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# THE MARRIAGE OF ADAM AND EVE: RITUAL AND LITERARY ELEMENTS

As most Latter-day Saints are no doubt aware, much of our ritual is associated with the establishing of covenants between ourselves and God. In fact, more often than not, the covenant is named after the ritual act itself. For instance, the term *baptism* comes from a Greek term meaning “to immerse,” while the term *endowment* comes from a Latin term meaning “to bestow.” In her paper, RoseAnn Benson examines the importance of ritual in the marriage covenant by reviewing the marriage of Adam and Eve through an overarching pattern of covenant making in the Old Testament. —DB

**M**ARRIAGE BETWEEN MAN AND WOMAN lies at the heart of Judeo-Christian family tradition, the roots of which are found in the Old Testament story of Adam and Eve. Ritual elements in the marriage of Adam and Eve point to its covenant nature. The following legendary depiction of the first marriage provides a starting point in discussing Adam and Eve’s marriage by illustrating several key elements.

The wedding of the first couple was celebrated with pomp never repeated in the whole course of history since. God Himself, before presenting her to Adam, attired and adorned Eve as a bride. Yea,

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He appealed to the angels, saying: "Come let us perform services of friendship for Adam and his helpmate, for the world rests upon friendly services, and they are more pleasing in My sight than the sacrifices Israel will offer upon the altar." The angels accordingly surrounded the marriage canopy, and God pronounced the blessings upon the bridal couple. . . . The angels then danced and played upon musical instruments before Adam and Eve in their ten bridal chambers of gold, pearls, and precious stones, which God had prepared for them.<sup>1</sup>

This Jewish legend highlights elements of ritual in this event. It depicts God, witnessed by angels, in a specially prepared place, presiding over and performing the wedding of Adam and Eve. The wedding's sacred location and the presence of witnesses suggest that this event followed ritual. The scriptural account and latter-day revelation contain ritual and literary patterns indicating that marriage is a covenant relationship.

### **Previous Scholarship**

The idea that Adam and Eve's marriage is covenant linked and was performed in sacred precincts resonates with Latter-day Saints; however, such is not the case with some prominent scholars such as Jacob Milgrom and Moshe Greenberg. The main counterarguments to a covenant-based marriage center on (1) the absence of Hebrew terms for oaths and covenants from descriptions of Adam and Eve's marriage and (2) debate over whether scriptural passages referring to marriage are metaphorical or literal. These scholars claim that the oath statement and covenant terms which do exist are symbolic of the relationship of Israel to Jehovah and are not representative of an actual marriage or the relationship between husband and wife. They conclude that these terms do not relate back to Adam and Eve.

Milgrom argues that none of the extant marriage contracts and laws from the ancient Near East stipulated an oath, without which marriage could not be classified as a covenant. For example, the oath and covenant between Jacob and Laban that is sometimes cited as an



Del Parson, *Adam and Eve Kneeling at an Altar*. (© Intellectual Reserve, Inc.)

example of covenant refers to Jacob's promise not to take other wives (see Genesis 31:44–50).<sup>2</sup> Further, Milgrom maintains that the Hebrew biblical term כרת ברית (*krt bryt*), meaning literally “to cut a covenant,” in other passages referring to marriage is a literary metaphor and had no legal bearing (for example, Ezekiel 6:8). He makes this assertion because the oath was taken by the bridegroom, God, rather than by his bride, Israel. Greenberg sides with Milgrom, explaining that this oath is part of the Abrahamic covenant, promising the land of Canaan to the patriarchs and their descendants, and is “the solemn declaration of mutual obligation connected with the Exodus and covenant with the people,” rather than a reflection of marital practice.<sup>3</sup> Thus Milgrom and Greenberg assert that the “swearing” and “covenant” found in Ezekiel 16 are metaphorical rather than literal.<sup>4</sup>

The text of Malachi, the chief pillar of the traditional identification of covenantal marriage in the Old Testament, is another area of debate for the literal or metaphorical question. Does the text refer to a “literal marriage or to a symbolic marriage (whether to God, to the covenant, or to the priesthood)”?<sup>5</sup> Malachi 2:14 witnesses against the unfaithfulness of Levite priests to the “wife of [their] youth.” Milgrom claims that “it is the bride, not the husband, who is subject to the laws of adultery,” making this reference in Malachi also metaphorical rather than literal.<sup>6</sup> Proverbs 2:17 describes the adulteress “which forsaketh the guide of her youth, and forgetteth the covenant of her God.” Though some scholars cite this passage to explicitly identify marriage as a covenant, others believe that the covenant in question is with Israel and her God—not an individual covenant of marriage.<sup>7</sup> Scholars also object to describing the relationship of Adam and Eve as a covenantal relationship because the word *covenant* does not appear in passages related to their marriage.

The contentions of these scholars can be countered, first, by recognizing that the absence of specific Hebrew words such as *krt bryt* does not preclude a covenant. In this regard, George Mendenhall wrote, “There are numerous references to covenants and covenant relationships where this term does not occur.”<sup>8</sup> The Decalogue unquestionably defines the covenant relationship between Jehovah and the house of Israel, but it

also lacks the legal term “*krt bryt*.”<sup>9</sup> Second, symbolism without a concrete referent has no meaning. Although the metaphor of the bride and bridegroom in the writings of Hosea, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel symbolizes the covenant between God and the house of Israel, this metaphor would neither be understandable nor have the power to convey a message of covenant fidelity if the metaphor did not correspond with the literal marriage relationship.<sup>10</sup> Thus P. A. Kruger observes that “the use of a specific image in a particular society demands a certain cultural milieu in which this image can function meaningfully.”<sup>11</sup> The position that this covenant symbolizes God’s marriage to the house of Israel is no more valid than the idea that marriage symbolizes God’s covenant with a man and woman. God desires his children to understand the idea of fidelity to their covenant with him, so he utilized a relationship with which they are all familiar—marriage.

