the intellect are mentioned along with the head, which things represent carnal knowledge and its fellow travelers or, alternatively, mind married (anointed) to Spirit (spiritual mind; Christed).

The head is a redundant symbol with such things as Peter, the officiator, Elohim, and Lucifer. It may be noticed that cutting off the head is a symbol seen repeatedly in religious culture, such as where the head of John the Baptist is cut off, Laban's head is removed, and the penalty in the pre-1990 endowment for revealing the first token of the Aaronic Priesthood was cutting off the head. The head in these cases represent the carnal mind and its reliance on illusory knowledge. The symbolism of washing and anointing the head in the relevant ritual points to the same thing as these other symbols.

The bowels are anointed to 'do their proper function' which in the physical body is to digest food, taking in that which is nourishing and disposing of that which is not. There is a spiritual counterpart of this is being referenced in this symbol.

The loins are symbolic of creative power. It might be noticed that carnal man attempts to cover these with the apron and these are also mentioned in the name of the second token of the Melchizedek Priesthood that one might have 'strength in the loins' (proper creative activity).

(see Baptism)

**Work for the dead:** This phrase is carnally mistaken to refer to those who have passed out of the physical body or those who are physically dead, rather than those who spiritually dead.

It is always those who are spiritually dead who have need of the (preparatory) work, since those who are living receive no benefit by the work for the dead.

Temple work for the dead is tied to genealogical searches for ones relatives. LDS are rightly told that they 'cannot be saved without their *kindred* dead.' This phrase embodies profound symbolism. First, it tells the patrons that they are (spiritually) dead, since the meaning of kindred is 'related' or 'a similar kind.' Secondly, genealogical work symbolically refers to carnal mans search for who he truly is, the purpose of the patron going to the temple (building) in the first place.

(see Tokens, Names, and Signs at the beginning of this word listing)

*Truth is the only thing that exists. Everything else is illusion. Illusion is not real, although a lot of us seem to believe in it. Illusion does not need to be destroyed since its illusion in the first place. It is when we understand illusion for what it truly is that we find life more abundant. -- Po Tai*

## **How All Things are Perfect**

**By Eleazar, 2004**

This narrative is the last in a series written about understanding the LDS temple endowment at new and deeper levels of meaning. The temple endowment tells a profound and meaningful parable about the patron himself (or herself), his birth into spiritual and material existence, his entrance into a state of imprisonment by illusion, and his reason for being. The endowment portrays this perfectly, though few understand how or why. In a profound way, the endowment is like a mirror that contains the (perfectly reflected) image of the patron.

Endowment patrons tend to look upon the endowment experience as one of the most sacred events in their lives. This often accompanies a failure to perceive that everyday experience is as sacred as the endowment experience. To see perfection, endowment patrons will need to look further and perceive more. Temple patrons will first need to comprehend how *the endowment is all about them*. This last sentence should be understood at two major levels of meaning. First, it refers to the LDS temple endowment as specifically relevant to the temple patron himself (or herself). At a deeper level of understanding, the endowment comprises everything in creation. All of our daily experience in this sense-world comprises an endowment similar to the one received in LDS temples. Thus, an endowment is comprised within everything that surrounds us (*ie. is about us*).

One of the fundamental messages of the endowment is that the patron is a fallen being, living under illusion and (spiritual) death. As in Adam, it is for the patron. Adam does not realize that he is blinded by illusion and spiritually dead. Adam's illusory world has him believing in a false notion of opposition in all things. The belief in opposition leads Adam into a continual state of conflict and suffering where he mistakenly interprets all that is about him in terms of good and evil. This interpretation is as a veil that prevents Adam from perceiving perfection.

To understand perfection, Adam will need to cleanse himself thoroughly and completely of that which blinds him. Adam will first need to come to the realization of the existence of his illusions so that the cleansing process can begin. Ultimately, he will come to understand what he experiences. He will also understand why. It's this way because Adam has planned it that way before he fell into illusion. The created world has always been perfect from the beginning, despite Adam's failure to understand it as a fallen being. When Adam emerges from the veil of illusion, he will comprehend how and why the plan has always been perfect.

