

Re-considering the LDS Perspective of the Fall
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Is it troubling to any of my fellow believers that we LDS people so easily dismiss the Savior's assessment of who the adversary really is (Jn 8:44) and assume the "liar and murderer" is telling the truth: that our Holy Father was once a man, like us: carnal, sensual and devilish, and himself in need of a savior? Does the Savior's testimony of His own Father (Jn 5:19,20) not utterly flay the statement as a blatant lie? Or is it more convenient for us to relentlessly cling to the traditions of our Fathers, tracing back to the Father of Lies?

Is it unsettling to anyone else that the core LDS rationalization of the Fall "there is no other way" (also expressed as "we never should have had children", and "it is better that we should pass through sorrow that we may know the good from the evil") also traces back to believing Lucifer's lies, independent of who believed and repeated the lie most recently?

Is it disturbing to anyone else that we have books full of justifications why God should be disobeyed and rationalizations why Lucifer should be obeyed in the Garden? We teach and sing in Primary at the most fundamental level "I know the Lord provides a way, He wants me to obey", yet at the most fundamental level of our teaching the plan of salvation, we learn that God must be disobeyed in the Garden because there is *no other way*.

Does anyone else find paradox in the thought that our doctrine would have it be God's intent, desire, need or *design* that light should be stripped from our parents and us *in falling* so that we might forever be cast from His sight to create a need for the horrific sacrifice of the Only Begotten? (see D&C 93:31-39) Why is it so hard to understand the contingent nature of the atonement: "If they should partake of the fruit thereof, *then* we shall provide a Savior for them"? How did that simple cause/effect demonstration of love and mercy get twisted into the perverse circular logic that God needed our parents to fall so that they would create the need for an atonement?

What is the real purpose of the time we spend in the beginning of the endowment, learning context prior to the ordinance itself? Do we rehearse over and over again the events of the Garden of Eden so that we can nod our heads in approval, or sit and rationalize why it had to be thus and no other way? Is it a validation of why things are so bad in the world around us and to suggest that we cannot do anything about it? Or is it more substantive and urgent than any of that?

Are we not witnessing in the faces of the masters of those two trees, the very first endowment of moral agency—the right to choose to become of light or of darkness? And isn't it jaw-dropping to realize that every time we watch we are being given the exact same endowment and test of *our own* moral agency? We too are being tried and tested: Will we believe and hearken to the voice of God with none of hesitation, excuse or rationalizing? Or will we instead do as our parents did, and first seek the voice of the adversary, then listen to him, then obey him, then celebrate his mastery over us by donning the emblem of our obeisance to him by wearing his garb of fig leaves?

Shouldn't we rather do as our parents did after falling: recognize, repent, *discard the apron*, claim and respect the garment of the holy priesthood, then covenant to obey?