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A Note in Favor of Rereading Great Works, Including the Scriptures

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Daniel C. Peterson

Abstract: *When I was young, I learned an important lesson that has stayed with me through my life. This lesson has led me, on many occasions, to reread great works by great authors. The scriptures are no exceptions, and rereading them can be beneficial to any reader.*

When I was still quite young, perhaps around fourteen or so, the bishopric of my southern California ward asked the ward's home teachers to invite the families they visited to set goals for the coming year.

One night soon thereafter, my senior companion and I visited one of the homes to which we were assigned. It belonged to a couple in their fifties or early sixties, transplants from Utah (as many of the California Saints of that generation were), who had occasionally been active members of the ward but whose recent participation had been, at most, sporadic.

My senior companion told them of the challenge from the bishop and asked if there were any goals that they might like to set. The husband thought for a while and then, quite seriously, said he would like to have a million dollars in the bank.

My companion chuckled and replied that, while that might be a good ambition, he imagined that the bishop probably had goals in mind of a more spiritual nature, goals with which home teachers might be able to help.

The man and his wife could think of none.

After a couple of minutes, my companion suggested the goal of, say, reading the Book of Mormon or the New Testament during the coming months.

"Oh," the husband immediately responded, "but I've already *read* the scriptures."

It's a small thing but, for some reason, that little experience has stuck in my memory ever since. I can still remember the name of my senior

companion and of the married couple — though I think that I was only assigned to him and to them for a very short time — and in my mind's eye I can still see that scene in their living room.

Even then, as a young boy, it seemed odd to me to think of the scriptures as books you read through once and then are done with.

That's the way one reads escapist literature, pulp fiction. When, having completed a none-too-good detective novel, you know that the butler did it — in the kitchen, with a wrench — there's usually not too much reason to go back and read the book again. And certainly there would be little point in rereading it very carefully, lingering over each line, weighing each word, seeking to plumb the depths of the writer's mind.

For very good books, though, and especially for truly great ones, there is enormous value to be gained from reading them again and again, poring over them, reflecting upon them, reading them in different ways.

They can be read rapidly (say, the Book of Mormon or the New Testament in a month or a week or a long weekend) or slowly, lingering over every word and phrase or tracking down every cross reference. They can be read thematically, working through the Topical Guide. The Bible can be read in a fresh translation, or even in the original languages. The scriptures can be read in a language different from one's own or heard in an audio version. Read silently or aloud. Read alone or with a group.

I can confidently guarantee, based on at least some experience with every one of those approaches, that each of them will yield new insights and unexpected discoveries. Permit me to share a simple example from my own life.

For many years, I regarded the opening rhetorical salvo by Samuel the Lamanite as an example of bad, repetitious prose:

> And he said unto them: Behold, I, Samuel, a Lamanite, do speak the words of the Lord which he doth put into my heart; and behold he hath put it into my heart to say unto this people that the sword of justice hangeth over this people; and four hundred years pass not away save the sword of justice falleth upon this people.

> Yea, heavy destruction awaiteth this people, and it surely cometh unto this people, and nothing can save this people save it be repentance and faith on the Lord Jesus Christ, who surely shall come into the world, and shall suffer many things and shall be slain for his people. (Helaman 13:5–6)

Repeating the phrase *this people* six times in two sentences was, I thought, boring, even embarrassing, and definitely very poor style.

Reading the passage aloud one day, however, trying to place vocal emphases in what seemed the most appropriate places, I realized I was wrong.

Samuel, who deliberately stresses that he's "a Lamanite," is speaking from the wall of the city of Zarahemla to a violently hostile Nephite audience. They're wicked, but they're also inclined to think themselves superior because of their lineage.[1]

In the preceding chapter (Helaman 12:4–7), the prophet Mormon had inserted an editorial comment, drawing not only upon the materials he was editing but also upon his own experience: "O how foolish," he exclaimed, "and how vain, and how evil, and devilish, and how quick to do iniquity, and how slow to do good, are the children of men. … Yea, how quick to be lifted up in pride; yea, how quick to boast" (Helaman 12:4, 5).[2]

His own view? "O," he exclaimed, reflecting on human resistance to God's authority, "how great is the nothingness of the children of men; yea, even they are less than the dust of the earth" (Helaman 12:7).

When I read Samuel's denunciation of the people of Zarahemla aloud, I understood it. The repeated condemnations of "this people" were followed by a promise that the divine Savior would enter into our world in order to "suffer" and "be slain for *his* people." Samuel was contrasting "this people" (the Nephites) with *God's* people. He was telling his prideful audience that merely being Nephites would not save them. Being faithful to their covenants and, thus, enrolled among the Lord's covenant people was their only hope of salvation.

The passage's repetitive drumbeat of *this people* was designed, I think, to emphasize the concluding *his people*. It's rather like what music theorists call "resolution," which is the move from a dissonant or unstable sound, either a single note or a chord, to a consonant or stable one. The irritating *this people* yields to the serene and comforting *his people*.

I learned from this little experience with reading the scriptures aloud that it's very helpful to hear them with our ears as well as in our minds.

As I say, very good books, and particularly truly great ones, are worth reading and rereading. They reward different *ways* of reading.

This isn't true only of the scriptures, of course. It's true for Plato and Dante, Milton and Goethe, Lewis and Tolkien, Hemingway and Fitzgerald, the works of Shakespeare, and many others. To view *Hamlet* or *King Lear* or *Othello* in different productions and with different actors is to see them differently and to notice things one had not noticed before.

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1. Samuel's acute awareness of the ethnic issue is obvious at Helaman 14:10 and in Helaman 15:3–17.

2. For Moroni's own experience in regard to boasting, see Mormon 3:9; 4:8.

The novels of Jane Austen can be read over and over again not only with enjoyment but also with increasing insight and understanding.

Moreover, we are different readers at thirty, fifty, and seventy than we were at fifteen or twenty. We've had different experiences, for good and for ill. We've lived life. We've married, perhaps, had children, lost loved ones, experienced triumphs and failures, suffered betrayal, rejoiced at redemptions. Perhaps we were even clever readers in high school or as college freshmen. But cleverness is not enough. There is reason behind Plato's requirement that the philosopher-kings in his *Republic* must be not only rational, intelligent, self-controlled, simple in lifestyle, lovers of wisdom, and capable of making prudent decisions on behalf of their community but also, minimally, fifty years of age.[3] Constitutionally, the minimum age for a president of the United States of America is thirty-five.[4]

I own a "quadruple combination" — a single volume containing the King James translation of the Old and New Testaments, the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, and the Pearl of Great Price — that I brought with me as an incoming freshman at Brigham Young University. It has long since passed into decay and decrepitude and is falling apart. But I keep it — partly for sentimental reasons and partly because it's very instructive to me about the person I once was. I myself have also moved solidly into decrepitude and decay. I, too, have begun to fall apart. Looking into that book, though, I'm reminded of ways in which I've changed and, I hope, improved.

I was an ambitious marker of scripture in those days, and my old "quad" is extensively marked. There are marginal annotations about thoughts that had occurred to me, linguistic notes about underlying Greek and Hebrew terms, and insights I had picked up at lectures. And there are many passages that are underlined or highlighted because, obviously, they had particularly caught my attention or had seemed especially significant.

What amazes me, though, is to notice the passages I had *not* underlined or colored. These include many verses that are now enormously important to me. And sometimes they're right there in the neighborhood of the passages I had marked, though seemingly unnoticed. In fact, for more than a few cases, I can no longer remember why I highlighted the passages that I did.

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3. Plato, *Republic*, VI–VII; https://www.gutenberg.org/files/1497/1497-h/1497-h.htm#link2H_4_0009

4. U.S. Constitution, Article II, Section I, Clause 5; https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/constitution-transcript#toc-section-1--2.

It's not the scriptures that have changed, I have. My interests, my needs, and my perceptions have been altered over the years. (It would be tragically sad — wouldn't it? — if they hadn't.) Seeing and understanding this strengthens my conviction that the wisdom to be gained from the scriptures is mortally inexhaustible, their depths unfathomable.

And that virtually infinite richness is one of the principal reasons for the very existence of *Interpreter: A Journal of Latter-day Saint Faith and Scholarship* and, indeed, for the Interpreter Foundation itself.

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An Other Approach to Isaiah Studies

Joshua M. Sears

Abstract: *A recent review of Joseph M. Spencer's book* The Vision of All: Twenty-Five Lectures on Isaiah in Nephi's Record *made the case that the book contains several challenges and problems, in particular that it advocates a theologically deficient interpretation of Isaiah that denies Isaiah's witness of Jesus Christ. This response provides an alternative reading of Spencer's work and suggests these assertions are often based on misunderstanding. At stake in this conversation is the question of whether or not there is more than one valid way to read Isaiah that draws upon a faithful, Restoration perspective. While Spencer may interpret and frame some things differently than some other Latter-day Saint scholars, the prophecies of Isaiah provide enough richness and possibility to accommodate a chorus of faithful approaches.*

In a previous issue of *Interpreter*, Donald W. Parry reviewed Joseph M. Spencer's book *The Vision of All: Twenty-Five Lectures on Isaiah in Nephi's Record*.[1] I am offering a response for two reasons. First, although they were not intended this way, a few statements in the review may incorrectly be taken to imply that Spencer, as a person, lacks an understanding of Restoration doctrine, does not accept Church teachings, and is closed to the influence of the Holy Ghost. When readers come away from the review thinking this is what the review meant, it can lead to significant personal and professional repercussions for Spencer, who is a Brigham Young University religion professor. Second, I believe the review significantly misunderstands Spencer's book, and these misunderstandings led to substantial misrepresentations of what Spencer's

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1. Donald W. Parry, "An Approach to Isaiah Studies," *Interpreter: A Journal of Latter-day Saint Faith and Scholarship* 34 (2020): 245–64, https://journal. interpreterfoundation.org/an-approach-to-isaiah-studies/.

book says. My aim, then, is to offer my own reading of Spencer's book and gently correct the errors I perceive in the earlier review.

Before proceeding, I wish to state categorically that my response should in no way signal disrespect for the intelligence, talent, or good intentions of Dr. Parry. He has been my teacher, mentor, and friend for many years, and there are few people whose opinions on Isaiah or Hebrew I value as highly. I believe Dr. Parry's review was written with the best of intentions and that the inaccuracies were the result of honest misunderstanding. Although the record should be set straight regarding Spencer's book, this should in no way diminish Dr. Parry's numerous contributions to our study of Isaiah, the Dead Sea Scrolls, and other important fields of study, for which Latter-day Saints will always be in his debt.

Faithfully Approaching Isaiah

Unfortunately, some lines in the review could be read to infer that Spencer is not a believing or faithful Latter-day Saint. For example, these two sentences are taken from the same page:

> In my own personal view, Spencer's work presents certain challenges and problems, especially for Christians who maintain that Isaiah's text contains numerous Jesus Christ-focused elements. …

> In my experience and considered opinion, academics (particularly those who belong to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints) who intend to explicate Isaiah's text in books or media would do well to possess the following: (1) a comprehensive understanding of the doctrinal framework of the Restoration of the gospel (and acceptance of and compliance with its teachings) and (2) a heart open to the promptings of the Holy Ghost, the quintessential revelator and teacher.[2]

Based on my personal familiarity with Dr. Parry — a model of kindness and professionalism — I do not read these statements as personal criticisms of Spencer, and Dr. Parry himself has assured me that they were absolutely not intended that way. However, I have also spoken with many individuals who read the review and came away thinking a personal criticism was intended. I believe this miscommunication resulted from the fact that the

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2. Ibid., 246.

review occasionally makes general observations about how to approach Isaiah (including the necessity of having the Holy Ghost), and some readers naturally understood these statements had some bearing on the individual scholar whose work was being reviewed. It is admittedly easy to read these general observations as criticisms when they appear in close proximity to sentences that negatively evaluate other aspects of Spencer's writings.[3] It is regrettable that the review did not more clearly distinguish between its Isaiah-in-general and Spencer-specific observations, but I wish to clarify for anyone who took it that way that no accusation of faithlessness was intended.

On Searching for Jesus Christ in Isaiah's Text

The majority of the review of Spencer's book is dedicated to defending the presence of Jesus Christ in the book of Isaiah. I appreciate and applaud the motivation of defending the Savior and the scriptures that witness of Him. However, I believe the review misreads Spencer's actual arguments and that all the evidence it musters does not address the issues at hand.

The review takes particular exception to a statement of Spencer's that it quotes multiple times: "*Stop looking for Jesus in Isaiah*."[4] The review is emphatic: "I take an opposite view."[5] The review goes on to establish that Christ is ubiquitous in Isaiah by using the following pieces of evidence:

- Numerous Church authorities have identified Jesus as Jehovah, the biblical God of Israel.[6]

- Jehovah's name (*Yahweh* in Hebrew) appears more than 6,000 times in the Old Testament (euphemistically rendered "the Lord" in the King James Version).[7]

- In Isaiah alone, Jehovah's name appears 450 times.[8]

- Certain Old Testament titles for Jehovah, such as "rock" or "king," are also used in the New Testament to refer to Jesus.[9]

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3. See also ibid., 257 and 258. Page 247 also mentions those who do not "accept" the position of Church authorities that Jesus Christ's premortal name was Jehovah, but while it is clearly implied that Spencer does not accept that position, I will argue below that this was based on a misreading of Spencer.