In truth, there can only be reality, because unreality is illusory. In reality, there is only perfection. Everything is perfect. However, how all things are perfect is difficult to comprehend for those who are now standing in front of the veil and desiring to pass beyond. The purpose of this narrative is to offer new ideas that will help to understand how perfection is the one and only true reality. This author sees this as a task much more difficult than presenting the ideas found in prior

narratives. Explaining perfection is akin to trying to explain a joke to someone else who doesn't understand. There is only so far that a person can go in trying to explain a joke. In the end, each individual must *get it* on their own. It is this 'getting it' that this narrative cannot provide. Nor should it. At best, it can attempt to explain things not popularly perceived.

To comprehend how all things are perfect, it is necessary to first rid oneself of popular notions of perfection that can be misleading. What will follow is suggestions of a new ways to look at what perfection might be.

**Why suffering?** The notion that all things are perfect may appear incredible to those hearing it for the first time. *“How can this world be perfect? Have you not seen the injustice, suffering, and death that are part of this world?”*

The existence of injustice, suffering, and death is not denied by the notion of perfection, but rather is accepted as an integral part of it. In order to comprehend how these things are part of perfection, one must be able to go beyond them to see them as they truly are and their reason for being. Most importantly, one must come to understand *why* these things exist.

Seeing things are as they truly are is a difficult task for fallen man who consumes himself with the illusion of appearance. Appearances aren't real, although they symbolize what is. Yet, appearance has a purpose, which is to create an illusion in which God can individualize and live out by self-expression and (self) discovery. Suffering is an outcome of this process and misery is a chosen path. This world is a place for God to dwell, that he might express himself in myriad ways, according to his desire. Unknown to carnal man, everything is happening right here in the smallest microcosm of the all.

Hopefully, the idea of how the world is perfect, despite the perceived reality of misery, suffering, and death, will become clearer as this narrative progresses. These are our own creation, all illusions with a purpose that they might be experienced as real so as to give meaning to life. God created the world so that there would be a place to dwell. It can be nothing else but perfect, notwithstanding the appearance of misery, suffering, and death. There is nothing wrong with things as they are right now, that is, except when we say so, since that is a part of the perfection of our being.

**A mother's definition of perfection.** Perfection in all things is a difficult idea to grasp because of a wide misunderstanding of what perfection means. There is a mistaken tendency to think of perfection as it is defined by worldly notions and earthly values. Perfection is mistakenly viewed in LDS theology as the endpoint of an incremental and progressive growth path similar to how a child grows to teen, then adult. Perfection is thought to be an achievement, the ultimate reward for great effort and endurance in terms of obedience to God's commands. A perfect being is thought to be one who knows a lot, can do a lot, a great leader, conductor of God's work, and presiding authority. However, these are narrow perceptions that can be misleading. In understanding what perfection truly means, it may help to first consider perfection in cases where there is a lack of these things. To illustrate this, it may be helpful to consider the idea of a mother and child.

Consider a mother who has just given birth to a child that is healthy and wanted (desired). The mother will look upon this child as *perfect*, will she not? Can anyone else rightly proclaim that a desired and healthy child is not perfect and the mother is wrong for thinking so? If there is imperfection in a child, then what is it? In truth, there is no imperfection, yet such a child cannot feed,

clean, clothe itself, is unable to speak adult language, and is unaware of the world outside of its immediate environment. Omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent are terms associated with *Godliness* and *perfection* that would certainly not apply to a newborn child. Yet, the words of perfect or Godly are appropriate for describing such a child.