### Covenants in the Ancient Near East

*Covenant*, in its broadest sense, can refer to any agreement among parties, even if unaccompanied by ritual verbal expressions or external symbols. Thus, for example, “a handclasp or a meal in common may constitute a covenant.”<sup>12</sup> A common-law relationship might be considered a legal marriage in some cultures, although the individuals may not have participated in a symbolic, ritualistic, or legal public act. Common to Old Testament usage and understanding of covenant are, however, certain essential elements.

In the ancient Near East, a covenant was a relationship between parties that involved obligations on both sides and was established through an oath and often an action. Most scholars agree that the oath, a promise backed by a curse or penalty, impressed upon both the giver and receiver the obligation of truthfulness and dependability and was essential to the covenant.<sup>13</sup> Usually, the oath is followed either by a witness invocation or a curse formula—an appeal to the deity or king who could carry out the penalty if the covenant were broken.<sup>14</sup> God is the ultimate witness to and executor of all oaths.<sup>15</sup> Thus a covenant, as used in the Old Testament, is much more than an agreement or a contract. It is a pledge and a personal

commitment to fulfill the obligation of the agreement.<sup>16</sup> It is the oath that binds the covenant parties to the stipulated obligations.

Frequently oaths and covenants are found as paired expressions. The term “covenant” is often paired with “oath,” and the phrase “to make [cut] a covenant” with “to swear.”<sup>17</sup> For example, “Let there be now an *oath* betwixt us, even betwixt us and thee, and let us make [cut] a *covenant* with thee” (Genesis 26:28; emphasis added) and “I *sware* unto thee, and entered into a *covenant* with thee” (Ezekiel 16:8; emphasis added). The pairing of these terms indicates they may be considered elements of covenant making.<sup>18</sup> Thus, in the covenant paradigm, the elements “swearing of oaths” and “cutting of covenants,” meaning ritual cutting of animals for sacrificial purposes, are indications of a mutually binding obligation and often go together.<sup>19</sup> Nevertheless, although the word for covenant is not specifically mentioned in the marriage of Adam and Eve, ritual and literary elements indicate that it was a covenant relationship.

### **Ritual and Literary Patterns of Covenant Making**

As ancient Near Eastern documents were discovered, Elias Bickerman made a fascinating observation—the structural elements common to these treaties were also found in Old Testament covenants. The elements common to both treaty and covenant identified by Bickerman are the introduction of the speaker, historical prologue, stipulations, document, calling upon gods or God as witnesses, and pronouncement of blessings and cursings.<sup>20</sup> Dennis McCarthy noted a pattern of rituals or rites common to the process of covenant making: negotiations based on existing relations; a clearer definition of the relationship; symbolic affirmation; notice of covenant making; and association with a shrine. Although there may be differences in the order of the elements, the patterns are generally consistent.<sup>21</sup>

A more complete covenant paradigm for examining the marriage of Adam and Eve is formulated by combining the overlapping elements of covenant/treaty literary patterns and covenant rituals. Covenants are based on the past history or relationship between the covenant parties. The conditions of the covenant are the second element. The third element



lists the promised consequences—good and bad—depending upon adherence to the conditions. The fourth element requires witnesses to the covenant making. The last element includes rituals signaling acceptance as well as documentation signaling legitimacy and renewal.

Treaty/Covenant	Ritual	Covenant Paradigm
1. Introduction of the speaker, historical prologue	Negotiations based on existing relations, a clearer definition of the relation	Historical prologue and relationship
2. Stipulations		Stipulations
3. Blessings and cursings		Cursings and blessings
4. Calling upon gods as witnesses		Witnesses
5. Document	Symbolic affirmation, notice of covenant making, association with a shrine	Affirmation, document, announcement, sacred space

The following descriptions provide greater detail to the patterns identified and place the marriage of Adam and Eve within the elements.

*Historical prologue and relationship.* The historical prologue is the antecedent history and presents a brief retrospective of the relationship between the parties, providing a context for further negotiations and clarification of a covenant. A previous and “general” relationship is the initial basis for a treaty or covenant and may be a mere formality with polite expressions or a “give and take” type of bargaining.<sup>22</sup> In this preamble, the speaker is introduced—who it is that grants the covenant, and why he has a right to do so—which establishes a link between the parties. This history is intended to provide the legal precedent for the covenant and define the parties’ relationship, explaining why one party is the suzerain and the other one the vassal.<sup>23</sup> The speaker is the creator of the covenant because he is the suzerain, or the one in power. For example, in the preamble to the Decalogue, the speaker and his suzerainty are

succinctly stated: “I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage” (Exodus 20:2). Thus God is the speaker, and by recounting his deliverance of the Israelites out of bondage in Egypt, he states his history with them and declares his right of suzerainty.

The Genesis 1 account declares, “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth” and “God created man in his own image . . . ; male and female created he them” (Genesis 1:1, 27). There is no doubt that God, the Creator, was the power that brought the world into being. He declares his suzerain rights, as organizer of all the elements, animate and inanimate, for the intended inhabitants of the earth, Adam and Eve. At the completion of each creative period, he pronounces his works of creation good.<sup>24</sup>

Following the creation of Adam, God places him in the Garden of Eden, instructing him to “dress it and to keep it” (Genesis 2:15). Additionally, God brings the animals to Adam to name.<sup>25</sup> Adam is given commandments regarding his responsibilities to the plant and animal kingdoms as steward over all God’s creations. Man and woman, God’s crowning creation, are commanded to “be fruitful, and multiply,” to “replenish the earth, and subdue it” by exercising dominion over all living things (Genesis 1:27–28).<sup>26</sup> At the conclusion of the creation period, God announces that “every thing . . . he had made . . . was very good” (Genesis 1:31). Each creation was good, but the pinnacle creation is man and woman, whom God commanded to set into motion his purposes and plans for all of creation.