4. Parry, "Approach to Isaiah Studies," 247, 255.

5. Ibid., 247.

6. Ibid.

7. Ibid., 248–49.

8. Ibid., 249.

9. Ibid.

- Non-Latter-day Saint Christian scholars also believe that "it is to Him that [all] Old Testament Scripture points."[10]

- The book of Isaiah describes Jehovah with titles we associate with Christ, including "Prince of Peace" or "Redeemer."[11]

- The book of Isaiah refers to the law of Moses, which the New Testament and Book of Mormon teach pointed to Christ.[12]

- Several names in Isaiah incorporate Jehovah's Hebrew name (Yahweh) in them, including Hezekiah, Isaiah, and Uzziah.[13]

- Isaiah mentions ordinances, rituals, and ceremonies, all of which symbolized Christ.[14]

- Several New Testament passages state that the Old Testament teaches of Jesus Christ.[15]

Some of these points are stronger than others, but collectively they do provide an excellent summary of the theological position of Latter-day Saints that Jesus Christ should be identified with Jehovah, the God of the Old Testament. In the context of this review, however, the problem is that none of this has anything to do with what Spencer is saying in his book.

In the statements by Spencer to which the review takes exception, Spencer is using the terms "Jesus" and "Christ" in a very restricted sense, referring more or less to the mortal ministry of Jesus as described in the New Testament. In other words, when Spencer says, "Stop looking for Jesus in Isaiah," what he means is "Stop looking for *nothing but detailed references to Jesus's mortal ministry as described in the New Testament* in Isaiah."[16] I can understand why Spencer made this suggestion: I have

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10. Ibid., 253.
11. Ibid.
12. Ibid.
13. Ibid.
14. Ibid.
15. Ibid., 254–55.
16. There are a few places where Spencer qualifies what he means by "Christ," such as where he describes "Christ from the New Testament" or where he describes "Christ's life" (Joseph M. Spencer, *The Vision of All: Twenty-five Lectures on Isaiah in Nephi's Record* [Salt Lake City: Greg Kofford Books, 2016], 34, 290). However, I do believe that Spencer should have more carefully and more frequently made this nuance clear. While careful readers should pick up on the fact that Spencer is saying only that the *mortal* Jesus is relatively rare in Isaiah, I can understand how some readers would miss that distinction.

been in several settings where fellow Saints have read Isaiah under the assumption that every sentence refers *somehow* to something familiar in the four Gospels — if only you are spiritually sensitive enough to discern the hidden symbolism. That approach can be useful for devotional reading, but Spencer is trying to help people see that Isaiah talks about many other things as well, when read in context.[17] Helping people appreciate those contexts — the Assyrian threat, the Babylonian exile, the Persian restoration, etc. — is crucial for Spencer's book because the prophet Nephi is familiar with those contexts and uses them to develop his brilliant likening of Isaiah to new settings.

The review, then, takes a broad, everything-counts approach to finding Jesus in Isaiah and then unfairly compares that to Spencer's assertion that Isaiah contains relatively little (at least without likening) regarding the details of Christ's mortal ministry in first-century Judea. If the review were to challenge Spencer's approach on its own grounds that would be one thing (i.e., it would be helpful to see specific references where Parry sees details of Christ's mortal ministry described in Isaiah), but simply making the argument that Jesus is Jehovah does not address Spencer's actual assertion. It's easy to make the case that (from a Latter-day Saint perspective) Jesus is Jehovah, but to present Spencer as opposed to that position sets up a straw man argument.

Besides misreading Spencer's claim that Isaiah says relatively little in detail about Jesus's mortal ministry, the review also unfairly presents Spencer's position by highlighting a few carefully-selected lines that most

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17. When we come to "the Isaiah chapters" in my BYU Book of Mormon classes, many students share their previous frustration with Isaiah's writings. These feelings are not uncommon, of course, but I have discovered that for some of these students the frustration (or even antagonism) they feel toward these chapters derives in part from the expectations they developed in Seminary or Sunday School. Their teachers had framed Isaiah as a book of prophecies about the coming of Christ, and they illustrated that point with two or three verses they said talked about the Savior's birth, life, or death. This approach does not equip the students to be able to understand anything about the hundreds of other Isaiah verses in the Book of Mormon that do not so easily sound like they relate to Christ's life. As they read the Isaiah chapters on their own, the students become frustrated, concluding they must not be smart enough or spiritual enough to see the descriptions of Jesus they have been set up to expect in nearly every sentence. When I begin to explain the context of Isaiah's writings, I have seen students become visibly relieved to discover, for example, that most of the time "Assyrians" just means Assyrians — not Pharisees or lepers or Roman soldiers. I do, of course, also show them places where I believe Isaiah *is* directly prophesying of Christ's life as well as show them how to find Jesus in Isaiah through likening, types and shadows, and other interpretive approaches.

strongly suggest Spencer opposes finding Jesus in Isaiah while ignoring many more statements that show Spencer in fact *supports* finding Jesus in Isaiah — provided the references are methodologically sound. For example:

- Before stating the line of greatest controversy — "Stop looking for Jesus in Isaiah" — Spencer himself announces that the suggestion will be worded "far too strongly at first." The review includes that line in its quotation of Spencer,[18] but does not stop to notice that Spencer himself admits that the suggestion is deliberately exaggerated, nor does the review note that Spencer then takes multiple pages to tone down and qualify that purposefully over-the-top opening statement.[19] Spencer's initial self-described exaggeration was apparently a rhetorical device, and I think he should have been more careful about how he set up his actual position. Nevertheless, the review should not have singled out the exaggeration without including Spencer's subsequent discussion of what he actually means by it.

- Rather than not looking for Christ at all, as implied in the review, Spencer actually advocates for a process of looking at Isaiah's historical context *first* and *then* looking for Christ. "Wait a bit before trying to find Christ," Spencer says, "don't try too quickly to force [a passage of Isaiah] to tell us something about Christ. It'll do that in good time."[20] "It'll do that in good time" indicates that Spencer *does* believe Christ's mortal ministry appears in Isaiah.

- The review quotes Spencer saying, "Now, let me be perfectly clear on something: Christ *is* there in Isaiah, I think." The review then states, "Note the uncertainty Spencer expresses with the words 'I think.'"[21] A more charitable reading might be that Spencer is expressing epistemological humility, something Spencer values perhaps to a fault. Spencer is not uniquely expressing caution regarding the particular idea of Christ in Isaiah; attentive readers will notice that in his book he is cautious in virtually *everything* he says. According to an electronic word search using the book preview at Amazon.com, that phrase "I think" appears 89 times

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18. Parry, "Approach to Isaiah Studies," 247.
19. See Spencer, *The Vision of All*, 33–34.
20. Ibid., 34.
21. Parry, "Approach to Isaiah Studies," 247.

in the book — and "maybe" appears 41 times, "possibly" 66, and "perhaps" 103. In this book, that's just the way Spencer talks. Furthermore, the review focuses solely on the potentially negative "uncertainty" of that "I think" clause without appreciating the fact that Spencer has just said quite clearly that he *does* think Christ is in Isaiah. This is even clearer when Spencer's complete thought is quoted in full: "Christ *is* there in Isaiah, I think. There are very good Isaiah scholars who find messianic anticipation in Isaiah's prophecies, even if there are others who don't. (I actually find *the latter's* arguments a bit obtuse.) And we'll see later that *Nephi* insists that certain Isaiah passages have something to say about Christ. Abinadi's even stronger on that point."[22] Although the review paints Spencer as opposing any and all messianic anticipation in Isaiah's prophecies, Spencer himself actually evaluates such a position negatively.

- The review fails to mention Spencer's analysis of Lehi's use of Isaiah and the possibility he describes there that "Isaiah saw the time and coming of Christ in vision. Isaiah's prophecies would be fulfilled first and foremost when the messianic age would dawn and the redemption of the world would begin in earnest."[23] Although Spencer presents this as just one of three possible ways to read Lehi's use of Isaiah, Spencer says that they are "all genuine possibilities, any of them could work."[24]

- The review fails to mention that when Spencer gets to Isaiah 4:2, he concludes that "this is most likely to be understood as a messianic reference."[25]

- The review quotes Spencer saying, "When we start digging in Isaiah's writings for clear prophecies of Christ, we find relatively little that makes sense."[26] The review fails to mention the corrective that Spencer offers immediately after that statement: "… though we ought to be careful not to let it make us overly skeptical. There's plenty of evidence that Nephi saw at least a few major passages in Isaiah's writings as messianic

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22. Spencer, *The Vision of All*, 34.
23. Ibid., 64.
24. Ibid., 65.
25. Ibid., 160; see also 199.
26. Parry, "Approach to Isaiah Studies," 247.

(as pointing directly to Christ)."²⁷ Shortly thereafter Spencer repeats, "But again, it's clear from what Nephi does with Isaiah that we can't get too skeptical .… we'd be overly hasty if we simply dismissed every messianic reading of the prophet."²⁸ Ironically, the review paints Spencer as "dismiss[ing] every messianic reading of the prophet" even though he advocates against such an approach.

To summarize, while the quotations selected for the review create the impression that Spencer opposes any efforts to locate Christ in Isaiah, Spencer's position is actually much more nuanced: "We *ought* to be looking *in modest and informed ways* for prophecies in Isaiah that might indeed point to the coming of Christ several centuries later."²⁹ Perhaps the reviewer has a different approach regarding how "modest" one must be and what constitutes an "informed" approach to locating Christological passages — but setting up Spencer as wholly opposed to this process once again creates a straw man.

Interpreting Isaiah 7:14 and Isaiah 9:6

Another issue relating to finding Christ in Isaiah is how to interpret "Isaianic passages that many Christians interpret to refer to Jesus Christ."³⁰ The review focuses on the two examples of how Spencer approaches Isaiah 7:14 ("a virgin shall conceive") and Isaiah 9:6 ("unto us a child is born"). The review's exclusive focus on these two passages is in itself misleading, however, because the chapter where Spencer discusses them is actually about *three* passages — Isaiah 7:14, Isaiah 9:6, and Isaiah 11:1. Spencer finds Isaiah 11:1 the most messianic of the three but also mentions the irony that a Latter-day scripture (Doctrine and Covenants 113:4) interprets this traditionally messianic passage as *not* about Jesus. None of this fits the review's position that Spencer opposes all messianic passages or that every potentially messianic passage is definitely about Jesus — which may be why the review is silent about Spencer's evaluation.

In its discussion of Isaiah 7:14 and Isaiah 9:6, the review explains that Spencer "attempts to diminish [the] interpretation" that these passages refer to Jesus Christ.³¹ That's true in a sense, but the review fails

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27. Spencer, *The Vision of All*, 290–91.
28. Ibid., 291.
29. Ibid., 291; emphasis added.
30. Parry, "Approaches to Isaiah Studies," 249.
31. Ibid., 249.

to communicate any of Spencer's stated reasons for wanting to nuance (perhaps a better word than "diminish") the traditional Christological interpretations. Unfortunately, this can leave readers with the sense that Spencer is attacking Christological interpretations just for the sake of attacking Christological interpretations. Rather than simplistically dismissing Christ-centered readings of Isaiah 7:14 and Isaiah 9:6, Spencer explains that "whether these are messianic prophecies … is a *really* complicated question."[32]

The review defends a Christological reading of Isaiah 7:14 on several grounds:

- Matthew 1:21–23 states that Isaiah 7:14 was fulfilled in Christ's birth.[33]

- Modern prophets like Gordon B. Hinckley and Thomas S. Monson have quoted Isaiah 7:14 in relation to Christmas.[34]

- Aspects of Isaiah 7:14 fit with the story of the birth of Jesus, including "conception, the child being a son, the naming of the son, the child's knowledge, the child before eight years old, land, kings, the role of the Lord, and the refrain 'God is with us.'"[35]

These points summarize why Latter-day Saints can and should see Christ in this passage. However, the review fails to engage *any* of the reasons Spencer gives for *also* interpreting Isaiah 7:14 in another way.[36] This is especially surprising given that Spencer's argument is so compellingly simple: when read in the full context of Isaiah chapter 7, the child mentioned in v. 14 *has* to refer to a child who lived contemporaneously with Isaiah in the late eighth-century bc. *Nothing* about the entire set up of the prophecy makes sense if it were to refer *exclusively* to a baby born seven centuries in the future. Spencer is perfectly content to say the Holy Ghost could have intended an additional meaning to refer to the future birth of Christ and that we can read this passage as a type or shadow of His coming,[37] but he does not believe this

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32. Spencer, *The Vision of All*, 204.
33. Parry, "Approach to Isaiah Studies," 250.
34. Ibid., 250–52.
35. Ibid., 252–53.
36. See Spencer, *The Vision of All*, 208–10.
37. See ibid., 210.

Christological reading is incompatible with the view that the immediate context of the prophecy was talking about a different baby.