With the above analogy in mind, it may help to reconsider what else perfection can mean. Perfection can be rightly applied to that which is *desired* and *fills its purpose* or that which *rightly fills the measure of its creation*. Here, readers may want to consider that there are many things in this world that, like a newborn child, rightly fill the measure of their creation and are, therefore, perfect. In reality, it is all things, but if you can't seem to get it at the present time, try to first consider that there are a few things in the world that are perfect. Newer considerations may help to perceive how perfection is in all things.

At a deep level of comprehension, even illusions are perfect. But, how can our illusions be perfect? Well, this has everything to do with our reason for being. Illusion is necessary for our being, even when it *appears* that things are really messed up. How can that be? To understand how this is so, it may be helpful to look next at an analogy that is illustrated in a Book of Mormon stories about king-men.

**We want a king!** How an (apparently) imperfect world is perfect can be illustrated in a variety of Book of Mormon stories about the people desiring a(n) (earthly) king. The Book of Mormon has it that God's counsel us that having an (earthly) king results in suffering (*cf.* Mosiah 23:7). Despite this counsel, some people want a king anyway. After enough people demand a king enough times, they are given one (*cf.* Ether 6:22-27). Like the endowment, these stories (parables) are about what is going on here and now in the world *about us*. Being such, they are parables directly relevant to us, *our-story* or, as it is mistakenly perceived by those who do not comprehend it: *his-story* (*ie.* about someone else). In truth, what is mistaken as his-tory in the scriptures is better understood as a profound metaphor about us in the present time and place.

In the Book of Mormon (his)story, God advises against a king, but when the people desire to have a king, their wishes are granted according to their desire. After having their own desires granted, one of the multitude could rightly run around proclaiming that God said they (the people) should have a king. "*Thus saith the Lord: Ye shall have a King!!*" Such a statement is comical since it is true *in fact*, but misleading. Having a king was the desire of the people and that is why it (desire) was granted. Incidentally, our deepest desires are always granted, notwithstanding few understand how or why. This is as true now as it always has been, despite the fact that most are oblivious to what is really happening.

Here, a question can be raised about king-men being granted their desires: *Would it be right that God now take away their king?* The answer is no, otherwise what would be the reason for God granting a king? Is it right for another person among the people to try to force the people free of the king? Well, that's an interesting question, perhaps answered by asking why one would go against God's wishes? Should a minority rule over the majority for their own (supposed) good? Some appear to think so. Others might argue that king-men are minority, therefore it is good to force them to live as free-men. And so a war is born, with both sides failing to understand what is happening.

It may be appropriate to now ask if king-men having a(n) earthly king according to their own desires and demands is *perfect*? In truth, it is perfection, but to understand how it is perfect, one must

come to understand why it exists. What is the reason for it? The key to understanding perfection is to ask for what purpose these things exist? In this particular case, a king is the king-men's (perfect) *creation*.

There is an important purpose for creation. The purpose of creation is not to avoid suffering and gain pleasure, but to experience who we truly are. The suffering that eventually comes from having a king will give the people experience of what it means to re-create themselves in that manner. An experience of what it means is why it exists in the first place. That is why Adam chose to fall into illusion. It was to *experience what it (illusion) means*.

Here, one needs to remember who Adam is as well as ask who they are and why they are here. Devout LDS are prone to be under a mistaken notion that they already know who they are and why they are here. However, it may help to consider that the popular notions are carnal and sensual interpretations that need to be given up for new understandings. The endowment tells Adam through symbolism that he doesn't understand.

It is important to realize that the endowment parable of is not about what went on in the past, but it is about what is happening right now. Eternity is occurring right now. Eternal life is an ongoing *process* of great purpose and design. One might say that (Eternal) life is a process of continual *be-coming* (re-creating oneself). The purpose of life is that God might re-create himself and then know himself through experience of his creations. The world(s) of (apparent) opposition is the medium in which we carry this out. And, it's perfect because it fills the measure of its creation.