As the physical body of Eve is created from the side of Adam, the origin of man and woman’s kinship is declared (see Genesis 2:21–22).<sup>27</sup> Although many commentators view the rib story as figurative, this imagery, whether read as literal or figurative, indicates that Adam and Eve had a very close relationship.<sup>28</sup> Adam recognizes Eve as being like him in more than just a “general” sense. Unlike other creations of the animal kingdom that have four appendages but also fur, scales, or some other sort of covering, woman has man’s same type of flesh and bones. Adam identifies this similarity when he affirms, “This is now bone of



my bones, and flesh of my flesh” (Genesis 2:23). Adam underscores their close origin by announcing, “She shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man” (Genesis 2:23). God’s creation of woman “out of man” emphasizes the couple’s similarity to each other and their uniqueness from his previous creations. Adam therefore rightly concludes that Eve has a closer relationship to him than does any other creation. Sealing their kinship, God places them both in the Garden of Eden as companions: God “gavest [her] to be with [him]” and, in the words of Adam, “commandest that she should remain with [him]” (Genesis 3:12; Moses 4:18).

The Hebrew verb נתן (*nathan*), “to give,” has the meaning of giving either chattel (property or slave) or a maiden.<sup>29</sup> For example, in the following passage, Saul *gives* his oldest daughter Merab to Adriel “to wife,” indicating that the Hebrew verb *nathan* is often synonymous with marriage (see 1 Samuel 18:19). Thus the phrases “gave her to be with him” and “commanded that she should remain with him” indicate that God is marrying Adam to Eve and stipulating that their relationship is binding.

God’s command “Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh” and the narrator’s reference to “the man and his wife” (Genesis 2:24–25) further define Adam and Eve’s relationship. Jesus, in responding to questions from the Pharisees regarding divorce, reiterates this phrase and adds, “Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder” (Matthew 19:6). When the Pharisees continue to press, Jesus teaches that God intended for this relationship to be binding; however, “Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so” (Matthew 19:8). Echoing the teachings of Jesus against divorce, the Apostle Paul states that the Lord commanded, “Let not the wife depart from her husband. . . . And let not the husband put away his wife” (1 Corinthians 7:10–11). Throughout this chapter of 1 Corinthians, Paul establishes “a steady theme of loyalty to a married partner once that relationship is made.”<sup>30</sup> The scriptural relationship between husband and wife indicates that it is intended to be permanent.

From the beginning, God established that he was Lord of heaven and earth, and all that was in them. In the giving of responsibilities and commandments he established suzerainty in his relationship with his children. God was the benevolent giver of life and the covenant, and Adam and Eve were his grateful vassal recipients.

*Stipulations.* The stipulations are statements of requirements and obligations which define the covenant relationship in terms of positive and negative imperatives. The first part of the stipulations contains the conditions or expectations of the covenant. The second part of the stipulations is the acceptance or confirmation of the covenant by oath or other symbolic action.<sup>31</sup>

First, God, as suzerain, sets the stipulations that his vassals are expected to obey. God commanded Adam and Eve to be obedient to his stipulations: to multiply, replenish, and subdue the earth, and have dominion over all living creations (see Genesis 1:28);<sup>32</sup> to “love and serve him, the only living and true God, and that he should be the only being whom they should worship” (D&C 20:19); to not eat of the “tree of the knowledge of good and evil”; to remain together (see Genesis 3:12; Moses 4:18); and for Eve to be a help meet for Adam (see Genesis 2:20). Complete compliance to the stipulations set forth by God required Adam and Eve to obey them together.

<b>God's Stipulations to Adam and Eve</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Multiply, replenish, and subdue the earth, and have dominion over all living things</li> <li>2. Love, serve, and worship only God</li> <li>3. Do not eat from the “tree of the knowledge of good and evil”</li> <li>4. Adam and Eve must stay together</li> <li>5. Eve is to be a help meet for Adam</li> </ol>

Adam, in responding to why he partook of the forbidden fruit, said, “The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat” (Genesis 3:12). As developed earlier, the Hebrew verb *nathan*, meaning “to give,” indicates marriage. That this was to be a binding or covenantal relationship is made clearer by the interjection of an additional

phrase from the Joseph Smith Translation: “and commandest that she should remain with me [Adam]” (Moses 4:18). God created a woman, gave her to Adam in marriage, and commanded them to stay together. The importance of this stipulation was clear to Adam. Paul teaches that Adam was not deceived (see 1 Timothy 2:14). He willingly partook of the forbidden fruit in order to remain with Eve. Adam already knew what it was like to be alone and without a companion (see Genesis 2:18–20). He left God’s presence and Eden to remain with Eve; thus Adam went from paradise to the telestial world to remain with the woman God had given him. At some point Adam and Eve recognize that to fulfill the stipulation to multiply, they must leave the garden (see Moses 5:11; 2 Nephi 2:22–23).

Second, some external act or solemn expression indicates the parties’ acceptance of the stipulations. Hugenberger suggests that Adam spoke *verba solemnia* (solemn words) before God: “This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh” (Genesis 2:23).<sup>33</sup> Jolene Rockwood identifies this phrase as a ritual pledge.<sup>34</sup> According to Rockwood, *bone* in Hebrew symbolizes power, whereas *flesh* symbolizes weakness. Adam, in declaring Eve “bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh,” ritually vows to be bound to her in strength and weakness, similar to the marital promise to stay together “in sickness and in health,” signifying that these words indicate a marriage covenant.<sup>35</sup>

A similar declaration was made in the covenant with David to be king of Israel. The leaders from the northern tribes of Israel came before David in Hebron and affirmed his kingship, proclaiming, “We are thy bone and thy flesh,” binding words of commitment to the political entity of Israel and its leader (2 Samuel 5:1; 1 Chronicles 11:1). Adam and Eve’s marriage was a binding commitment—both in their eyes, with Adam partaking of the fruit so that he could remain with Eve, and in God’s eyes, who reiterates his command after the Fall for them to remain together.

*Cursings and blessings.* Cursings pronounce the consequences for broken obligations. Blessings are considered the norm and each party to a covenant acknowledges their presence.<sup>36</sup> Simply restated, cursings are penalties for disregarding the stipulations of the covenant, and blessings are incentives for adherence to the stipulations.<sup>37</sup> Although there is no

extant record of Adam or Eve solemnizing their marriage with blessings and cursings, the blessing and cursing genre is found in God's pronouncements. God declares their marital responsibilities and gives them commandments when he places them in the garden. He reiterates these commandments and amplifies Adam and Eve's understanding of them when they fall from their Edenic state to mortality in order to bring forth children (see Genesis 2:17; 3:14–19; 2 Nephi 2:22–25).