The review's unilateral defense of Isaiah 7:14 as a prophecy of Jesus's birth — without any hint that it could also describe other events — is particularly perplexing given the fact that Parry has elsewhere supported a dual reading not entirely dissimilar from Spencer's.[38] In that earlier work, Parry describes the fulfillment in Christ as the "greater fulfillment" and the fulfillment in Isaiah's day as a "lesser fulfillment," in contrast to Spencer, who focuses on the immediate fulfillment as the primary meaning and the fulfillment in Christ as a likening given later by the Holy Spirit. However, that distinction in their approach is not nearly as incompatible as the review makes it out to be ("My understanding of Isaiah 7:14 … is completely dissimilar to Spencer's").[39]

Furthermore, the idea that this passage can have multiple fulfillments is supported by Elder Jeffrey R. Holland,[40] so it is puzzling that the review quotes Elder Holland to imply that a Christological reading is the *only* valid interpretation.[41] The review also fails to mention the many other

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38. "The prophecy has a dual application, as shown by a close reading of Isaiah 7:10–16; 8:3–7; and Matthew 1:21. First, the greater fulfillment of the prophecy centers in Jesus Christ, who was Immanuel, the son of the virgin Mary … Second, because the sign was given in part to nurture Ahaz's faith, it would have had some fulfillment in his lifetime. The lesser fulfillment of the Immanuel prophecy thus pertains to Isaiah's wife, the prophetess, who also fulfilled the conditions of Isaiah's prophecy when she brought forth a son." (Donald W. Parry, Jay A. Parry, and Tina M. Peterson, *Understanding Isaiah* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1998], 72–73).

39. Parry, "Approach to Isaiah Studies," 250.

40. "There are plural or parallel elements to this prophecy [Isaiah 7:14], as with so much of Isaiah's writing. The most immediate meaning was probably focused on Isaiah's wife, a pure and good woman who brought forth a son about this time, the child becoming a type and shadow of the greater, later fulfillment of the prophecy that would be realized in the birth of Jesus Christ." (Jeffrey R. Holland, *Christ and the New Covenant: The Messianic Message of the Book of Mormon* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1997], 79). "The dual or parallel fulfillment of this prophecy [Isaiah 7:14] comes in the realization that Isaiah's wife, a pure and good young woman — symbolically representing another pure young woman — did bring forth a son. This boy's birth was a type and shadow of the greater and later fulfillment of that prophecy, the virgin birth of the Lord Jesus Christ." (Jeffrey R. Holland, "'More Fully Persuaded': Isaiah's Witness of Christ's Ministry," in *Isaiah in the Book of Mormon*, ed. Donald W. Parry and John W. Welch [Provo, UT: Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, 1998], 6).

41. See Parry, "Approach to Isaiah Studies," 252.

Latter-day Saint scholars[42] — as well as other apostles[43] — who have approached Isaiah 7:14 in a similar way.

The review also defends a Christological reading of Isaiah 9:6. As with the previous example, the review unfortunately fails either to adequately address Spencer's interpretation that the passage refers to King Hezekiah or to acknowledge that Spencer is perfectly willing to allow a double-interpretive approach that sees in Hezekiah's birth a type of Christ's.[44] To counter Spencer's identification of Hezekiah, the review asks, "But how does Spencer contend that the 'Mighty God' … refers to Hezekiah rather than Jesus Christ?"[45] The review summarizes and dismisses Spencer's appeal to alternate Bible translations that modify the wording to a less-divine title but fails to mention that Spencer's explanation is more robust than that, citing ancient Near Eastern throne names and the perceived divine connection between gods and kings.[46] Spencer's quick synopsis of these issues does have scholarly support,[47] but the review does not engage with any of the extensive literature identifying the royal child as Hezekiah, content instead to simply dismiss Spencer's summary of that literature.

To be clear, I think there are places where Spencer's arguments do deserve further exploration and even some serious critiques. For example, Spencer asserts without explanation that it is unlikely Isaiah himself would have understood Isaiah 7:14 or Isaiah 9:6 to have been

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42. See Jason R. Combs, "'From King Ahaz's Sign to Christ Jesus': The 'Fulfillment' of Isaiah 7:14," in *Prophets and Prophecies of the Old Testament: The 46th Annual Brigham Young University Sidney B. Sperry Symposium*, ed. Aaron P. Schade, Brian M. Hauglid, and Kerry Muhlestein (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University; Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2017), 95–122, as well as the many other references included in his endnotes.

43. For example, President Dallin H. Oaks wrote, "Many of the prophecies and doctrinal passages in the scriptures have multiple meanings … The book of Isaiah contains numerous prophecies that seem to have multiple fulfillments. One seems to involve the people of Isaiah's day or the circumstances of the next generation. Another meaning, often symbolic, seems to refer to events in the meridian of time, when Jerusalem was destroyed and her people scattered after the crucifixion of the Son of God. Still another meaning or fulfillment of the same prophecy seems to relate to the events attending the Second Coming of the Savior." (Dallin H. Oaks, "Scripture Reading and Revelation," *Ensign* 25, no. 1, January 1995, 8).

44. Spencer, *The Vision of All*, 212.

45. Parry, "Approach to Isaiah Studies," 250.

46. See Spencer, *The Vision of All*, 211.

47. See Combs, "King Ahaz's Sign," 102–5, as well as the many works cited in his endnotes.

pointing ahead to Jesus. But why couldn't Isaiah have understood the fuller meaning of his prophecies, even if his contemporaries saw only the immediate application? It is regrettable the review did not engage Spencer's actual arguments in more detail, or some of these points could have been explored more fully.

One final point can be made regarding Spencer's approach to finding Christ in Isaiah: Spencer takes many of his cues regarding where to locate Christ from none other than the prophet Nephi. The review fails to mention how tenaciously Spencer is trying to track Nephi's interpretive approach (indeed, the review barely acknowledges this is actually a book about 1 and 2 Nephi, not the book of Isaiah). But since Spencer's book is *all about* how Nephi interprets Isaiah, this focus on Nephi instead of Matthew makes sense. It is Nephi who encourages Spencer not to be too skeptical in the face of secular scholars who deny the presence of Jesus in Isaiah.[48] Nephi's influence also goes the other way: one reason Spencer hesitates to declare that a passage like Isaiah 7:14 only refers to Jesus is that *Nephi himself does not explicitly interpret the passage that way.* In fact, when Nephi gets to his interpretation of the Isaiah chapters in 2 Nephi 25–30, he's hardly interested at all in the birth and mortal ministry of Jesus, mentioning them only when he's doing quick historical overviews.[49] Nephi is certainly sensitive to the infinite effects of Christ's atoning sacrifice, but as far as Christ's place in history is concerned, Nephi is laser-focused on the last days, not the meridian of time.

In sum, Spencer's book is not out to excise the mortal Messiah from the book of Isaiah as much as it is invested in helping us appreciate how much Nephi is trying to point us in the latter days to Christ — not to the Babe in Bethlehem or the Son of Man who walked the roads of Palestine, but to the Redeemer of Israel who remembers His ancient covenants with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and who is gathering His people in preparation for His glorious second coming.

On Other Matters

The middle section of the review, titled "Other Matters," criticizes Spencer on a number of miscellaneous points. Unfortunately, each paragraph misrepresents Spencer or leaves an unfairly poor impression of him.

- The review makes the point that "it is doubtful that biblical scholars can adequately conduct text-critical studies on

48. See Spencer, *The Vision of All*, 34, 207–8, 210, 212, 245, 290–91.
49. See 2 Nephi 25:12–13, 18–19.

Isaiah's writing recorded in the Book of Mormon. Because the Book of Mormon is an English translation (i.e., we do not have access to the language of the brass plates), word-to-word correspondences and lemmatizations are impossible."[50] Spencer certainly knows this, and I can't identify any places where Spencer's writing suggests otherwise. The review provides no examples to explain why it brings up this topic, so I'm not sure why it goes over this information. For most readers of the review, the implication they will be left with is that Spencer does not understand this.

- The review says Spencer commits a fallacy of negative proof when he suggests that perhaps the fact that the Book of Mormon never quotes from Isaiah 56–66 could mean that those chapters were not on the brass plates.[51] The review is correct to point out that this absence does not *prove* these chapters were not on the brass plates. However, it would have been helpful to at least briefly acknowledge that Spencer's suggestion is not outside the mainstream of conservative Book of Mormon scholarship; a similar observation that Isaiah 56–66 might not have been on the brass plates has been made by authors such as Hugh Nibley, John Welch, Kevin Christensen, and Kent Jackson.[52] The review also fails to mention that Spencer's reasons for suggesting that some chapters of Isaiah might not have been on the brass plates are much more extensive than

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50. Parry, "Approach to Isaiah Studies," 255–56.

51. Ibid., 256.

52. See Hugh Nibley, *Since Cumorah*, 2nd ed. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1988), 125; John W. Welch, "Authorship of the Book of Isaiah in Light of the Book of Mormon," in *Isaiah in the Book of Mormon*, ed. Donald W. Parry and John W. Welch (Provo, UT: Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, 1998), 432–33; Kevin Christensen, "Paradigms Regained: A Survey of Margaret Barker's Scholarship and Its Significance for Mormon Studies," *FARMS Occasional Papers* 2 (2001): 78–79; and Kent Jackson, "Isaiah in the Book of Mormon," in *A Reason for Faith*, ed. Laura Harris Hales (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University; Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2016), 75. Note that these authors are not *arguing* that Isaiah 56–66 were not on the brass plates; they are allowing only for the possibility. Since Spencer is similarly making only suggestions, not a hard argument, I see his position as compatible. Spencer's overall point is that there is much we can learn from (non-Latter-day Saint) Isaiah scholars, even if "someone committed to the Book of Mormon's historical claims can't uncritically accept every conclusion" they draw (Spencer, *The Vision of All*, 23).

simply observing that the Book of Mormon does not quote from them.[53] The review does indicate that authorship of Isaiah is a complicated issue, but because it provides no additional background, uninformed readers will come away from this paragraph with the impression that Spencer's "fallacy" is an uncommon and illogical position.

- The review accuses Spencer of fallacies of generalization for claiming that most Latter-day Saint readers would find detailed academic commentaries dull and that more Latter-day Saints are interested in Isaiah in the Book of Mormon than they are in the book of Isaiah itself.[54] The review demands "empirical" evidence for these "unsupportable claims," which surprises me. Is the review really suggesting the *majority* of all Latter-day Saints really do think academic commentaries are page turners or that more of them care about the biblical book of Isaiah than they do the Isaiah chapters in the Book of Mormon?

- The review quotes Spencer saying, "Don't get lost in the details" when reading Isaiah and says that "I take, and recommend, a contrary approach."[55] The review seems to understand that Spencer is saying one can safely ignore the details of Isaiah, and the review recommends that instead one should seek to "comprehend the overarching themes, pericopes, text divisions, and intervals of the Masoretic Text, 1QIsaᵃ, and the other Hebrew witnesses of Isaiah from the Dead Sea Scrolls" and that "one must also carefully scrutinize the details in Isaiah's text by decoding the thousands of linguistic forms (including morphological values and lexical structures), poetic arrangements, and rhetorical configurations he used."[56] But Spencer is not saying the details are unimportant or that you should not get to them eventually; he is saying you should explore those details only *after* "you have a good sense for what's going on in general."[57] Furthermore, the review's recommendations speak to readers who are diving deep into Isaiah, whereas Spencer is speaking to readers just

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53. See Spencer, *The Vision of All*, 17–23.
54. Parry, "Approach to Isaiah Studies," 256.
55. Ibid., 257.
56. Ibid.
57. Spencer, *The Vision of All*, 35.

getting started — who don't even know what "pericopes," "the Masoretic Text," "1QIsaᵃ," or "morphological values" *are*. Spencer is encouraging people not to get bogged down or give up when they come to tricky passages; he is not encouraging ignorance.

On the Necessity of Knowing Hebrew

The review ends with a lengthy excursus on the value of using biblical Hebrew when analyzing Isaiah. As one who has spent many years studying Hebrew and enjoying the richness it brings to my scripture study, I agree with this basic premise. However, in the context of the larger review of Spencer's book, I see three problems with the excursus.

First, I believe the excursus is overly dismissive of Spencer's qualifications to write about Isaiah. Spencer is disparaged for "lack[ing], or fail[ing] to communicate, an understanding of biblical Hebrew" and for instead "rel[ying] on English translations."[58]

The excursus goes on to declare that "there are not many excuses for biblical scholars — especially in this age of disposable time and computerized resources — for not learning and using biblical Hebrew"[59] and states that "not one specialized journal of the Hebrew Bible or Dead Sea Scrolls would generally consider publishing an article by someone who lacks sufficient knowledge of biblical Hebrew."[60] The review is speaking more broadly to biblical scholars, but why do so here in this particular book review? Spencer is not a biblical scholar, and he is open about that in his book ("I'm not an expert in ancient texts and languages").[61] The publisher for this book is not a "specialized journal of the Hebrew Bible," nor is Spencer's audience other academics. It seems strange to criticize a book on apples for not meeting the requirements of academic journals on oranges.