Progression is not a long journey that ends at some far off place nor is perfection something gained by achievement through effort. Each of us, like children, are perfect now. We were made perfect, despite our own illusory beliefs to the contrary. Yet, in being perfect, there is still what is called (eternal) progression. This can appear paradoxical, but it will make sense as one understands who we are and *why we are here*. Eternal progression is happening right now and it doesn't end. It is not that there is a reward waiting for us in some far off place as much as it is that what is happening now is rewarding.

**A distant and weak God?** In addition to considering the possibility that this (Telestial) world (of Death and Hell), although illusory, is nevertheless perfect, it may help to briefly examine an important concept that underlies notions that many of us profess to hold dear, particularly a (professed) belief in a God who is *all-present* (omnipresent), *all-knowing* (omniscient) and *all-powerful* (omnipotent). At the very least, readers ought to acknowledge that belief in an imperfect world requires non-belief (*unbelief*) in a God who is caring as well as omnipresent, omniscient, and omnipotent. This *unbelief* is the apparent reality of carnal man's illusory world, despite carnal man's tendency to falsely proclaim with his lips that he is a faithful believer.

Many Christian religions tend to view the condition of our world as a result of a War in Heaven in which a rebellious being (Lucifer/Satan) rose up to challenge God. Few seem to question how an omnipresent, omniscient, and omnipotent God can be challenged at all, much less by someone (symbolized by Lucifer) who represents the opposite of those things, limited, ignorant, and un-powerful. Belief in the traditional notion of a war in heaven not only includes a *belief* in the (willful or powerless) failure of God to keep things perfect, but also a *belief in the power of a rebellious being* to make things imperfect.

It may help to re-examine popular interpretations of a War in Heaven as a past event and see it as a parable about the present. The War in Heaven can be profoundly understood as a relevant parable about us, who we are and what we do (now). We should be asking ourselves what role we are playing in the drama (now)?

It may help to first notice the parallels in the story of Lucifer and the story of Adam whom endowment patrons are told to consider as themselves. Church doctrine has it that Lucifer, a formerly illustrious being that 'rebelled' in regard to a heavenly 'plan', is cast out of heaven to the earth. In parallel, Adam rebels against God by eating of the fruit and is thereby cast into the lone and dreary world. It may help to consider that these parables are about the same thing, although different symbols (Lucifer; Adam) are used. The war in heaven and the creation of the world are actually the same story played out redundantly as repeats of a single story: *Ours*. Unfortunately, carnal man is so infatuated with himself that he falls into the trap of thinking that everything in the endowment that is unflattering must be about someone else and everything that is flattering must be about him. That is a fairly nice description of the character of Lucifer. The real perfection of the endowment can be perceived when we consider that it's all about us rather than someone else. Endowment patrons seem resistant to the idea that Lucifer represents them. Rightly so. If it was otherwise, then its symbols would not be truly reflective.

Endowment patrons are told to consider themselves as Adam and that the story of the 'man and woman' is 'figurative' (*ie.* symbolic, metaphorical). Like Adam, each patron in the endowment can be considered as *a/the first man*. At one level of symbolism, *man* represents creation or, rather, *appearance*. One might say that the first being (person) consumed with appearance is Lucifer, even though the first *man*(infestation) is Adam. These symbols are redundant and profound. But, there is much more than what is usually perceived because we (endowment patrons) are more than the *first* (being consumed with) *appearance* (Lucifer) or *first man* (Adam). If we think we are not Lucifer, but we are Adam, we miss the point because both are synonymous in representation. Rather than look within himself for who he truly is, carnal man will need to stop looking outside of himself and consuming himself with appearances. In reality, we are both *the first and the last*, notwithstanding we choose (in real time) which of these we will act out. In truth, all is within us, yet reflected outwardly. That too is part of the parable.

Dear reader, if the above paragraph sounds too cryptic and complex for your palate, clear your mind and be at peace. Perhaps you have been thinking too much to begin with. Let it flow from deep within you, just as the waters (metaphorically) flow from beneath the temple. This is understanding that you already have, but have chosen to forget for a wise purpose that you are trying to remember now. When you begin to comprehend what it truly is, you will be amazed at its simplicity as well as depth of accuracy.