At their marriage, God blesses and instructs Adam and Eve to “be fruitful, and multiply,” to “replenish the earth, and subdue it” by having dominion over all living things (Genesis 1:28). God places the man in the Garden of Eden and instructs him concerning the fruit of the trees, saying to eat freely except from one particular tree, “the tree of the knowledge of good and evil,” because it is the tree of mortality (Genesis 2:16–17). Both Adam and Eve transgress this stipulation. Following their confession of disobedience in partaking of the forbidden fruit, God pronounces the specific consequences of their disobedience. The consequences affect both their marriage relationship and their relationship with God. They had been warned they would die if they partook of the forbidden fruit and were aware of this penalty beforehand. After their disobedience, God explains in greater detail what the consequences of mortality, called “death” in Genesis, would be. He informs Eve that “I will greatly multiply [over and over] thy sorrow [pain] and thy conception [birth pangs]; in sorrow [pain or distress] thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire [longing] shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule [preside] over thee” (Genesis 3:16).<sup>38</sup> God advises Adam that the cursing of the ground brings forth the blessing of hard work which would end only at death (see Genesis 3:17–19). At this point, God makes “coats of skins” as clothing for Adam and Eve, perhaps ritualizing his pronouncements. In addition, Adam and Eve, as a couple, must leave God's presence in the Garden of Eden (see Genesis 3:24). The consequences of their disobedience, although different for each of them and pronounced individually, affect them both since they are married and commanded to stay together.

*Witnesses.* The invocation of gods as witnesses to validate the covenant is found throughout ancient Near Eastern treaties. These gods

represent the power of the suzerain to bless or penalize the vassal according to obedience to the stipulations. In the Old Testament, heaven and earth, mortal and immortal beings, animate and inanimate objects are invoked as witnesses to covenants (see Deuteronomy 27:1–8; 30:19; 31:26; 32:1–43; Joshua 24:27; 1 Enoch 100),<sup>39</sup> and so are, as Jewish legend declares, angels.<sup>40</sup> In the case of a covenant between God and his children, regardless of the symbolic witness, God is both a party to and the guarantor of the covenant. Since God gave Eve to Adam and commanded her to remain with him, God is the creator of their relationship and the ultimate witness. Von Rad describes this participation as follows: “God himself, like a father of the bride, leads the woman to the man.”<sup>41</sup> Thus God, in both his godly and fatherly roles, was present to witness and judge Adam and Eve’s acceptance and obedience to the stipulations that he had established.

*Affirmation, document, announcement, sacred space.* Often a symbolic affirmation, sign, or ritual ratified or memorialized a covenant in ancient Near Eastern culture.<sup>42</sup> For example, circumcision was the sign or token that accompanied the making of a covenant with Abraham. In marriage, עדי (*yāda*), meaning “know,” or sexual union, was the sign or token that accompanied the making of the covenant.

Gordon Hugenberger has examined Malachi 2 and other Old Testament passages for evidences of covenant in marriage. He notes the presence of *verba solemnia* and sexual union as the ratifying signs of the marriage covenant.<sup>43</sup> Commenting on a phrase in Malachi 2:14, “the wife of thy youth . . . thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant,” Ze’ev Falk points out the synonymous use of the Hebrew feminine noun חברה (*chabereth*), meaning “wife” or “companion,” with the word “covenant.” The verb form of this word, חבר (*chaber*), has meanings which include “uniting, joining, and generally creating a bodily association and may therefore be used in the sense of sexual intercourse.”<sup>44</sup> Elder Jeffrey R. Holland described the sacred and symbolic meaning of sexual intimacy as a binding sign of the marriage covenant. “Such a total, virtually unbreakable union, such an unyielding commitment between a man and a woman, can only come with the proximity and permanence afforded in

a marriage covenant. . . . The external symbol of that union, the physical manifestation of what is a far deeper spiritual and metaphysical bonding, is the physical blending that is part of—indeed, a most beautiful and gratifying expression of—that larger, more complete union of eternal purpose and promise”<sup>45</sup>

Herbert Huffmon comments that *yāda*’ has legal significance in treaties and biblical covenants.<sup>46</sup> In an ancient Near Eastern treaty, the suzerain required his vassals to “know,” meaning legally recognize, the suzerain or face the threat of invasion and other consequences for recognition of any other ruler outside the suzerain family. Perhaps this exchange between God and Israel is the best parallel to some of the ancient Near Eastern treaties that illustrate an exclusive covenant relationship: “I am the Lord [Yahweh] thy God from the land of Egypt, and thou shalt *know* no god but me: for there is no saviour beside me. I did *know* thee in the wilderness, in the land of great drought” (Hosea 13:4–5; emphasis added).<sup>47</sup> In this example, Yahweh, the “suzerain,” tells Israel, his “vassal,” to recognize no other God, for he recognizes no other people as stipulated in the Sinaitic covenant.<sup>48</sup> Thus *yāda*’ can be a legal term indicating “mutual legal recognition” of a treaty covenant.<sup>49</sup>

Adam knowing Eve (see Genesis 4:1) may also signify “mutual legal recognition” of a marriage covenant.<sup>50</sup> In this example, “know” is an oblique reference to sexual union and is the formal indicator “for the consummation of marriage both in the Old Testament and elsewhere in the ancient Near East . . . because it was viewed as an oath-sign.”<sup>51</sup> Hugenberger asserts that consensual sexual union was understood to be the marriage act and its covenant-ratifying oath-sign.<sup>52</sup>