All of this raises some larger questions, in particular, *should* anyone who does not possess "advanced knowledge of biblical Hebrew"[62] be allowed to say anything about Isaiah?

If we assume for the sake of argument that people without such skills *should* be allowed a place at the table, the best things they could do to make up for their lack of language skills would be to read the Bible

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58. Parry, "Approach to Isaiah Studies," 262.
59. Ibid., 263.
60. Ibid.
61. Spencer, *The Vision of All*, 98.
62. Parry, "Approach to Isaiah Studies," 258, 263.

in multiple translations, read commentaries by scholars who do know Hebrew, compare biblical texts with Restoration scripture, and seek help from the Holy Ghost to discern meaning.[63] And for his part, Spencer does his homework. Even as he himself recognizes that advanced Hebrew proficiency would be the ideal,[64] he takes all of the necessary "next best" steps such as reading commentaries and comparing translations. That explains why, for someone who doesn't know Hebrew, he seems to discuss the meaning of Hebrew words and sentences quite regularly.[65]

So, unless we are going to take the extreme position that *only* people with advanced Hebrew be permitted to speak on Isaiah, I think we need to acknowledge that Spencer did do his best to responsibly incorporate the Hebrew insights of specialists. This is not to say that Spencer's work would not have benefited had he known Hebrew or that there are no places where Hebrew could be used to critique his arguments.[66] Unfortunately, the review does not engage with any specific arguments but dismisses Spencer categorically.[67]

While most of the individual points in the excursus are accurate descriptions of the value of knowing Hebrew, I think the problem is that the excursus — at least as written, and coming at the end of a review of a book by a non-Hebraist writing to non-specialists — conveys a very exclusionary tone. I'm sure this was not intentional, and had these points been made in another setting they would work better. But as it is, dismissing people for talking about Isaiah when they have *merely*

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63. "In an ideal world, we would follow Joseph Smith's example and develop a strong tradition of studying the Bible in its original languages, but the next best method for getting closer to the original texts is to compare several translations, along with the additional witness of modern scriptures." (Grant Hardy, "The King James Bible and the Future of Missionary Work," *Dialogue* 45, no. 1 [2012]: 5).

64. Spencer, *The Vision of All*, 31.

65. I found examples in Spencer, *The Vision of All*, 27, 29, 161, 162, 172, 175, 180, 186, 187, 188, 190, 194, 199, 205, 209, 211, 221, 222, and 273.

66. For example, Noel B. Reynolds critiques Spencer's uses Hebrew to argue against a particular point Spencer made in another publication (although Reynolds is reconstructing what he believes the Hebrew behind our English translation would have been). (Noel B. Reynolds, "On Doubting Nephi's Break Between 1 and 2 Nephi: A Critique of Joseph Spencer's *An Other Testament: On Typology*," *Interpreter: A Journal of Latter-day Saint Faith and Scholarship* 25, 2017), 85–102.

67. In another irony, the review also demonstrates that it is easy to make unwitting errors when it comes to Hebrew: on page 248, the Tetragrammaton *yhwh* is spelled backwards as *hwhy*. There is no question that the author knows his Hebrew, so this is likely nothing more than a typesetting error.

"relie[d] on English translations of Isaiah's text"[68] sends the impression that only a select few can have anything meaningful to contribute. The tone unintentionally makes the excursus come across as disciplinary boundary maintenance.

The second problem with the excursus is that it overstates the necessity of knowing Hebrew even for average, non-academic readers of Isaiah. While the review admits up front that "biblical Hebrew may not be for everyone" and that "knowledge of biblical Hebrew is less important than … understanding … the doctrinal framework of the Restoration doctrine" and being "open to the promptings of the Holy Ghost,"[69] the tone of much of the rest of the excurses seems to ignore those statements.

Not only does the excursus summarily dismiss Spencer's work as the author, it actually faults Spencer for advising *his non-specialist readers* to compare multiple translations to better understand Isaiah ("Spencer's book … even recommends to readers various modern English translations").[70] The review dismisses every single existing translation of Isaiah, stating, "While these translations are competent, their purposes are different from that of helping modern readers experience even a simulated engagement with the meaning, beauty, and depth of the Hebrew composition."[71]

From my point of view, this is the wrong approach to take. While fully acknowledging the value of knowing biblical Hebrew — I have three degrees in Hebrew Bible — I would imagine that, statistically speaking, the number of members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints who actually read biblical Hebrew is zero. And most people do not have the time, means, talent, and interest in learning to doing so. Rather than shame Spencer's readership of everyday, non-academic Latter-day Saints by calling their ability to read Isaiah less than "even a simulated engagement" with Isaiah's words, we should be encouraging them to do the exact things Spencer advises them to do — read Isaiah in multiple translations and compare the different ways they illuminate Isaiah's meaning.[72]

While encouraging original-language learning to certain people in certain situations is appropriate, we also want to be careful about overly disparaging translations of scriptural texts or suggesting they cannot be meaningfully appreciated unless read in the original tongue. After

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68. Parry, "Approach to Isaiah Studies," 262.
69. Ibid., 258.
70. Ibid., 262.
71. Ibid., 263.
72. Spencer, *The Vision of All*, 31–33; Joshua M. Sears, "Study Bibles: An Introduction for Latter-day Saints," *Religious Educator* 20, no. 3 (2019): 27–57.

all, where would that leave us with the New Testament, which preserves Jesus's Aramaic teachings only in Greek translation? Or with the Book of Mormon, where Mormon's words are accessible only in English?

The third problem with the excursus is that, despite that it appears in a review of Spencer's book, it actually does not tell readers anything specific or helpful about how Hebrew could have improved Spencer's book. Instead, readers are given only this vague summary evaluation:

> Spencer's book lacks, or fails to communicate, an understanding of biblical Hebrew. Rather it relies on English translations of Isaiah's text … A knowledge of biblical Hebrew would have appreciably informed Spencer's topics and writing.[73]

Despite spending pages making the case that Spencer's book suffers from his lack of Hebrew, the excursus offers one and only one specific example: "The front cover of Spencer's book depicts a small Hebrew document — with the Hebrew writing upside down!"[74] The review seems to be saying that Spencer (or perhaps Spencer's publisher) is so laughably inept at Hebrew that he even let a blunder like that make its way onto the cover.

Antonio Balestra's painting of Isaiah *does* show Hebrew text upside down from the perspective of the one viewing the painting, but a closer look reveals that Isaiah is holding a writing instrument and is composing Hebrew on a document lying atop a hard writing surface, and that the top of the document has been slid up and rolled over the top of the writing surface. It's *supposed* to be upside down to the viewer, or it would have been upside down to Isaiah in the painting.[75]

Misunderstanding the painting is a minor issue, but unfortunately it is typical of much of the rest of the review: it spots something wrong on the surface and attacks the perceived problem without taking into account the larger context. If the Hebrew were really upside down — if Spencer really doesn't believe that Jesus is Jehovah, or really opposes modern apostles, or really were out of touch with other Latter-day Saint scholars, or really advocated ignoring the details in Isaiah — then the review's spirited critiques would be appropriate. But as it is, the review misreads Spencer on so many points that the criticisms, however well intentioned, simply miss the mark.

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73. Parry, "Approach to Isaiah Studies," 262–63.

74. Ibid., 263.

75. "Antonio Balestra — Prophet Isaiah," Wikimedia Commons, updated September 22, 2014, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Antonio_Balestra_-_Prophet_Isaiah.jpg.

Spencer's book is not perfect, and his approach may not be for everyone. However, I believe fellow Latter-day Saints would miss out were they to dismiss him simply because his approach is different from theirs. For thousands of years, the book of Isaiah has inspired all kinds of people to repent, to hope, to prophesy, to believe, to dream. The Book of Mormon itself models the fact that Isaiah can speak differently to people. Nephi used Isaiah to point latter-day readers to Christ, who is even now leading His Church in preparation for His long-anticipated return. Jacob likened lines from Isaiah differently than Nephi did, and Nephi included both interpretations in his record. Abinadi used Isaiah to teach his contemporary audience about the Messiah's mortal suffering and death. Christ Himself quoted Isaiah to teach the Nephites about the latter-day gathering of Israel, and He felt free to give multiple interpretations and even multiple versions of the same prophecy. Perhaps Isaiah's ability to be read in such multifaceted richness is one reason Nephi emphasized that Isaiah "pertain[s] to things both temporal *and* spiritual" (1 Nephi 22:3). His words not only accommodate but demand a variety of approaches.

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The Importance of Authorial Intention

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Donald W. Parry

Abstract: *It is important when evaluating the words of others to consider the intention of their writing. It also does not hurt to consider what may go on behind the scenes before an article (or a book review) even reaches a particular readership.*

I recently penned a review of *The Vision of All: Twenty-Five Lectures on Isaiah in Nephi's Record*, a book by Joseph M Spencer.[1] Josh Sears, a colleague of Spencer's, felt compelled to take issue with certain portions of my review.[2] In my own view, and regrettably, Sears has wrenched certain details of my review, in order to take a stand against it and to defend Spencers's book. But rather than respond to Sears's arguments point by point (and continue to drag this discussion out), I will briefly express matters in general terms, specifically by examining the concept of authorial intention.

The concept of authorial intentionality is a topic of great interest as well as controversy.[3] To demonstrate that author intentionality continues to hold significance to biblical scholars, view the following words of the eminent biblical scholar and literary critic, Meir Sternberg:

> As interpreters of the Bible, our only concern is with "embodied" or "objectified" intention; and that forms a different business altogether, about which a wide measure of agreement has always existed. In my own view, such intention fulfills a crucial role, for communication presupposes a speaker who resorts

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1. Donald W. Parry, "An Approach to Isaiah Studies," *Interpreter: A Journal of Latter-day Saint Faith and Scholarship* 34 (2020), 245-64.

2. Joshua M. Sears, "An Other Approach to Isaiah Studies," *Interpreter: A Journal of Latter-day Saint Faith and Scholarship* 37 (2020), 1-20.

3. Clarissa Breu, editor, *Biblical Exegesis without Authorial Intention? Interdisciplinary Approaches to Authorship and Meaning* (Boston: Brill, 2019).

to certain linguistic and structural tools in order to produce certain effects on the addressee; the discourse accordingly supplies a network of clues to the speaker's intention.[4]

To provide an example of authorial intent, consider the opening paragraphs of an article I published in 2010, titled "Hannah in the Presence of the Lord":

> The Hannah pericope features representative characteristics of a narrative: a plot structure with an exposition, a conflict and resolution; a comparison and contrast of characters; and a narrator's evaluative point of view. The narrative is dialogical; the narrator cites the words of Elkanah (1 Samuel 1:8, 23), Hannah (1 Samuel 1:11, 15–16, 18, 22, 26), and Eli (1 Samuel 1:14, 17). The pericope also contains linguistic forms that are characteristic of biblical narratives, such as chronological markers and multiple examples of *waw* conjunctions, articles, and object markers. Similar to other biblical narrators, the narrator of the Hannah story is omniscient. The narrator knows the precise words uttered by Hannah, Elkanah, and Eli, is aware of a particularly personal and private matter — that the Lord shut up Hannah's womb, and the narrator is even cognizant of the thoughts of the characters in his story, for Eli *thought* that Hannah was drunk.
>
> In this narrative, Hannah's character zone is greater than others, including her rival wife Peninnah and the story's male characters, Elkanah, Hannah's husband, Eli the chief priest of the Shiloh cultus, and Samuel, the boy destined to become one of Israel's great prophets. The Hannah story is much more than a birth narrative in which all events are designed to lead up to the hero's birth, for the episodes focus on Hannah, a relatively obscure woman who would rise to fame because of her great faith in Israel's God. The Hannah-centric nature of the narrative is as follows — Hannah's husband, his genealogy and his piety (1 Samuel 1:1, 3); Hannah and the rival wife's introduction (1 Samuel 1:2; Hannah is mentioned first); the priests of the temple (1 Samuel 1:3); Hannah's closed womb (1 Samuel 1:5); Hannah's depression (LXX 1 Samuel 1:6); Hannah's weeping (1 Samuel 1:7);

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4. Meir Sternberg, *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative: Ideological Literature and the Drama of Reading* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), 9.

conflict between Hannah and Peninnah (1 Samuel 1:5–7); Elkanah and Hannah's serious conversation followed by eating and drinking (1 Samuel 1:8–9); Hannah's prayer and vow (1 Samuel 1:10–12); Hannah and Eli's first interaction (1 Samuel 1:13–18); the Lord's remembrance of Hannah and her conception (1 Samuel 1:19–20); Hannah's decision to remain home during Elkanah's second pilgrimage to nurse Samuel (1 Samuel 1:21–24a); Hannah's journey to take Samuel to Shiloh's temple and present him to Eli, fulfilling her vow (1 Samuel 1:24–28a); Hannah's worship (4QSamᵃ 1:28b); and Hannah's Song (1 Samuel 2:1–10).[5]

After reading the title and the opening two paragraphs, the reader should know the intent of my article; however, if the reader misses my intent, the thesis statement sums up the objective of the writing: "The chief goal of this paper is to examine Hannah's relative position in the narrative … "[6]

My primary intent in the review of Spencer's book pertains to the concept that Jesus Christ (who "is the Jehovah of the Old Testament"[7]), was of paramount importance to the prophet Isaiah. In the review I titled one section, "Searching for Jesus Christ in Isaiah's Text."[8] Then I wrote, "First and foremost, I wish to briefly (*briefly*, because this is a book review and not a scholarly article or monograph) make a case for the distinct presence of Jesus Christ in Isaiah's text."[9] Note the use of the superlative expression *first and foremost*. My primary intent, my *authorial intent*, was to demonstrate Jesus in Isaiah's text. In order to establish that intent, I set forth seventeen different categories that establish that Isaiah's book focuses on Jesus Christ. The seventeen include Messianic prophecies, the name *Jehovah*, equivalent designations in the Old and New Testaments, names and titles of God, theophoric names, types and shadows, revelatory speech forms, self-identification declarations, witnesses of Jesus Christ in the New Testament, and much more.

