

# Lessons from Eve

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*"And Adam called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living; for thus have I, the Lord God, called the first of all women, which are many" (Moses 4:26).*

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*By studying about Eve, the righteous mother of all, we can learn fundamental lessons of everlasting importance for all women today.*

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## **Introduction**

Adam and Eve were an essential part of our Father in Heaven's eternal "plan of happiness" (Alma 42:8). Their transgression as "our first parents" cut them off "both temporally and spiritually from the presence of the Lord; . . . to follow after their own will" (Alma 42:7).

But Adam and Eve remembered the teachings of the Lord. They had been taught by the Lord in and out of the Garden of Eden. As depicted on the cover of this year's personal study guide, in an attitude of humility and repentance, Adam and Eve "called upon the name of the Lord" (Moses 5:4) and offered sacrifices unto the Lord. They also made covenants with him. They were filled with joy as they remembered that Jesus Christ would redeem them and had promised them the "eternal life which God giveth unto all the obedient" (Moses 5:11).

## **Eve Is an Example for All Women Today**

Elder Russell M. Nelson stated that the creation of Eve was "the final link in the chain of creation. . . . All the purposes of the world and all that was in the world would be brought to naught without woman—a keystone in the priesthood arch of creation." He outlined "five fundamental lessons of everlasting importance" that we can learn from our study of Eve ("Lessons from Eve," *Ensign*, Nov. 1987, p. 87).

Her example as "the mother of all living" (Moses 4:26) applies to all women, regardless of their present circumstances. Indeed, "all of the blessings of our Father in Heaven will be yours if you continue faithful, if you are true, and if you serve Him and His children with all your heart, might, mind, and strength," promised

President Ezra Taft Benson ("To the Single Adult Sisters of the Church," *Ensign*, Nov. 1988, p. 97).

*Eve labored beside her companion (see Moses 5:1).* Elder Nelson taught: "Adam held the priesthood. Eve served in matriarchal partnership with the patriarchal priesthood. So today, each wife may join with her husband as a partner unified in purpose. . . . [See 1 Corinthians 11:11.] Marvelously, it takes a man *and* a woman to make a man *or* a woman. Without union of the sexes, neither can we exist, nor can we become perfect. Ordinary and imperfect people can build each other through their wholeness together. The complete contribution of one partner to the other is essential to exaltation. This is so 'that the earth might answer the end of its creation' (D&C 49:16).

"So labor and love in partnership. Honor your companion. Any sense of competition for place or position is not appropriate for either partner, especially when enlightened by scriptural understanding" ("Lessons from Eve," p. 87).

*Eve bore the responsibilities of motherhood (see Moses 5:2).* According to Elder Nelson, Eve did not shirk her responsibilities. "So with welcome arms you may gratefully greet those children God may send, through your divine design as cocreator. With your husband, be obedient to the commandment to multiply and replenish the earth, as your opportunity, your spiritual guidance, your wisdom, and your health allow. You will gain joy and rejoicing in your posterity. That enrichment becomes more beautiful and precious with each passing year.

"For you childless sisters and those without companions, remember the eternal timetable of the Lord is much longer than the lonely hours of your preparation or the total of this mortal life. These are only as microseconds when compared to eternity. Your willingness and worthiness are surely known to Him. The spiritual rewards of motherhood are available to all women. Nurturing the young, comforting the frightened, protecting the vulnerable, teaching and giving encouragement need not—and should not—be limited to our own children.

"Sisters, be patient. I know something of the pressures you feel. Your kitchens are too small. Your budgets are too tight. Demands upon you exceed your capacity to help all who cry out to you. . . .

"When priorities are in place, one can more patiently tolerate unfinished business."

Elder Nelson urged women to "remember the precious eternal perspective. As you faithfully endure to the end, you will gain rewards promised by your Father in Heaven. They include thrones, kingdoms, principalities, powers, dominions, glory,

immortality, and eternal lives (see D&C 75:5; 128:12, 13; 132:19, 24; Moses 1:39)" ("Lessons from Eve," pp. 87–88).

*Eve worshipped the Lord in prayer* (see Moses 5:4). Elder Nelson counseled: "As each of us follows that pattern of prayer, blessings of wisdom and personal peace will ensue.

"'Counsel with the Lord in all thy doings, and he will direct thee for good' (Alma 37:37). Pray alone in your closet—in the solitude of your own sanctuary. Pour out the longings of your soul. Then pray with and for your husband, your sons and daughters, your sister and brother, your mother and father and all in your family. Let the weight of your innocence be felt as you lovingly motivate others to good works. With your mind so attuned to the Lord and his power, your influence for good becomes immeasurably great. And in this world of sin and temptation, the power of prayer will protect you and be a shield for your loved ones.