An example of sexual union as the sign of the consummation of marriage is found in Jacob’s comments to Laban regarding Rachel: “Give me my wife, for my days are fulfilled, that I may go in unto her” (Genesis 29:21). This passage illustrates that sexual relations characterize the end of the betrothal period and the beginning of the marriage. Since Laban tricked Jacob by giving him Leah, Jacob complains about the deceit but does not question the validity of his marriage to Leah because he had consummated the marriage (see Genesis 29:23). In contrast to



licit sexual relations, the story of Shechem and Dinah demonstrates that in biblical times premarital sexual relations defiled a woman, regardless of whether or not the act was consensual (see Genesis 34). The Damascus Document offers an even stricter view.<sup>53</sup> In the laws of seduction (see Exodus 22:16) and rape (see Deuteronomy 22:25–29), “any sexual intercourse between a man and an unmarried woman created a marital bond regardless of whether or not this was the couple’s intent.”<sup>54</sup> The reasoning behind this interpretation is that an unbreakable bond results from becoming “one flesh.”<sup>55</sup>

According to Hebrew law, premarital sexual relations could be legitimized by formal marriage; however, the father had the right to refuse to give his daughter to a man who had raped or enticed her (see Exodus 22:16–17). In Hebrew social culture, consummating marriage was of such importance that a new groom was excused from battle (see Deuteronomy 20:5–7; 24:5).

Hugenberger also maintains that the stress on unity that often accompanies covenant making, such as eating together and shaking hands, is evident in God’s command to Adam and Eve that they “be one flesh” (Genesis 2:24). Sexual union literally fulfills the physical aspect of this divine injunction. “Since sexual intercourse is characteristic of marriage . . . for a couple to willingly engage in sexual intercourse may simultaneously imply the recognition of each other as husband and wife.”<sup>56</sup> Thus the statement “Adam knew Eve his wife” (Genesis 4:1) is the sign or token that officially signifies that a covenant had been made.

Adam and Eve affirm their covenant “vassal” relationship to God in several passages. Adam accepts the gift of Eve and embraces her (see Genesis 2:23–24). Eve verbalizes God’s stipulation not to eat of the tree of knowledge (see Genesis 3:3). Adam and Eve each respond to God’s questions in terms of their personal obedience to his stipulations (see Genesis 3:9–13). Following their expulsion from the garden, they begin to have children in obedience to the commandment that they must multiply (see Genesis 4:1–2; Moses 5:2). Their obedience to the stipulation to exercise dominion over all living creations is implied in their ability to make sacrifices of flocks and fruits (see Genesis 4:2–4; Moses 5:1, 5). After

the Fall, God reaffirms their marriage relationship: to Eve in reminding her that her desires would be to her husband, who was to preside (Genesis 3:16; Moses 4:22), and to Adam in referring to Eve as his wife (see Genesis 3:17). Adam also reaffirms his marriage to Eve by giving her a name, חַוְוָה (*Chavvah*), a title meaning “life” or “living,” and states that she is the “mother of all living” (Genesis 3:20).

A written document, generally following a “legal schema,” is often made to formalize a covenant.<sup>57</sup> The document perpetuates the covenant through the acts of recording and yearly reading for renewal.<sup>58</sup> There are numerous examples of ancient Near Eastern marriage documents—Assyrian, Babylonian, and Egyptian. There are, however, no such documents recorded in the Old Testament.<sup>59</sup> According to Gene M. Tucker, this is not surprising since “primarily the Old Testament preserves only narratives about covenants and covenant ceremonies, not covenant texts themselves.”<sup>60</sup> Falk states that “in the case of divorce, there was need for a deed witnessing the release of the husband’s rights over his former wife (Deuteronomy 24:1; Isaiah 50:1), but no corresponding document seems to have been necessary for the celebration of marriage. . . . Biblical marriage may therefore be presumed to have been an oral transaction.”<sup>61</sup> No document recording the marriage covenant of Adam and Eve has been found. The absence of records simply indicates that if a record was made, either we have not found it or it did not survive. Even without a written document, pronouncements from God, Adam, and Eve confirm that a marriage had taken place that structured their relationship.

Covenant-making rituals frequently occur at a shrine or temple. Divine covenant-making rituals create sacred space because of the interaction with God. The presence of God in Eden as he spoke with Adam and Eve makes the garden sacred space.<sup>62</sup> Eliade identifies the Garden of Eden as the prototype of the heavenly temple.<sup>63</sup> Further, Eden is identified in the Pseudepigrapha as the “Holy of Holies, and the dwelling of the Lord” (Jubilees 3:19). The prophet Ezekiel called Eden “the garden of God” and his “holy mountain” (Ezekiel 28:13, 14), the “mountain of the Lord’s house” being a well-known reference to the temple (see Isaiah 2:2).<sup>64</sup> Thus

Adam and Eve were married in the Edenic version of a “Holy of Holies”—the garden of God’s holy mountain temple.<sup>65</sup>

### Additional Latter-day Saint Insights

Latter-day scripture and revelation add insights to covenant marriage that fall into two broad categories: the purposes of God and the importance of ordinances associated with covenants.

*Purposes of God.* The Latter-day Saint point of view presumes that the marriage of Adam and Eve was foreordained in the premortal realm.<sup>66</sup> Thus the decision to be husband and wife had already occurred, and God simply brought Eve to Adam and gave her to him as previously arranged. The “curses,” or consequences, of falling from God’s presence were actually blessings for both Adam and Eve. They were each to experience hardship in their respective God-given responsibility: work and child-birth—both essential to sustain life. And from this they would learn to experience joy in the fruits of their labors. The consequence of God’s penalties was mortal life, which offered the opportunity for temporal and eternal blessings that could be obtained no other way. The marriage of Adam to Eve and their fall to mortality were part of God’s plan.

*Ordinances and covenants.* After their fall, Adam and Eve renewed their covenant relationship with God through ritual, such as worshipping God through sacrifice (see Moses 5:5). Although the scriptures only record that Adam received baptism, the gift of the Holy Ghost, and priesthood authority (see Moses 5:59; 6:64–68), Eve is later called “glorious” and part of the congregation of great and mighty ones who awaited Christ’s visit to the spirit world; therefore, we can presume that she too received essential ordinances (see D&C 138:38–39). Although there is no extant record of Adam and Eve’s marriage, the Joseph Smith Translation of Genesis reports that Adam kept a book of remembrance, perhaps including a record of their marriage as well as other ordinances and covenants (see Moses 6:5, 8, 46).