5. Donald W. Parry, "Hannah in the Presence of the Lord," in Archaeology of the Books of Samuel: The Entangling of the Textual and Literary History, ed. by Philippe Hugo and Adrian Schenker. Supplements to Vetus Testamentum [132] (Leiden, NLD: E. J. Brill, 2010), 53-54.

6. Ibid., 54.

7. President Russell M. Nelson, "Prophets, Leadership, and Divine Law," worldwide devotional (speech), Brigham Young University, January 8, 2017, Provo, UT, https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/broadcasts/article/worldwide-devotionals/2017/01/prophets-leadership-and-divine-law?lang=eng.

8. Parry, "An Approach to Isaiah Studies," 246-55.

9. Ibid., 246.

Judging from the positive responses I received concerning the book review — in the form of personal visits and also written communications — *Interpreter's* readers appropriately grasped my intent, the *authorial* intent. A number of the positive responses came from Sears's colleagues in his own department. In sum, the authorial intention (*my* intent), was to urge *Interpreter's* readers to take into account the crucial consideration that Isaiah's text focuses its attention on Jesus Christ. All other items and details in my review took subordinate positions.

Top-Tier Peer Reviews — an Important, Scholarly Method

It may be helpful to some to understand what took place behind the scenes, before my review went to press.

There exist scores of academic articles that establish the considerable benefit of scholarly peer reviews.[10] The field of biblical studies, similar to other disciplines and fields, utilizes open or blind reviews for various types of publications. Premiere biblical (Old and New Testament) journals and established book presses throughout the world utilize various peer-review methods to ensure top-quality publications. In fact, the practice of blind peer reviews is one of the multiple scientific[11] methods scholars utilize to ensure the highest quality writings, and peer reviews have been utilized for more than a century in the field of biblical studies.

Early in my career, I learned that peer reviews serve multiple, significant purposes. I continue to appreciate peer-reviews, open and blind, for my various writings. A recent case in point is my newly published *Exploring the Isaiah Scrolls and Their Textual Variants*.[12] Eight reviewers scrutinized this 500-page manuscript. The review team consisted of Professor Eugene Ulrich (eminent Isaiah scholar),[13] Dr. Jason Driesbach (textual critic), Richard W. Medina (Hebrew philologist), a BYU-employed professional editor, and Dr. Monte Shelley

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10. The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines a peer review as, "the review of commercial, professional, or academic efficiency, competence, etc., by others in the same occupation; an instance of this" or "the process by which an academic journal passes a paper submitted for publication to independent experts for comments on its suitability and worth; refereeing;" s.v. "peer review, n.," https://www.oed.com/view/Entry/139736?rskey=Pgnmi0&result=1#eid.

11. I use "scientific" in the sense of "systematic, methodical, meticulous." *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. "scientific, adj. and n.," https://www.oed.com/view/Entry/172685?rskey=ljFS84&result=1&isAdvanced=false#eid

12. Donald W. Parry, *Exploring the Isaiah Scrolls and Their Textual Variants* (Leiden, NLD: E. J. Brill, 2020).

13. Dr. Ulrich also wrote the forward for the book.

and Jesse Vincent (BYU's WordCruncher team; they ran computerized searches to seek out possible errors in the manuscript). Additionally, the series editor[14] invited two double-blind reviewers to conduct a high-level scrutinization of my manuscript. These two reviewers took almost a year to complete their work. Each of the eight reviewers presented me with a list of suggested changes to the manuscript. One reviewer proposed that I add lexical definitions of approximately 600 Hebrew and Aramaic words (a mammoth task, but I did it). Altogether, the reviewers' criticisms took me approximately a year to work through. Importantly, the reviewers taught me important strategies and procedures I will incorporate in future writings.

Peer-reviewed papers have a worldwide impact, and there are several famous cases where eminent scholars in biblical studies failed the peer-review process, resulting in their papers not being published. I recall one such scholar, from the University of Oxford, whose paper was rejected. Years ago, he visited BYU's campus, and I was privileged to serve as his host. In the course of two days, we had many conversations. During one such conversation he recalled, with some emotion, that one of his papers had been rejected as a result of a double-blind review. But this scholar knew the double-blind review system was a significant scientific method in many disciplines, including biblical studies.

Six Peer Reviews of My Review

Realizing the sensitivity of writing a book review — especially one where I was taking a contrary approach to that of the author — I sought out four peer reviewers. I specifically asked them to scrutinize my review to see if it was fair, accurate, and free from *ad hominem* arguments. All four were BYU colleagues — senior scholars — who collectively have decades of experience in dealing with the academic community, peer- and book reviews, scholarly approaches and methodologies, and more. All four are prominent, experienced, and highly respected in both regional and international spheres. Collectively, the four have written or edited dozens of books and hundreds of articles. They know how to read and understand texts and how to write scholarly items. They also comprehend the concept of authorial intention — my intent. In short, they know the academy. Two additional peer reviews — the fifth and sixth — were double-blind, one from the College of Religious Education and one from *Interpreter*. (In order to protect their high quality and standards of excellence, *Interpreter*

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14. The book was published as part of Brill's *Supplements to the Textual History of the Bible* series.

engages their own peer reviewers.) Long established protocol, of course, requires the anonymity of the reviewers.

All six saw the book review as positive toward both Spencer and me. The review was designed to help Spencer, not hinder, as he moved forward on his career path. No one thought the review was a personal attack on Spencer or his discipular status in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. None of the reviewers held that I had taken Spencer's words out of context or that my review had hidden messages implicational of Spencer's character or lack of scholarship.

Two of the six reviewers are professors of the College of Religious Education. One was the aforementioned double-blind reviewer, and the other one is prominent in both regional, national, and international circles. This reviewer carefully examined my review and then concluded that it was fair, had a proper tone, and that it would be "good" for Spencer and his career. This prominent professor was interested — in positive and constructive ways — in Spencer's career path.

I share these items with *Interpreter*'s readers to demonstrate that I did my utmost to ensure my review was totally fair and impartial to Spencer. In fact, I went beyond the mark — many authors seek out one or two peer reviewers, but I had six expert reviewers scrutinize my paper. All six gave the go-ahead. This should put to rest any doubt that I had an improper purpose in reviewing Spencer's book.

In addition to the six reviewers, I sought out and received a careful review by a professional, experienced English editor — she is employed by BYU and does superior work. I have utilized her skills and experience on a number of occasions for my books and articles. She is very careful to keep me on task, especially when I do not properly articulate my words. As she edits my writings, she makes comments, such as "did you mean to say that?"; "I wonder if you would consider recasting this sentence, because it does not state what you probably think that it states"; "you have nuanced such and such, which is incorrect; please rewrite this sentence," and so on. I mention her edits because she did not find anything out of order in my review — nothing out of context, no unfair words or expressions, and no *ad hominem* arguments.

Authorial Intentionality Revisited

I cannot second-guess why Sears misreads my intent in my review of Spencer's work, but it seems clear that he did so. Not only did he misread my intent but, in my view, he also incorrectly parsed my words. The six reviewers did not misread my intent nor wrongly analyze my words

— neither did the professional editor. I maintain that Sears would have taken a different stance had he known about these behind-the-scenes proceedings, especially had he known that two of his own colleagues reviewed my review before it went to press. And there were other behind-the-scenes happenings that would give both Spencer and Sears quietness of mind and peace of heart regarding the book review.

I recognize that my review was not flawless. I also readily acknowledge that none of my writings are error-free. With this in mind, I thank Sears for pointing out that the upside-down Hebrew image (on the front cover of Spencer's book) is supposed to be that way — upside down. While the comment in my review was parenthetical and I acknowledged that the upside down Hebrew was "likely the publisher's doing, and not Spencer's,"[15] I acknowledge my error and I apologize to both Spencer and to his publisher for my mistake.

In no uncertain terms, I hereby state that I would never put hidden messages in a writing that undervalues other individuals or their scholarship. That does not mean, however, that an individual and I have to agree on certain points or issues. My review did not include hidden codes or implicational words or phrases designed to denigrate the author or his book. The review does *not* contain *ad hominem* (including *argumentum*, circumstantial, guilt by association, or *tu quoque*) arguments. There are also *no statements* in the form of implication, insinuation, or innuendo. Absolutely none.

Furthermore, with regard to contextomy (quoting out of context), I took nothing out of context from *The Vision of All*. Anyone who makes that claim is tugging at my words. I also refer readers to my own track record of researching, writing, and publishing peer-reviewed books and articles for more than two and a half decades. During these many years, no one has ever claimed I have misquoted someone or taken words out of context.

Finally, what is the authorial intention of the Excursus, which closes the review? The intent is to invite *scholars who teach the Old Testament* to learn Biblical Hebrew. Note my words (in the Excursus):

> It would be fitting, in my view, for scholars interested in teaching the Old Testament (through classroom instruction or via published writings) to expand their scholarly competence by learning Biblical Hebrew.[16]

In this sentence, I am addressing "scholars" and *not* laypersons. I refer to "*scholarly* competence," not a non-specialist's competence. And I do not

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15. Parry, "An Approach to Isaiah Studies," 263.
16. Ibid.

address all scholars, only those "interested in teaching the Old Testament." I, therefore, do *not* refer to non-biblical scholars. Later in the same paragraph I refer to "biblical scholars" again. Clearly, the Excursus is addressed to *biblical scholars* and no one else.

Furthermore, I write concerning the "Hebrew witnesses of Isaiah," "scholarly publications," "specialized journal[s] of the Hebrew Bible or Dead Sea Scrolls," and more. These are expressions addressed to scholars and their scholarship, not to laypersons. Anyone who suggests that I am proposing that laypersons or non-biblical scholars learn biblical Hebrew is misinterpreting my words. Thankfully, the peer reviewers did not misconstrue my authorial intention with regard to the Excursus.

In sum, perhaps we would all do well to move forward and, throughout our lives, read, reread, and read again Isaiah's words. Let us all remember that Isaiah's words inspire us to rejoice and to lift up our hearts. As Nephi wrote, "And now I write some of the words of Isaiah, that whoso of my people shall see these words may lift up their hearts and rejoice for all men" (2 Nephi 11:8).

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How Not to Read Isaiah

John Gee

Abstract: *In the Book of Mormon, Nephi draws upon his own knowledge of the Jewish people, their culture and language, and the surrounding area to add to his understanding of Isaiah's words, and commends that approach to his reader. In his book* The Vision of All, *it is clear that Joseph Spencer lacks knowledge in these topics, and it negatively affects his interpretation of Isaiah. Specifically, this lack of knowledge causes him to misinterpret the role of the Messiah in Isaiah's teachings, something that was clear to Isaiah's ancient readers.*

Review of Joseph M. Spencer, *The Vision of All: Twenty-five Lectures on Isaiah in Nephi's Record* (Salt Lake City: Greg Kofford Books, 2016). 318 pages. $59.95 (hardback); $29.95 paperback.

Recently, Don Parry reviewed Joseph Spencer's book on Isaiah[1] in what, to this observer, was a kindly and understated but also critical way, pointing out particularly Spencer's inability to read Hebrew.[2] Years ago James Faulconer, Spencer's undergraduate mentor, had a rule that he would not allow his students to write commentary on a book of scripture unless they controlled the original language of the text. This is a laudable ideal and obviously has much to recommend it. While knowledge of Hebrew is not a prerequisite to study Isaiah, it is very helpful — not least for avoiding serious errors — if one wishes to write about Isaiah as a scholar.

Parry's review deserves some additional comment because, if anything, Parry was not critical enough. Toward that end, in this review I will add to the conversation by focusing on just one chapter in Spencer's book.

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1. Joseph M. Spencer, *The Vision of All: Twenty-five Lectures on Isaiah in Nephi's Record* (Salt Lake City: Greg Kofford Books, 2016).

2. Donald W. Parry, "An Approach to Isaiah Studies," Interpreter: A Journal of Latter-day Saint Faith and Scholarship 34 (2020): 245-64.