"I plead with the women of the Church to accept individual responsibility to know and to love the Lord. Communicate with him. He will impress upon your mind inspiration and personal revelation to give you strength" ("Lessons from Eve," p. 88).

*Eve heeded divine commandments of obedience and sacrifice* (see Moses 5:5–6). Elder Nelson taught: "We are still commanded to sacrifice, but not by shedding blood of animals. Our highest sense of sacrifice is achieved as we make ourselves more sacred or holy.

"This we do by our obedience to the commandments of God. Thus, the laws of obedience and sacrifice are indelibly intertwined. Consider the commandments to obey the Word of Wisdom, to keep the Sabbath day holy, to pay an honest tithe. As we comply with these and other commandments, something wonderful happens to us. We become disciplined! We become disciples! We become more sacred and holy—like our Lord!" ("Lessons from Eve," p. 88).

*Eve taught the gospel to her children* (see Moses 5:12). Before you can teach others, Elder Nelson explained, "you must first learn of your premortal existence, the Creation, the Fall, the atonement of Christ, and the reason for mortality. Study the scriptures and internalize them. Teach faith, repentance, baptism, and the gift of the Holy Ghost. Then let your commitment to the mission of the Church be evident in all you do. Preaching the gospel, perfecting the Saints, and redeeming members of your family will cause you to concentrate on covenants and ordinances of eternal significance.

"As you exercise your agency, teach things that are elevating and useful. Teach the principles of honesty, self-reliance, avoidance of unnecessary debt. You will build a more stable society by so doing.

And remember your example. What you are is more important than what you do or what you say" ("Lessons from Eve," p. 89).

### **Latter-day Saint Women Can Make a Difference in Today's Society**

Elder Nelson gave a final caution to sisters as we contemplate the lessons of Eve. "We can't all do all things. Circumstances, available time, and talents vary widely among us. Your diversities take you to numerous arenas of activity. There let your presence be felt.

"Your foes in a sordid society demean the sacredness of women and the sanctity of motherhood. Your world, sickened by unchastity and plagued with sexually transmitted disease, needs your righteous example. For the wrath of God is provoked by governments that sponsor gambling, condone pornography, or legalize abortion. These forces serve to denigrate women now, just as they did in the days of Sodom and Gomorrah.

"You can—you must—make a difference," concluded Elder Nelson. "You are vital to the Lord's team—one team with one purpose. Through your diversity, build strength in unity. Bind yourselves together in all holiness. Anchor yourselves to 'the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone' (Ephesians 2:20).

" . . . A dispensation of the gospel has been entrusted to our care. Everlasting priesthood principles, laws, and power depend upon our partnership" ("Lessons from Eve," p. 89).

### **Additional Resource for Personal and Family Use**

Joanne B. Doxey, "Strengthening the Family," *Ensign*, Nov. 1987, pp. 90–92.

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### **Suggestions for Teachers**

1. Refer to the cover of this year's personal study guide. Create a setting for a discussion of the lessons we can learn from Eve's example. In what ways did Adam and Eve remember Jesus Christ? How did they know who he was? What gospel principles had Adam and Eve been taught? (Note: A lesson on the Fall and Atonement will be taught later.)
2. Identify and discuss each of the "fundamental lessons of everlasting importance" taught by our study of Eve. In what ways are they a divine pattern for all women, regardless of whether or not they are married or are parents?
3. What might be the results of cooperation rather than competition between marriage partners? In what ways is the complete contribution of one partner to the other essential to exaltation? How can we achieve unity in purpose?

4. What guidelines does Elder Nelson give concerning multiplying and replenishing the earth? In what ways can all women bear the responsibilities of parenthood? Why is an eternal perspective necessary in order to more patiently "tolerate unfinished business"? What are the rewards promised to those who faithfully endure to the end?
5. How can Adam and Eve's pattern of prayer bless us individually and as families? Why is it our individual responsibility to know and love the Lord? What sacrifices can we make today? In what ways can we show our obedience? What spiritual and temporal blessings come from doing so? What does Elder Nelson suggest we teach our own and others' children? (See also Mosiah 1:4; 3 Nephi 22:13; D&C 68:25–28; Moses 6:57–59.)
6. How can following the example of Eve help us to come unto Christ and remember him? Identify ways in which we can make a difference in our world today. Ask sisters to share feelings they had when someone made a difference in their lives.