Joseph Smith revealed that the Lord calls marriage a covenant relationship (D&C 132:4, 15). The Lord, however, differentiates between marrying “in the world” and “the new and everlasting covenant”—nevertheless,

both kinds of marriages are called covenants. In this revelation, the Lord discloses that all interactions, such as “covenants, contracts, bonds, obligations, oaths, vows, performances, connections, associations, or expectations,” in order to be in force after the resurrection must be “entered into and sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise” (D&C 132:7). Marrying “in the world” lasts “so long as he is in the world and she with him[.] [T]heir covenant and marriage are not of force when they are dead” (D&C 132:15). From this revelation, it is clear that God views all marriages as covenantal—however, some are “everlasting” and others are only “in the world.” The Lord also discloses the key elements of eternal marriage: (1) the marriage must be according to his word or law, by the new and everlasting covenant, (2) it must be sealed by the Holy Spirit of Promise, and (3) the marriage must be performed by one with the priesthood keys of sealing (see D&C 132:19). Matthew Cowley described marriage as a sacred triangle—the participants are husband, wife, and God.<sup>67</sup>

### Conclusion

Latter-day prophets have proclaimed that marriage is ordained of God and that it is central to fulfilling God’s plan for the human family. Marriage is the organization of family, the basic unit of society. Marriage as covenant, rather than a less-binding relationship, emphasizes the seriousness and permanence of the relationship between husband and wife. The rituals and literary elements associated with ancient Near Eastern covenant making are evident in the scriptures, and latter-day revelation confirms that marriage, whether by the laws of the world or by the new and everlasting covenant, is intended to be a covenant.

### Notes

1. Louis Ginzberg, *Legends of the Jews* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1956), 1:68.
2. Jacob Milgrom, “Cult and Conscience,” in *Studies in Judaism in Late Antiquity*, ed. Jacob Neusner (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1976), 12:134.
3. Moshe Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1–20: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, Anchor Bible 22 (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1983), 278.

4. Gordon Paul Hugenberger, *Marriage as a Covenant* (New York: E. J. Brill, 1994), 5; see also Greenberg, *Ezekiel 1–20*, 277–78.
5. Hugenberger, *Marriage as a Covenant*, 7; see also Ze'ev Falk, *Hebrew Law in Biblical Times*, 2nd ed. (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Press; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2001), 190.
6. Milgrom, "Cult and Conscience," 134.
7. Hugenberger, *Marriage as a Covenant*, 6.
8. Arthur Buttrick, *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1962), "covenant"; see also Dennis McCarthy, *Treaty and Covenant* (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1978), 21.
9. McCarthy, *Treaty and Covenant*, 4.
10. Falk, *Hebrew Law in Biblical Times*, 190.
11. P. A. Kruger, "Israel: The Harlot (Hosea 2:4–9)," *Journal of Northwestern Semitic Languages* 11 (1983): 107; see also Jacob Neusner, *The Enchantments of Judaism: Rites of Transformation from Birth through Death* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1991).
12. McCarthy, *Treaty and Covenant*, 11.
13. Stephen D. Ricks, "Oaths and Oath Taking in Ancient Israel," in *The Temple in Time and Eternity*, ed. Donald W. Parry and Stephen D. Ricks (Provo, UT: FARMS, 1999), 43.
14. Tony W. Cartledge, *Vows in the Hebrew Bible and the Ancient Near East* (Sheffield, England: JSOT Press, 1992), 15; see also Ricks, "Oaths and Oath Taking in Ancient Israel," 43.
15. Anthony C. Thistleton, "The Supposed Power of Words in the Biblical Writings," *Journal of Theological Studies*, n.s., 25, pt. 2 (October 1974): 291–92.
16. Gene M. Tucker, "Covenant Forms and Contract Forms," *Vetus Testamentum* 15 (1965): 488–501; see also McCarthy, *Treaty and Covenant*, 17; *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, ed. G. Johannes Botterweck and Helmer Ringgren, trans. David E. Green (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1975), 2:255–56, "berith."
17. Tucker, "Covenant Forms and Contract Forms," 488, 500–501.
18. *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, 2:253, "berith." The Hebrew Bible contains both unconditional covenant statements and conditional promises based upon Israel's obedience to God. Cartledge believes this reflects "a widespread assumption that God *desires* to participate in mutually binding relationships with his people." Cartledge, *Vows in the Hebrew Bible*, 28; emphasis in original.
19. *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, 5:262, "Covenantal Ceremony."
20. The traditional literary form of ancient Near Eastern covenants contains six elements. The following side-by-side comparison of a Hittite treaty (on the left) and passages from Deuteronomy (on the right) illustrate their common elements:

<b>1. Introduction of the Speaker</b>	
“These are the words of the Sun, Muwatallis, the Great King, King of the land of Hatti, Beloved of the Weather-God” (Muwatallis-Alaksandus of Wilusa = F 5, § 1, I. B 1–2).	“These are the testimonies, the statutes, and the ordinances, which Moses spoke” (Dt 4,45a-bB)
<b>2. Historical Prologue</b>	
“When, in former times Labarnas, my grandfather, <i>attacked</i> the land of Wilusa, he conquered (it). . . . The Land of Wilusa never after fell away from the land of Hatti, but . . . remained friends with the king of Hatti” (§ 2, I. B 2–8).	“when they came out of Egypt (Dt 4,45bB) . . . and they took possession of . . . the land of Og” (Dt 4,47a).
<b>3. Stipulations</b>	
“Thou, Alaksandus, shalt protect the Sun as a friend!” (§ 6, I. A 65–7).	“. . . thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart” (Dt 6,5a)
<b>4. The Document</b>	
“Moreover, let someone read thee this tablet which I have made for thee three times every year” (§ 19, III. 73–4).	“And thou shalt write on the stones all the the words of this law most clearly” (Dt 27,8).
<b>5. The Gods</b>	
“The Sun God of heaven, lord of the lands, Shepherd of men, the Sun Goddess of Arinna, the Queen of the lands, the Weather-God” (§ 20, IV. 1–30).	[“This day thou art become the people of the Lord thy God. Thou shalt therefore obey the voice of the Lord thy God.” (Dt 27,9–10)]*
<b>6. Curse and Blessing</b>	
“If thou, Alaksandus, break the words of this document, which are placed on this document, then may these oaths wipe thee out . . . and wipe thy seed from the face of the earth. But if thou keepest these words, then may the thousand gods . . . keep thee, thy wife, thy sons . . . with friendly hand.” (§ 21, IV. 31–46).	“If thou shalt hearken diligently unto the the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments which I Command thee this day . . . all these blessings shall come on thee. If thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe to do all His commandments . . . all these curses shall come upon thee” (Dt 28,1–2, 15).