The Things of the Jews

Not only is Hebrew highly desirable as preparation for writing about Isaiah, but the Book of Mormon points out other prerequisites to understanding Isaiah. It is worth reviewing these, particularly since Spencer seeks to focus on Isaiah in Nephi's record.[3]

Nephi instructs his readers, "the Jews do understand the things of the prophets, and there is none other people that understand the things which were spoken unto the Jews like unto them, save it be that they are taught after the manner of the things of the Jews" (2 Nephi 25:5). Therefore, someone who wishes to follow Nephi's method ideally needs to know the things of the ancient Jews, like their language (through philology), their script, their culture, their history, their material culture (through archaeology), their poetry, and their rhetorical patterns. In short, one needs to be "taught somewhat in all the learning of [Nephi's] father" (1 Nephi 1:1).

Nephi also notes that he knows "concerning the regions round about" (2 Nephi 25:6). From Nephi's own words it can be extrapolated that one also needs to be familiar with the cultures surrounding the lands of the Jews. Isaiah provides two lists of these. One is the major sections with prophecies against major nations. The other is the list: "from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea" (Isaiah 11:11).

Meeting these requirements requires a great deal of effort, more than most people want to invest. Still, even if no living mortal can reproduce "the manner of the things of the Jews" from Nephi's day, the closer we try to match that, the better our chances of understanding Isaiah properly and Nephi's use of Isaiah specifically.

Nephi provides another way to understand Isaiah: "The words of Isaiah are not plain unto you, nevertheless they are plain unto all those that are filled with the spirit of prophecy" (2 Nephi 25:4). The Holy Ghost can teach an individual things that are unavailable through scholarship, "for the Spirit speaketh the truth and lieth not. Wherefore, it speaketh of things as they really are, and of things as they really will be; wherefore, these things are manifested unto us plainly, for the salvation of our souls" (Jacob 4:13). But there is a rub — revelation that we receive has to be within the sphere of our stewardship. The only ones who can speak their revelation for the whole Church are those who have been "ordained

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3. This is made clear in the subtitle of Spencer's book: *Twenty-five Lectures on Isaiah in Nephi's Record.*

by some one who has authority, and it is known to the church that he has authority and has been regularly ordained by the heads of the church" (Doctrine and Covenants 42:11).

Scholarship and Revelation

Nephi obviously recognized that there were two ways to understand the words of Isaiah — what we would call scholarship and revelation. In our modern world there is often a curious tension between these two approaches. As Hugh Nibley once said, "The prophet recognizes the scholar for what he is, but the scholar does not return the compliment. He cannot conceive how anyone could possibly acquire knowledge by any method other than his. He cannot believe that any man has experienced anything which he has not experienced."[4] This would explain repeated efforts by historians who know no language but English to redefine Joseph Smith's translations into anything other than the process of making "a version from one language or form of words into another."[5]

It should go without saying that neither I nor Spencer nor Parry nor any other similar commenter on Isaiah has been ordained or sustained to any position of prophetic authority for the Church. Therefore, the only authority that any of us can claim to possess must derive from the quality of our scholarship. This is precisely where I have concerns about Spencer's book, and I will shortly outline some reasons for these concerns.

Over half a century ago, Hugh Nibley addressed the issue of the authority of scholars by saying that they should be respected "for that knowledge and proficiency which they have demonstrated to the world" otherwise "they invite legitimate censure"[6] since they "parade as scholars without being scholars."[7] He further warned scholars associated with the Latter-day Saint community against being "like a man setting out to explore a wonderful cavern without bothering to equip himself with either lights or ropes."[8] As an antidote, Nibley recommended returning "to the program of the School of the Prophets and the University of Nauvoo, which was the acquisition of basic knowledge (especially languages)

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4. Hugh Nibley, *The World and the Prophets* (Provo, UT: The Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, 1987), 31.
5. Oxford English Dictionary, s.v. *translate*.
6. Hugh Nibley, "Nobody to Blame," in Hugh Nibley, *Eloquent Witness* (Provo, UT: Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship, 2008), 138.
7. Ibid., 136.
8. Ibid., 138.

for the avowed purpose of aiding the spreading of the gospel."[9] This is because "all knowledge of the past — historical, philosophical, literary, religious, etc. — comes to us through written texts which … *cannot* be critically examined or understood in translation."[10]

Spencer's Approach

Here I will deal only with Isaiah chapters 7–12 and with Spencer's treatment of them. The prophecy in these chapters was given on the occasion of a plot by the kings of Samaria and Damascus to conquer Judah and replace its king Ahaz with their own tribute-paying puppet. Anyone familiar with the histories of the various kingdoms of the period will recognize this as an oft-repeated scenario and that no nation did it more successfully than the Assyrians. To us it may seem hackneyed, but back then it was a high-stakes game with many losers. Isaiah's message to Ahaz was that things would go well in the short term and even better in the long term, which they did.

Of chapters 6 through 12 in Isaiah, Spencer asserts that "we've got to look at them carefully."[11] He claims that we need "to read the passage in context,"[12] that is, in "both textual and historical" context.[13] Spencer thinks that there is much to be gained by reading these chapters through the lens of secular scholars because "biblical scholars make arguments for their conclusions, and their arguments about the relatively un-Christian scope of much of the Hebrew Bible are generally good ones."[14]

Spencer accepts the line of reasoning of many biblical scholars and claims that "before any one scholar can make a contribution to the question of the messianic here, she first has to establish what she takes to be the basic textual history of these chapters, and that will always be a rather controversial position."[15] Spencer then attributes the position of modern scholars to the ancient inhabitants of Jerusalem: "Nephi reads certain parts of Isaiah messianically even as he recognizes that his predecessors may seldom, if ever, have been able to do that."[16] He provides no evidence for this assertion.

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9. Ibid.
10. Ibid., 132.
11. Spencer, *The Vision of All*, 203.
12. Ibid., 210.
13. Ibid., 209.
14. Ibid., 204.
15. Ibid., 207.
16. Ibid., 207-8.

A close reading of a text should be careful about the assumptions it makes, particularly about importing assumptions at odds with the text. Spencer asserts that the reader is "free to see in Isaiah 6-12 *two* rival interpretations of the text — one non-messianic (or at least not messianic in any strong sense), and one messianic (in a strong sense)."[17] Of these two rival interpretations, Spencer recognizes the latter but seems to lean toward the non-messianic: "There's very little reason for seeing Isaiah's prophetic sign as referring to Jesus."[18] "It makes little sense in context to understand it as a reference to Jesus. How would the birth of Jesus, seven and a half centuries away, serve as a sign to Ahaz regarding the imminent demise of his enemies?"[19] Spencer ignores the fact that even if one assumes the prophecy referred to Jesus, it would still be true. He claims that "we're *far* too quick to find Jesus in Isaiah, privileging traditionally messianic passages over everything else because we think we can see Christian themes in the prophet."[20]

Spencer asserts that Isaiah 9 is "already closer to the question of the messianic," but only in the sense that "what's predicted here is a Davidic king who will finally get some things right."[21] On the other hand,

> If we think the prediction of any decent Davidic king amounts to a messianic prophecy, then we've got a messianic prophecy here. If we think messianic prophecy must include something bigger than that — an anticipation of a figure who will bring history to a kind of end, suspend the law in fulfilled righteousness, and usher in an era of unending peace — then we're arguably not yet dealing with a messianic prophecy.[22]

To Spencer "it seems pretty clear that Isaiah's prophecy here is focused primarily on Ahaz's son Hezekiah. … It seems pretty clear that he's got Hezekiah in mind."[23]

A Major Historical Mistake

Despite Spencer's admonition that Isaiah 6–12 needs to be read in context, the reading he presents is neither close nor careful. In fact, it is an impossible reading. To understand why, we need to look more

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17. Ibid., 208.
18. Ibid., 209.
19. Ibid.
20. Ibid., 214.
21. Ibid., 210.
22. Ibid., 210-11.
23. Ibid., 211.

carefully at the historical context that Spencer commends to us. We can do so by noting two overlooked passages. The first of these is in 2 Kings:

> Now it came to pass in the third year of Hoshea son of Elah king of Israel, that Hezekiah the son of Ahaz king of Judah began to reign. Twenty and five years old was he when he began to reign; and he reigned twenty and nine years in Jerusalem. His mother's name also was Abi, the daughter of Zachariah. (2 Kings 18:1–2)

The second passage is slightly earlier in 2 Kings:

> Ahaz … reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem, and did not that which was right in the sight of the Lord his God, like David his father. (2 Kings 16:2)

If Ahaz ruled for sixteen years and his son Hezekiah took over at the age of twenty-five, then Hezekiah was born before Ahaz began to rule, before he was king. So when Isaiah prophesied to Ahaz, while he was king, about the birth of a child, if there is one person the prophecy cannot be about, it is Hezekiah. With that, Spencer's entire case for Isaiah 6–12 being about Hezekiah collapses; his reading of Isaiah as prophesying about Hezekiah makes no sense in the historical context.

There are clearly aspects of the historical context that we do not fully understand, such as what Ahaz may have thought the sign meant and how it may have been meant to persuade him. At the very least Ahaz would have known that he needed at least nine months plus however long it took a child to "know to refuse the evil, and choose the good" (Isaiah 7:16) before he could expect the threat to be completely removed. Yet, since Ahaz's son Hezekiah was past that point, Ahaz would not have been expecting the prophecy to refer to Hezekiah, and neither would have Isaiah.

Ignoring Hebrew Again

Of course, Spencer brings in other arguments against understanding the chapters as referring to a Messiah. He argues that the translation "the mighty God" in Isaiah 9:6 is in error. He prefers "Hero Warrior" or "one Mighty in Valor."[24] This enables him to claim that "Isaiah may not exactly have meant to indicate that anyone about to be enthroned was fully divine."[25] The problem is that without having examined the original Hebrew himself, Spencer is left at a disadvantage, with no option

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24. Ibid.
25. Ibid.

but to uncritically accept other translations as accurate. But because "we believe the Bible to be the word of God as far as it is translated correctly" (Articles of Faith 1:8), Latter-day Saints do not need to accept bad translations. In this case the King James version is superior to the more recent translations cited by Spencer. The Hebrew term in question is ʾēl gibbôr. However one chooses to translate *gibbôr* (strong, mighty, etc.), the term ʾēl does not mean *hero*, or *one mighty*, but *God*.

Still, we should look at how Isaiah uses the term. This is the textual context that Spencer says is critical. According to Isaiah, the Egyptians are men and not ʾēl (Isaiah 31:3). Men make an ʾēl when they make a graven image (Isaiah 44:17; 46:6), and they pray to that ʾēl (Isaiah 45:20). The stars belong to ʾēl (Isaiah 14:13). The Lord says: "I am ʾēl, and there is no other" (Isaiah 45:22; 46:9; 43:12). Isaiah also points out that ʾēl is "holy and will be sanctified in righteousness" (Isaiah 5:16). And, of course, "thus saith YHWH, the ʾēl" (Isaiah 42:5). Isaiah never uses the term ʾēl to mean something that is not claimed to be divine. Spencer has made an assertion completely backwards precisely because he did not and cannot look at the Hebrew and, as a result, completely ignored the textual context.

Another error relating to Hebrew is Spencer's allegation that "the Hebrew word translated as 'virgin' doesn't, strictly speaking, mean 'virgin'; it means 'young woman.'"[26] Here again, though, a close examination of that Hebrew word weakens his claim. The term used in Isaiah 7:14, ʿalmāh, is a lesser used, more poetic synonym for a young woman or virgin. The term is also used in the meaning *virgin* in Proverbs 30:19 (translated in the King James Version as "maid"), as also is arguably the case in Genesis 24:43. In all uses of the term, and especially given the cultural context of the Hebrew Bible, the notion of *virgin* is in the very least implied.

Finally, let's consider another place where a familiarity with Hebrew would have helped Spencer better understand the textual context of the passage he is attempting to explain. Spencer claims that reading the messianic prophecies in Isaiah has "been put on hold" because a scholar "has to establish what she takes to be the basic textual history of these chapters."[27] This proposal assumes — without argument or perhaps much critical reflection — that the text of this portion of Isaiah has been put together from various authors who wrote at different times, sometimes significantly later than Isaiah, many after Lehi left Jerusalem. Isaiah 7–12 has a number of leitmotifs that unify the composition, but

26. Ibid., 209.
27. Ibid., 207.

these are obliterated in the translation. Isaiah actually draws attention to the leitmotifs when he says (following the King James version): "Behold, I and the children whom the Lord hath given me are for signs and for wonders in Israel from the Lord of hosts" (Isaiah 8:18). Throughout Isaiah 7–12 there are word plays and references to Isaiah and the various children named in the passage. Let us consider each of these in turn.

We will start with Isaiah himself. The name *Yešaʿyāhû* means "the Lord (*Yāhû*) will save." Its spelling (*yšʿyhw*) is close to the spelling for the term for *salvation* (*yšwʿh*). The name appears at the beginning of the section (Isaiah 7:3) while the latter term appears three times at the end of the section (Isaiah 12:2–3), forming an *inclusio* for the entire passage.[28]

Isaiah is instructed to bring his son, Shear-jashub, with him (Isaiah 7:3) The name *Šeʾāryāšûb* can be translated either "the remnant shall return" or "the rest will repent." There are direct uses of the name elsewhere in the passage (Isaiah 10:20; 21, 22) as well as word plays on this name throughout the passage (Isaiah 9:11, 12, 16, 20; 10:4, 19; 11:11, 16; 12:1).