You are here now because you have chosen it. *Choice* and *creation* are two fundamental principles of endowment symbolism. Michael forgets who he is by choice. Adam eats of the fruit of knowledge (illusion) by choice. You are that person who has chosen to forget who you are, falling into illusion, all for a great purpose that you once comprehended, but forgot so that its purpose would be accomplished. It is all a part of your plan. Your remembrance is a part of it too. And it all has to do with your original purpose and plan which can be understood in the context of what is going on (now) and why. So, what is it that is going on? In a single word, the answer is: *Creation*. This is part of the fundamental message of the endowment parable.

A mystery to be revealed to students of the endowment is how the world can be perfect as well as illusory. The world in which we live and have our being is full of symbolism that points the way to meaning. The world itself is not meaningful, but it is *what was before the world* that is. In this, there is a paradox. Man is to *find meaning that has always existed through experiencing something that does not exist except as an illusion, counterfeit, manifestation, or creation.*

**Perfection isn't fatalistic.** One of the barriers to comprehending what is happening is getting sidetracked into mistakenly thinking of perfection as fatalistic. "*If things are perfect now, then what need is there to do anything?*" Well, perfection does not mean predestination, nor does it mean lack of choice. Comprehending all things as perfect is believing all things and hoping all things. Even illusion has a purpose, which is to provide a means for God to know himself. Fatalism is an anathema to living. Fatalism is an (illusory) opposite to perfection.

Carnal man as a religious zealot lives out his existence in a state of struggle trying to earn salvation and remake what he sees as imperfection into his own image of what is perfection. In truth, heaven cannot be created by improving on hell. Hell is an illusion that will need to be abandoned, not improved upon, nor fought against, since it is an illusion in the first place.

Ultimately, the prideful mind and heart of carnal man is broken by the realization of his continual failure to make heaven out of hell. Although he doesn't realize it at first, his failure lies in the very thing that he is creating. Ultimately, carnal man realizes that the proverbial War in Heaven is his own creation. In trying to destroy it, man serves to strengthen it. In creating a fearful struggle, man experiences the same. In truth, it is truly wonderful, since that is what he (Adam; Michael; God) was about in the first place, recreating himself and then knowing himself by experiencing it.

A problem with emerging from the illusion of knowledge of good and evil is that an apparent lack of a (so-called) good cause (war) to engage oneself can leave a vacuum in which purpose appears non-existence. Carnal man is prone to hang onto carnality rather than offer all of his former dogma in consecration. "Without war and struggle, where is *purpose?*" "If everything is perfect as it is because others have chosen it, then *what reason* is there to act?" If you are asking these questions, then you might consider that you have yet to consecrate the last of your carnal knowledge.

It is important to realize that creation is an ongoing process rather than a past event. Re-creation is the better term for what is going on. Moreover, it is not so much about others as it is about you, despite the shared experience of creation in the lone and dreary world. Adam mistakenly perceives the world about him as a creation of others like him. In a profound way, it is! But, for what purpose? It's a grand one, which is so that he will not be alone and will have a place to dwell and express himself. In truth, it's a wonderful place rather than horrible, perfect rather than imperfect, desired rather than not, planned rather than chaotic. The world is changing, dynamic, breathing, a living thing. And you are here, aren't you? *Here* is a place for you to dwell (forever). *Here* isn't the world. If you are confusing *here* with the world, then you don't yet comprehend where you are.

Here, we arrive at one of the greatest mysteries of all. An emergence from the bonds of illusion does not mean a destruction of the outer existence as much as it means a destruction of ones dependence and reliance on it. That being the case, does that mean that one adhere to a fatalistic view and choose to do nothing and leave things as they are? Sure it does if doing (or not doing) that is what one desires to create and experience. Will it be an enjoyable experience or not? Well, that is the mystery. Create it and find out.