\*The bracketed portion was my addition, since McCarthy did not list a corresponding scriptural passage for number 5, “The Gods.”

McCarthy, *Treaty and Covenant*, 1–2; see also Klaus Baltzer, *The Covenant Formulary*, trans. David E. Green (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1971), 10–17.



21. McCarthy, *Treaty and Covenant*, 20.
22. McCarthy, *Treaty and Covenant*, 20.
23. Baltzer, *Covenant Formulary*, 18–20; see also Victor L. Ludlow, “Covenant Teaching in the Book of Mormon,” *The Fulness of the Gospel: Foundational Teachings from the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book; Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 2003), 229–30.
24. The exception to this pronouncement is at the conclusion of the second period. According to Jewish legend, hell was created when heaven and earth were separated, and thus this work was not good. Ginzberg, *Legends of the Jews*, 1:15.
25. In the Pearl of Great Price’s Abraham account, both Adam and Eve were created and then the animals were brought to Adam for naming (see Abraham 5:14–21).
26. The two accounts of creation, as found in Genesis 1–2 and Moses 2–3, are usually interpreted by Latter-day Saints to depict the “spiritual creation” and the physical creation prior to mortality. See Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1954), 1:75–76. Some scholars posit two authors, designated as J1 and J2; others view the two accounts as analogous to Paul’s, Alma’s, and Joseph Smith’s several accounts of the same spiritual manifestation.
27. Jolene Edmunds Rockwood, “The Redemption of Eve,” in *Sisters in Spirit*, ed. E. Maureen Ursenbach Beecher and Lavina Fielding Anderson (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois, 1987), 17. Rockwood notes that the Hebrew word *sela* means “side” rather than “rib.”
28. Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, Word Biblical Commentary 1 (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1987), 1:69. Spencer W. Kimball clarified the LDS point of view by stating, “The story of the rib, of course, is figurative.” “The Blessings and Responsibilities of Womanhood,” *Ensign*, March 1976, 71.
29. Falk, *Hebrew Law in Biblical Times*, 142. According to David Mace, “the Hebrew wife has often been thought of as a chattel, but this view appears to be based on a double misunderstanding; first, of the distinction between a wife and a concubine; and second, of that between authority and ownership. What the husband obtained in marriage was exclusive possession of his wife’s sexuality, but not (as in the case of a slave-woman) of her person. . . . Thus the wife shared with her husband not only the functions of sex and parenthood, but also a comradeship in which as a person she ranked as his equal. That this principle may often have been abused does not alter the fact that it was the basis of the Hebrew marriage relation.” David R. Mace, *Hebrew Marriage: A Sociological Study* (London: Epworth Press, 1953), xiv. For a discussion of the status of women according to the Mishnah, see Judith Romney Wegner, *Chattel or Person* (New York: Oxford, 1988).

30. Richard Lloyd Anderson, *Understanding Paul* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1983), 105.
31. Baltzer, *Covenant Formulary*, 22.
32. The scriptures do not make clear which commandment came first, however; Elder Dallin Oaks declared that the command to be fruitful, and multiply was “first in sequence and first in importance.” “The Great Plan of Happiness,” *Ensign*, November 1993, 72.
33. Hugenberger, *Marriage as a Covenant*, 167.
34. Rockwood, “Redemption of Eve,” 17.
35. Rockwood, “Redemption of Eve,” 18.
36. Baltzer, *Covenant Formulary*, 25.
37. Ludlow, “Covenant Teachings in the Book of Mormon,” 230.
38. Hugh Nibley, “Patriarchy and Matriarchy,” in *Old Testament and Related Studies* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book; Provo, UT: FARMS, 1986), 89; see Kimball, “Blessings and Responsibilities of Womanhood,” 71.
39. See Baltzer, *Covenant Formulary*, 24–25.
40. Ginzberg, *Legends of the Jews*, 1:68.
41. Gerhard Von Rad, *Genesis*, rev. ed. (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1995), 82.
42. McCarthy, *Treaty and Covenant*, 20. Three major signs or tokens of covenants between God and humans are found in the Old Testament. The first is the Sabbath, a sign that the Creation was complete (see Genesis 2:3; Exodus 31:16–17). The second is the rainbow, a token of the covenant that God made with both Enoch and Noah that he would never again send “a flood to destroy all flesh” (Genesis 9:12–15; JST, Genesis 9:21–24). The third is circumcision, which God commanded Abraham and all his children to observe as a token of their covenant and which established the age of accountability (see Genesis 17:9–10; JST, Genesis 17:11–12).
43. Hugenberger, *Marriage as a Covenant*, 216–79.
44. Falk, *Hebrew Law in Biblical Times*, 144.
45. Jeffrey R. Holland, “Of Souls, Symbols, and Sacraments,” BYU devotional address, January 12, 1988.
46. Herbert B. Huffmon, “The Treaty Background of Hebrew *YĀDA*,” *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 181 (1966): 31–37.
47. See also Genesis 18:19; Exodus 33:12; Jeremiah 1:5; 24:7; Amos 3:2.
48. Huffmon, “Treaty Background of Hebrew *YĀDA*,” 34–35.
49. Huffmon, “Treaty Background of Hebrew *YĀDA*,” 31.
50. Hugenberger, *Marriage as a Covenant*, 163, 273, 279.
51. Hugenberger, *Marriage as a Covenant*, 279.
52. Hugenberger, *Marriage as a Covenant*, 248–51.
53. The Damascus Document was found in cave 4 at Qumran and is a collection of admonitions, laws, and communal rules. The title comes from references