The next person mentioned is the prophesied child, Immanuel, whose name in Hebrew (*ʿimmānûʾēl*) means "God is with us." This name is repeated three times in the prophecy (Isaiah 7:14; 8:8, 10). In the King James Bible it is transliterated two times and translated once.

Finally, we have the child with the extremely long name, Maher-shalal-hash-baz (Isaiah 8:1, 3). The name *Mahēršālālḥāšbaz* means "the pillaging hastens, the plundering hurries." Though the name is not repeated with another meaning, there are word plays referencing the name throughout the section (Isaiah 8:4; 9:2; 10:2, 6).

These sections also have a number of repeated units that follow a particular form (Isaiah 9:8-12; 9:13-17; 9:18-21; 10:1-4):[29]

    a- Crime

        b- Punishment

            c- Epistrophe[30] or catchphrase: "For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still." (Isaiah 9:12, 17, 21; 10:4).

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28. See Jerome T. Walsh, *Style and Structure in Biblical Hebrew Narrative* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 2001), 57-69, 73-75.

29. This is identified as complex inclusion in Walsh, *Style and Structure in Biblical Hebrew Narrative*, 74.

30. See John Gee, "Rhetorical Devices in Ancient Egyptian Texts," *Journal of the Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities* 45 (2018-2019): 68; Waltraud Guglielmi, "Der Gebrauch rhetorischer Stilmittel in der ägyptischen Literatur," in *Ancient Egyptian Literature: History and Forms*, ed. Antonio Loprieno (Leiden, NDL: E. J. Brill, 1996), 471.

Note that the leitmotifs are used in the repeated units. These leitmotifs pervade and unify the passage into a rhetorical whole. Editorial insertions tend to destroy rhetorical devices and structure.[31] Hypothesizing the textual history destroys the structural cohesion of the text, and should thus prompt Spencer to question the assumption that these passages are a late conglomerate of sources. His unfamiliarity with the base language renders such evidence opaque to him, and thus to his audience. He might appeal to other evidence to support his assumption that the text is the result of many layers of redaction, but he has not done so, save via the appeal to authority. Being unable to critique those authorities on their own ground, he is unfortunately not able to weigh their evidences for himself.

Looking Forward to the Messiah

Let's return to Spencer's contention that "there's no full-blooded scholarly consensus on whether Isaiah 6–12 contains messianic prophecies."[32] This puts the emphasis on the scholarly consensus, which is the wrong place on which to focus, especially if Spencer is unable to weigh the merits of the various scholarly voices because he is not able to analyze the original language about which those voices speak.

Furthermore, there is little (if any) scholarly consensus on anything in biblical studies. But Spencer goes further and asserts that "if there *is* consensus about anything regarding the messianic in Isaiah 6–12, it's that *this* text isn't messianic."[33] He is demonstrably wrong.

Targum Jonathan is the name currently given to a Jewish translation of the Hebrew Bible into Aramaic that reached its final form in the late second or early third century A.D.[34] Despite the final date of its composition, it contains a number of elements that go back to earlier times. (We do not necessarily know how much earlier in any given case.) The attribution of the Targum to Jonathan is a misattribution; it was originally known as Targum Jerusalem and it contains interpretations that circulated around the area of Jerusalem and Galilee.[35] The translation is mostly literal but it is also idiomatic and cultural, giving the sense and understanding of the reading (Nehemiah 8:8). Targum Jonathan for Isaiah 7–12 contains four

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31. Compare Walsh, *Style and Structure in Biblical Hebrew Narrative*, 70-71.
32. Spencer, *The Vision of All*, 204.
33. Ibid., 209.
34. Paul V. M. Flesher and Bruce Chilton, *The Targums: A Critical Introduction* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2011), 81-82.
35. Ibid., 132-39.

direct references to the Messiah, demonstrating that ancient Jews took this entire prophecy to be messianic.

The first of these is the famous passage that reads, in the King James version: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace" (Isaiah 9:6).[36] In the Targum Jonathan it reads (in my unpoetic translation): "The prophet said to the house of David: Behold, a boy will be born to us, a son will be given to us. He has covenanted to keep the Law. His name has been called from the beginning: the miracle worker, counsel, the mighty God who lives forever, the Messiah in whose days peace will increase upon us."[37] Ancient Jews explicitly understood this passage as a messianic prophecy.

The second reference to the Messiah comes in the next chapter. The King James has the somewhat enigmatic: "And it shall come to pass in that day, that his burden shall be taken away from off thy shoulder, and his yoke from off thy neck, and the yoke shall be destroyed because of the anointing" (Isaiah 10:27). The Targum Jonathan here has: "And it shall come to pass at that time, his dominion shall be removed from you, and his yoke from off your neck, and the nations will become desolate before the Messiah."[38]

The third reference is in the following chapter. In the King James translation this appears as: "And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots" (Isaiah 11:1). Targum Jonathan is more explicit: "And the king will proceed from the sons of Jesse, and the Messiah will be anointed from his descendants."[39]

Finally, a few verses later where the King James translation has: "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them" (Isaiah 11:6), Targum Jonathan has: "In the days of the Messiah of Israel peace will increase in the earth and the wolf shall stable with the lamb; and the tiger will dwell with the kid; and the calf and the lion and the fatling together and the suckling child shall lead them."[40] Once again, ancient Jews explicitly understood this text to be messianic. This interpretation was not imposed by Christians

36. The Hebrew versification differs at this point, so in Hebrew this is Isaiah 9:5.

37. Targum Jonathan Isaiah 9:5, in Alexander Sperber, *The Bible in Aramaic: Based on Old Manuscripts and Printed Texts* (Leiden, NDL: E. J. Brill, 2004), 1:530.

38. Targum Jonathan Isaiah 10:27, in Sperber, *The Bible in Aramaic*, 1:526.

39. Targum Jonathan Isaiah 11:1, in Sperber, *The Bible in Aramaic*, 1:524.

40. Targum Jonathan Isaiah 11:6, in Sperber, *The Bible in Aramaic*, 1:523.

reading something back into the text that was not originally there — and indeed we must remember that the earliest Christians were all Jews, and did not invent entirely foreign or novel ways of seeing their sacred texts. Although we may not know how far back these messianic understandings go, they are ancient and Jewish, not modern and Christian.

Spencer confuses the matter by claiming that a "messianic prophecy would be prophecy that anticipates *a* messiah, however that messiah figure is understood."[41] In the Targum Jonathan of these passages, however, the term *Messiah* is always accompanied by the definite article. These are not references to a generic deliverer, but a singular, specific Messiah.

Conclusions

Spencer thinks that Latter-day Saints are "*far* too quick to find Jesus in Isaiah"[42] and urges his readers to "*stop looking for Jesus in Isaiah*."[43] This is a very odd attitude to take in a book that claims to want "to read Isaiah like Nephi."[44] Nephi, on the other hand, claims that Isaiah "verily saw my Redeemer, even as I have seen him" (2 Nephi 11:2). Nephi says, "that I might more fully persuade [my brethren] to believe in the Lord their Redeemer I did read unto them that which was written by the prophet Isaiah" (1 Nephi 19:23). According to Nephi, "according to the words of the prophets, the Messiah cometh in six hundred years from the time that my father left Jerusalem; and according to the words of the prophets, and also the word of the angel of God, his name shall be Jesus Christ, the Son of God" (2 Nephi 25:19). According to its title page, the whole point of the Book of Mormon is to convince people "that Jesus is the Christ, the Eternal God." To stop looking for Jesus in Isaiah is to read Isaiah contrary to the way that Nephi read him, and contrary to his purpose in including these texts in his record.

By training, Joseph Spencer is a philosopher, not a philologist. With *The Vision of All* he has ventured into territory where at least some philological expertise would have been very helpful. James Faulconer's rule about the value of knowing the original language of a text when writing a commentary on it remains wise counsel. One should feel free to explore the cave, but one ought to take a light.

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41. Spencer, *The Vision of All*, 204.
42. Ibid., 214.
43. Ibid., 33.
44. Ibid., ix.

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Cube, Gate, and Measuring Tools: A Biblical Pattern

Matthew B. Brown

Abstract: *This article explores the biblical pattern that relates the temple-related symbols of the cube, the gate, and measuring tools. The tools of architecture and measurement were associated with the kingship motifs of creation and conquering chaos, and on the day when a person was initiated as a king in ancient Israel, all of these concepts were applied to him.*

[**Editor's Note:** Part of our book chapter reprint series, this article is reprinted here as a service to the LDS community. Original pagination and page numbers have necessarily changed, otherwise the reprint has the same content as the original.

See Matthew B. Brown, "Cube, Gate, and Measuring Tools: A Biblical Pattern," in *Ancient Temple Worship: Proceedings of The Expound Symposium 14 May 2011,* ed. Matthew B. Brown, Jeffrey M. Bradshaw, Stephen D. Ricks, and John S. Thompson (Orem, UT: The Interpreter Foundation; Salt Lake City: Eborn Books, 2014), 1–26. Further information at https://interpreterfoundation.org/books/ancient-temple-worship/.]

The purpose of this paper[1] is to draw attention to several sets of matching themes which are found in descriptions of the ancient Israelite temple and portions of the apocalypse written by the apostle John. The information associated with these sets can be applied to the task of interpreting the respective texts where they are found and they can also be used to demonstrate a surprising way whereby the covenant people of the Old and New Testaments were interconnected.

The first point of comparison in the aforementioned matching sets has to do with the most sacred area in the Israelite temple known as the Holy of

Holies. The perfectly cubical shape of this room was revealed in a vision to the prophet Moses while he met with the Lord on Mount Sinai (Exodus 25:8–9). Long after Moses incorporated this room into the Tabernacle it was replicated on a larger scale inside of Solomon's Temple (1 Kings 6:20). Four pillars were placed on the east side of the Holy of Holies of the Tabernacle (Exodus 26:32–33), which logically would have created three narrow gateways that provided access to the room (see Figure 1).

A veil was stretched across these pillars and cherubim, or angelic guards, were embroidered on the veil (Exodus 26:31–32; cf. Genesis 3:24). The exact number of cherubim embroidered on the veil is not stated in any Old Testament text, but, as seen in Figure 2, there may have been been only three: one per gateway. The main reason this idea should be taken into serious consideration is the fact that once it is accepted, a matching pattern then emerges in the last volume of the New Testament.

In chapter 21 of the book of Revelation, the apostle John is shown the heavenly city of New Jerusalem, and he sees that it is shaped like a perfect cube. He also sees that it has three gates on each of its four sides, and one angel is standing guard at each of the gates (vv. 12, 16).

It can be determined with a degree of certainty that the heavenly New Jerusalem and the earthly Holy of Holies were parallel objects because of an important object that each of them contained. The Ark of the Covenant sat in the Holy of Holies of the earthly temple. There are a number of Bible scholars who believe that the Ark of the Covenant was a representation of God's throne[2] — which means that the Holy of Holies would have symbolically represented the throne room of the Heavenly King. When John the Revelator entered into the heavenly New
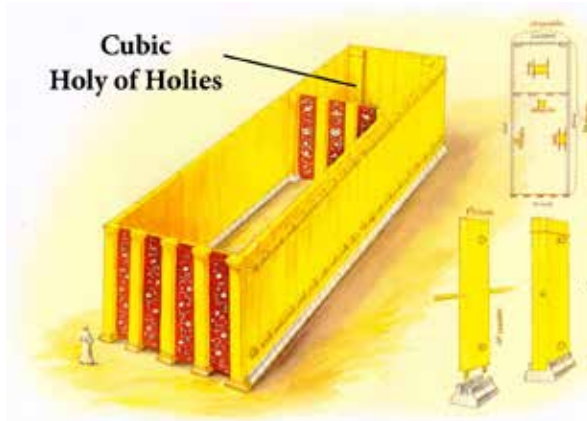
**Figure 1: The Holy Place and the Holy of Holies
of the Tabernacle**
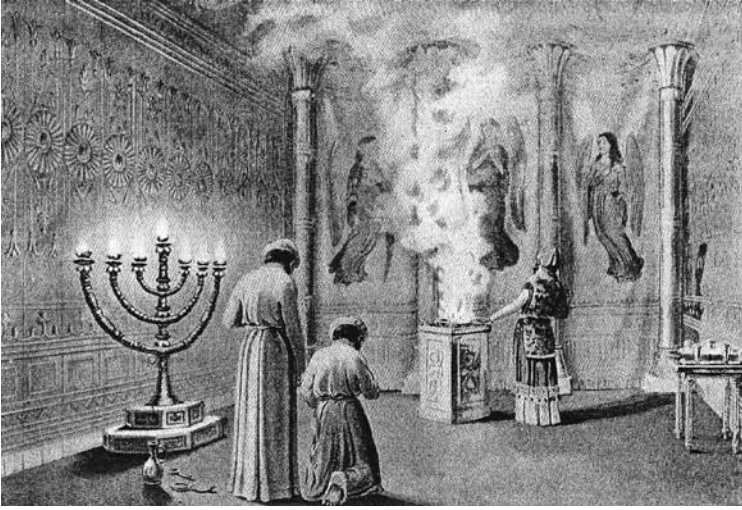
Figure 2: Interior of the Holy Place.