In truth, nothing in this world can be left as it is, because the creation is always changing, evolving. To truly comprehend what is going on, one needs to perceive creation as a *going-on* event. This is part of what the endowment is about. It is about *creation* and *choice, experience* and *re-creation*. It's a living process that is a foundation of life (eternal).

Falling into the bonds of illusion does not change what is happening, but rather brings the bitter experience of living in a state of yielding up ones agency, or at least the appearance of it. In truth, you have chosen to be here now and experience what you are experiencing now, despite the fact that you may have forgotten (by choice) so that the experience is (appears to be) a real one.

*This is life eternal* and it is an ongoing process rather than a future achievement. What will you do now? You will do what you have been doing all along. In this, there is a wonderful paradox. *You have no choice in having no choice*. Whatever you choose, you will always be re-creating who you are and then experiencing what that means. When it is comprehended, you will want to shout about how perfect it is now and always been.

**(Re)Creation.** Before illusion, there was (only) Go(o)d. Is it good that God be alone? No. Since it is not good that God is alone, a woman (creation) is formed from the side of God. But, how can one create a second when there is only one existing to create it from? The only way is by bringing about a forgetting such that the first does not recall that it is also the second. Notwithstanding there is an appearance of two, there is really only one. Despite the illusion of appearance, it's Go(o)d. Illusion is good because it's for a wise purpose.

The purpose of illusion is to provide a place where (that which was formerly) one can (re) create him-self and discover what that means by experiencing it. That is what we (I) am doing here. Moreover, it is something that is going on, happening in the present moment of time. It's perfect. How else could it be, since God created it?

It is good that there are infinite possibilities offered in regard to choosing what part of creation one will experience. There is even the possibility of trying to stamp out evil, notwithstanding this choice re-makes one into that which one tries to destroy. There is a beauty in the world of form that can be comprehended only by going beyond it and seeing why it exists in the first place. All things, including form (image; illusion), has a reason for being. If it were not so, they would not exist.

(Apparent) Opposition is a medium in which we can recreate ourselves and discover by first hand experience who we are. Eternal life is going on right now as an ongoing experience of re-creation and re-discovery. You might consider that now is the time that you have chosen to experience discovery that comes from reading this narrative. Now is the time that I have chosen to experience writing it.

## An Experience of Yourself

By Eleazar, 2004

Creation is the place which God can dwell.  
And what should we be doing?  
Choose who you will be.  
But that is what you've been doing all along,  
Even by letting others tell you what to do,  
So that you might experience what that means too.

Life eternal cannot die,  
But, it can be believed it can,  
So that it can be experienced in greater abundance.  
As carnal beings, we struggle to obtain what we already have,  
That we might experience what we already are.

In an infinite universe, all dreams come true.  
Even nightmares, it seems.  
Illusions, believed to be reality.  
Because we have made it so.  
Believing the dream we have created.

Now is the time  
To dream a new dream  
Of yourself.  
Dream a big dream.  
One that is the greatest one  
That you can imagine,  
And experience if it comes true,  
Or not.

Whatever it is  
You will have chosen it.  
So that you will know by experience  
Who you truly are.

And who are you?  
Whatever you decide.  
And yet, your decision only changes appearance,  
Because you don't really change who you are,  
Except you discover yourself anew,  
By each new experience  
Of what you have created.

Ye are the temple,  
The world of creation,  
The bride,  
The woman.  
Yet in you dwells the infinite,  
You and not you.  
You are both the Creator and the created,  
The Observer and the observed,  
The Father and the son,  
The Bridegroom and the bride.

That is, unless you choose not to believe it  
Because that is what you've been doing all along.  
Not believing in yourself,  
So that you might know by your experience,  
Who you are.

Eternal life  
Is going on right now,  
In every choice you make,  
In each recreation of yourself.

Here is a mystery you haven't yet imagined.  
This poem, these narratives, this book,  
Was written by you  
As a message to yourself  
That you might experience it now.

--finis non--