- to Damascus or the “land of Damascus,” the meaning of which, whether literal, symbolic, or secret, is unknown.
54. Aharon Shemesh, “4Q271.3: A Key to Sectarian Matrimonial Law,” *Journal of Jewish Studies* 490 (1998): 248.
  55. Shemesh, “4Q271.3: A Key to Sectarian Matrimonial Law,” 248.
  56. Hugenberg, *Marriage as a Covenant*, 267.
  57. Baltzer, *Covenant Formulary*, 27.
  58. Ludlow, “Covenant Teachings in the Book of Mormon,” 231.
  59. According to one account, Eve prior to her death commanded her children to “make now tablets of stone and other tablets of clay and write in them all my life and your father’s which you have heard and seen from us.” “Life of Adam and Eve” 50:1, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, ed. James Charlesworth (New York: Doubleday, 1985), 2:292.
  60. Gene M. Tucker, “Covenant Forms and Contract Forms,” *Vestus Testamentum* 15 (1965): 495.
  61. Falk, *Hebrew Law in Biblical Times*, 149–50. Falk further notes the use of marriage deeds in post–Old Testament writings, such as in the Apocryphal book Tobit 7:12–14 and among first-century Jews and Samaritans. The Hebrew marriage contracts from Elephantine were primarily to provide for cases of widowhood and divorce. However, it appears that marriage contracts were common to other ancient Near Eastern societies. One commentator noted that of all the marriage documents between free people that were recorded at Nuzi, an ancient Hurrian city west of Assyria and north of Babylon, the vast majority were exceptions to the cultural norms, namely marriages where the woman had means and the man did not. Under ordinary circumstances, written contracts were not drafted. See Jonathan Paradise, “Marriage Contracts of Free Persons at Nuzi,” *Journal of Cuneiform Studies* 30, no. 1 (Spring 1987): 3, 6.
  62. Donald W. Parry, “Garden of Eden: Prototype Sanctuary,” in *Temples of the Ancient World*, ed. Donald W. Parry (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book; Provo, UT: FARMS, 1994), 126; see also McCarthy, *Treaty and Covenant*, 20.
  63. Mircea Eliade, *Patterns in Comparative Religion*, trans. Rosemary Sheed (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1958), 282; see also Donald W. Parry, “Garden of Eden: Prototype Sanctuary,” 126.
  64. In Ezekiel 28, there is a direct reference to Adam in the Garden of Eden woven within the passages. The story of the primal man is found in the midst of an indictment and death lament regarding the king of Tyre. The imagery of the garden is the backdrop for this dramatic condemnation. Two chapters detailing the richness of the natural resources in his realm precede the lament for this king and for his hubris in thinking he had created such splendor (see Ezekiel 26–27).

The king of Tyre was placed in a fruitful garden spot and made a king. He yielded, however, to the sin of pride, believing he was “a god” (Ezekiel 28:2). As a result, God declared that he would cast him out and that the king would die, just as Adam was cast out and became mortal and subject to death (see Ezekiel 28:16–17). In comparing Adam and the king, it is possible to learn new things about Adam. In this imagery, the king of Tyrus (Tyre) mirrors Adam in some ways. For example, God says, “King of Tyrus . . . thou seal-est up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty” (Ezekiel 28:12). Thus Adam, in his Edenic state, is represented as a king and described as being the sum of wisdom and beauty, meaning perfect or complete.

Speaking further about Adam, Ezekiel states, “Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold” (Ezekiel 28:13). These stones are virtually identical to the ones that God directed Moses to place in the “breastplate of judgment” for Aaron as a symbol of his priestly office. The reference in Ezekiel to these particular stones covering Adam implies that he too held a priestly office.

Additionally, God said of Adam, “Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire” (Ezekiel 28:14). According to this text, it appears that in the Garden of Eden, a type of temple imagery, God anointed Adam a priest and gave him the responsibility to act as a “divine sentinel guarding the path leading to the presence of God.” Although the Genesis account implies that God came down to Eden, in Ezekiel’s account, Adam walked up to God’s holy mountain. Because of Adam’s sacred calling, God could have permitted him to walk up the holy mountain to his presence in “everlasting burnings” to converse with him (see Isaiah 33:14). Although the context of this metaphor is an indictment of and lament for the king of Tyre and all the points do not apply to Adam, information about Adam’s covenant relationship with God, his priesthood, and his responsibilities are implied. Thus kingship, priestly office, and sacred space give further evidence linking Adam to covenant. See Herbert G. May, “The King in the Garden of Eden: A Study of Ezekiel 28:12–19,” *Israel’s Prophetic Heritage* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1962), 166–76.

65. Psalm 45 is a royal wedding song. Verses 3–10 praise the virtues of the king, and verses 10–16 exhort the queen, daughter of a king, to reverence her husband and forsake all others (see Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:6); describe the queen’s wedding attire; and mention her maidens. Mitchell Dahood, *Psalms 1–50*, vol. 16, *Anchor Bible* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1965), 269–70. The midpoint of the psalm, “Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the scepter of thy kingdom is a right scepter,” is very closely quoted in

Hebrews 1:8. This chapter of Hebrews is about “his Son,” the “appointed heir,” who is in God’s “express image.” The Targum (see for example Edward M. Cook, *Targum Psalms*, book 2, Psalms 42–72, <http://targum.info/pss/ps2.htm>) and the LDS scriptural commentary both call this psalm messianic, meaning the king is the Messiah and the bride is the house of Israel. The psalm could also symbolize the marriage of Adam and Eve.

66. “Nor can we other than suppose that Eve was by her [Mary’s] side, rejoicing in her own foreordination to be the first woman, the mother of men, the consort, companion, and friend of mighty Michael [Adam].” Bruce R. McConkie, “Eve and the Fall,” in *Woman* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1979), 59.
67. Matthew Cowley, “The Sacred Triangle,” *Improvement Era*, December 1952, 916.