

Dear Ensign Editors,

2 October, 2017

I hope there is still time prior to the printing of the conference edition. Please help sustain President Nelson's credibility by fact checking his footnotes from his Saturday General Conference talk.

<https://www.deseretnews.com/article/865690026/See-the-lists-President-Nelson-compiled-about-the-Book-of-Mormon-and-shared-at-conference.html?user=app>

The list is incorrect on a couple of very important points:

The Book of Mormon affirms the necessity of the Fall of Adam and the wisdom of Eve, that men might have joy.

There is no mention anywhere in the Book of Mormon or anywhere in our canon of the “wisdom of Eve”. Nowhere in the Book of Mormon does it state or make the case or even insinuate that Eve was a heroine for having done that which Adam was either unwilling or unable to do. In fact, every other prophet of the Book of Mormon (besides Lehi) who talks about the Fall, does so with the clearly delineated idea not of divine purpose (which has the disastrous effect of giving us a duplicitous god—commanding one thing but intending the very opposite), but of agency's consequences when exercised in unrighteousness.

The false notion that our parents were mysteriously infertile while in the Garden of Eden became popular with President Young's “Adam-God” theory and was based on Eve's statement objectively recorded in Moses 5:11. Her thoughts there comprise a statement of rationalization, not of truth (D&C 58:43; D&C 93:24,25). Lehi (2 Ne 2) may have attempted to believe Eve and fit her not-yet-repentant perspective into his otherwise profound sermon (he said in v.17, “I *suppose*, according to the things I have read...”), but we should not believe there was ‘divine purpose’ to the Fall when such a belief contradicts the very words of God Himself (D&C 29:39-41; Moses 6:48). If you have time, I will sit with you and demonstrate how these are the doctrines of Lucifer mingled with scripture, and propounding such constitutes what Elder Ballard referred to as “tampering with the doctrine of Christ.” I love and sustain President Nelson enough to tell him in person that he is (blasphemously) wrong on this point. Is there anyone else among us willing to do so?

President Nelson also pointed out that The Book of Mormon refutes notions that happiness can be found in wickedness. Of course wickedness never was happiness, but can we legitimately say so while also holding to the idea that what Adam and Eve did (blatantly disobey God—what we would normally call *wickedness*) actually gave rise to *joy*? Again, read Moses 6:48 to find out that it wasn't joy at all that was produced by the fall, but rather misery, woe, and subjection to Lucifer. A couple of related but more minor points:

The Book of Mormon clarifies understanding about:

— Death. It is a necessary component of God's great plan of happiness.

No. Death is a result of disobedience and was never intended by God to be part of our happy experience. This is why we have the Plan of Salvation, to rescue us from death, which is significantly different as a contingency plan from the Plan of Happiness. (3 Nephi 27:13-21; Moses 7:32-36)

— Post-mortal existence begins in Paradise.

No. Post-mortal existence begins in the spirit prison and ends with resurrection. Death is a state lamented even by the righteous. (See D&C 138 esp. v.50) Alma teaches us that the righteous are in a state of rest while the wicked have cause to mourn (Alma 40:12-13). That rest is the rest strictly enforced by bondage and resulting from the lack of being able to feel, sense, experience or act. It is not joyous (D&C 93:33-34). We already have a suicide rate that runs ~2X higher than the national average. Isn't it about time that we stop glorifying Lucifer's death?

The messengers and spokesmen of God and the holders of His keys on the earth lose credibility with every declaration of a fortunate fall or of necessary mortality or of a heroic Eve—in fact of any rationalization that God designed or intended for His own law to be broken.

Please help.

Thanks,

—Ian