Jerusalem, he saw that the throne of God was there (Revelation 22:3). This explains why John said that he saw no temple inside of the heavenly New Jerusalem (Revelation 21:22). He was standing inside the Holy of Holies of the heavenly temple.

Figure 3 contains notations which are relevant to the discussion at hand. Psalm 29:10 in the King James Bible reads this way: "The LORD sitteth upon the flood; yea, the Lord sitteth King for ever." This is another way of saying that the throne of God was considered to be stationed over a body of water. In the mythology of ancient Israel (and several other regions of the ancient Near East), it was taught that at the time of creation
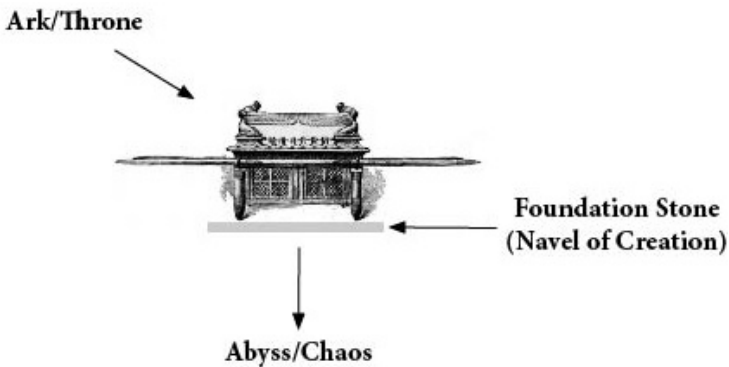
**Figure 3: "The Lord sitteth upon the flood;
yea, the Lord sitteth King for ever" (Psalm 29:10)**

God conquered chaos — or the chaos monster — which was signified by the boisterous waves of the sea. At one point in time, there was a symbolic rock placed directly in front of the Ark of the Covenant in the Holy of Holies called the "Foundation Stone." This rock represented the first portion of earth which arose from the sea at the time of creation. It was, therefore, considered to be the center, or navel, of creation, and the Israelites believed that it served as a sort of capstone over the chaotic sea.[3] These ideas will play a role in the discussion which follows.

In Figure 4 there are two more references to the book of Psalms. If it is accepted that the Ark of the Covenant represented God's throne, then these verses from Psalm 9 and Psalm 96 take on added meaning. They say, essentially, that there are specific attributes associated with God's throne or His kingship. These attributes are listed in the King James Version of the Bible as righteousness, truth, and uprightness. By extension, these throne attributes are connected with the Holy of Holies or throne room.

This is very significant since there are several Psalms which have been identified as temple entrance liturgies, and one of them (Psalm 15) names the very same throne attributes as requirements for entering through the temple's veiled gateway.[4] What is even more interesting, however, is that if the content of Revelation chapter 21 is considered in this light, it can been seen that the same temple entrance requirements are listed for the heavenly New Jerusalem — they are just named in a slightly different way than in Psalm 15:

> Psalm 15:1-2: Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? .… He that walketh *uprightly*, and worketh *righteousness*, and speaketh the *truth* in his heart.
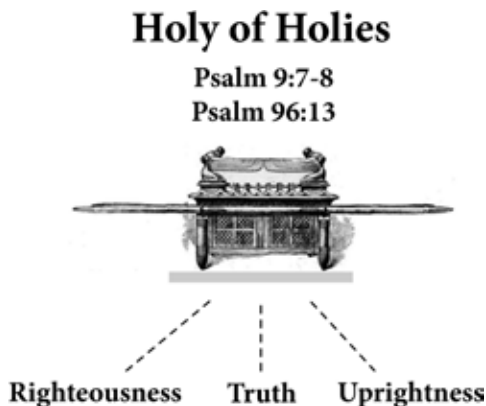
Figure 4: Three specific attributes associated with God's throne or his kingship

Revelation 21:27: And there shall in no wise enter into [New Jerusalem] anything that *defileth*, neither whatsoever worketh *abomination*, or maketh a *lie*.

Since there were three different veiled gateways in the Tabernacle built by Moses, the question naturally arises as to which gate the temple entrance liturgies applied to. Some early Jewish rabbis taught that the Psalm 24 entrance liturgy was used by the Israelite king in order to gain access to the Holy of Holies,[5] while there are some modern scholars who believe that the entrance liturgies were employed by regular members of Israelite society in order to get through the first gate which led into the temple courtyard.[6]

Here is a brief description of what happened — according to some commentators — when the Psalm 15 entrance text was being put to use:

- the location was a temple gate.
- the worshipers inquire[d] of the priest as to the qualifications for admission"; this was a question pertaining to "the nature and character of the person who desire[d] to enter God's presence."
- "the priest respond[ed] by specifying the requirements."
- the exchange "conclude[d] with a blessing."[7]

One scholar notes that the Psalm 15 question regarding entry requirements is addressed to the Lord because He alone "decides who
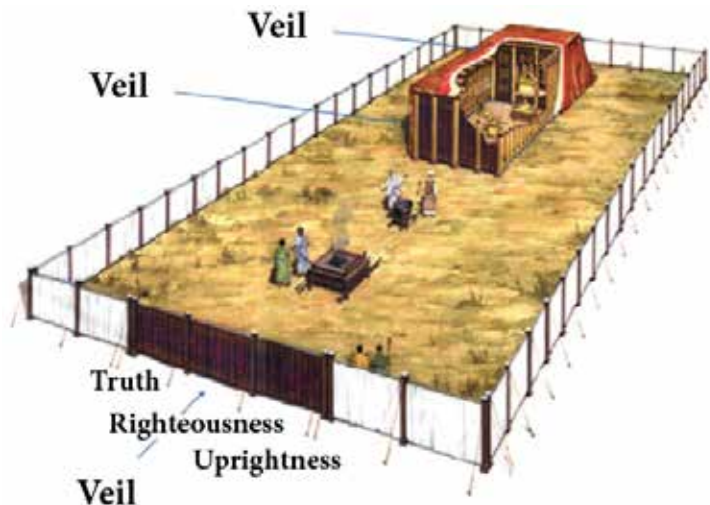
Figure 5: Veiled gateways of the Tabernacle

may appear before Him." Yet, it is "a priestly speaker" or proxy who answers on the Lord's behalf from inside of the temple entryway.[8]

By way of a brief historical digression, it is important to mention two things here. First, if a comparison is made between the book of Revelation Holy of Holies material and some of the teachings of Jesus Christ recorded in Luke chapter 13, an interesting pattern emerges. During a discussion about personal salvation in Luke 13, the Savior states that people will come from the four cardinal directions in order to enter into the kingdom of God (this may be a two-dimensional reference to the cube; reference to the kingdom suggests a throne). Furthermore, Jesus Christ indicates that there will be a gateway for entry into the kingdom, and people will engage in a conversation with a gatekeeper and be told of entry requirements (this, again, suggests the Holy of Holies of the temple). Passage through the gate is not to be automatic or easy, however, as evidenced by Luke 13:24, where the Lord states that the gate is narrow (*stenēs*),[9] and not everyone is granted access. In addition, the Savior alludes to the fact that those who do enter through the gate will have to "strive" to do so. The Greek word that underlies the translation "strive" (*agōnizesthe*) means to struggle or contend, as in a physical contest.[10] The second thing to mention is the act of knocking, which is referred to in Luke 13:25. In Figure 6 a Catholic officiator with a small mallet can be seen engaged in an entrance liturgy. He knocks three times and recites part of Psalm 24 — which is an ancient Israelite temple entrance text. This triple knocking and Psalm citation ceremony can be traced back among normative Christians to a very early period. For example, if Luke 13:22-30 is compared with the chapters 21 and 22 of the book of Revelation a clear set of parallels materializes (see Appendix).

Figure 6: A Catholic officiator with a small mallet as part of an entrance liturgy

Returning now to the temple entrance requirements of Psalm 15; *righteousness*, *truth*, and *uprightness* are the royal attributes of morality which are named as necessary to pass by the Lord's proxy at the temple gate. It is interesting to note that each of these attributes can be tied to specific architectural tools (next sections of this chapter), which, in turn, can be connected to the entrance liturgies in a secondary way (last sections of this chapter).

Figure 7: An Egyptian *merkhet* (plumb line), used to measure time

Figure 8: An Egyptian leveling line

Righteousness

In the Psalm 118 entrance liturgy, the gate of the temple is specifically called "the gate of righteousness," and in Isaiah 28:17 the Lord states, through one of His temple priests, that He judges "righteousness" by symbolically taking a measurement with a cord or a string. There is some disagreement among scholars over the exact identity of the instrument used by the Lord in His act of judgment, but whether it is a plumb line (the Egyptian instrument in Figure 7 was used to measure time) or a leveling line, it is still the same basic thing — a piece of cord or a string. Hence the temple gate, the moral attribute of righteousness, and the cord or string can be linked to each other.

There are a number of places in the Old Testament where God is depicted as utilizing a cord or string in order to measure His covenant people (see 1 Kings 21:13; Isaiah 28:17; 34:11; Lamentations 2:8; Amos 7:7–8). This imagery, says one commentator, is "a metaphor for divine judgment" and "it may be that the idea [being put forward by this act is] a strict, predetermined measure from which God will not deviate."[11]

Truth

The Psalm 15 temple entrance text combines the concept of "truth" with a person's "heart" (v. 2), while in the book of First Kings, walking in the "truth" with all of one's "heart" is a divinely mandated prerequisite for occupying the kingly throne in ancient Israel (1 Kings 2:4; cf. Isaiah 16:5).[12] Indeed, in Psalm 86:11 the Israelite king proclaims the he will indeed walk in God's "truth" (cf. Isaiah 38:3; 1 Kings 3:6).[13]

Psalm 89:8 mentions faithfulness as being "round about" God while a Jewish Targum of the same verse clarifies that it is "truth" which surrounds Him.[14] Since the

Figure 9: Christ with a compass

Hebrew word which underlies the King James phrase "round about" (*sabib)* can be rendered as "circumference" or "circuit," the general imagery invoked is that of a circle. God being encircled by truth hints at a specific architectural tool employed in constructing a round shape: a builder's compass.

Uprightness

In Psalm 15:2 the gate entry requirement of acting "uprightly" is a bit problematic since the Hebrew word being translated there does not match a clear pattern of words found throughout the Bible. The Hebrew word *tamim* underlies verse 2, but the parallel text of Isaiah 33:15 uses a different word for "uprightly" — *meshar* (see Figure 10). One of the meanings of *meshar* is "straightness" or "rectitude" in the figurative sense, and it comes from the Hebrew word *yashar,* which can also be translated as "straight." This is significant since Psalm 140:13 (which likewise parallels Psalm 15:1–2) says that the "upright" will dwell in God's presence, but it is translating the Hebrew word *yashar,* which can be rendered as "straight."

Here are some other points to consider (see Figure 11). In 1 Kings 3:6, it is said that the king of Israel walks in "uprightness," but the word being translated is *yesharah,* the feminine form of *yashar,* which can mean "straight." Evidence that this is an acceptable way to understand the meaning of the Hebrew word can be found in 2 Kings chapter 22,

Psalm 15:1	Isaiah 33:14-15	Psalm 140:13	Psalm 5:7-9
Uprightly (*tamim*)	Uprightly (*meshar* — from *yashar*)	Upright (*yashar*)	Straight (*yashar*)
Righteousness (*tzedeq*)	Righteously (*tsedaqah*)	Righteous (*tsaddiq*)	Righteousness (*tsedaqah*)
Truth (*emeth*)			Faithfulness in the mouth, leasing [lie] (*kun; kazab*)
Who shall dwell? Tabernacle	Who shall dwell?	Dwell in Thy presence	I will come into Thy house

Figure 10: Comparison of references in the Psalms and Isaiah

1 Kings 3:6	2 Kings 22;2	Psalm 45:6
Uprightness (*yesharah* — fem. of *yashar*)	Right (*yashar*) not to right or left	Right (*mishar* — from *yashar*)
Righteousness (*tsedeqah*)		
Truth (*emeth*)		

Figure 11: Comparison of references in 1 and 2 Kings and Psalm 45:6

verse 2, where it is made known that the Israelite king did that which was *yashar* in the sight of the Lord, turning neither to the right nor to the left. This seems to be a clear reference to an undeviating or "straight" line. A reference to God's throne in Psalm 45:6 is relevant here. It says, "Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever: the scepter of thy kingdom is a right scepter." The Hebrew word translated here as "scepter" (*shebet*) can also be rendered as "rod," and the word that describes it in the King James Bible (i.e., "right") is a rendition of the Hebrew word *mishor* which is derived from *yashar* which can mean "straight."

Psalm 5 — which has itself been "associated with the "entrance liturgies"[15] and is rehearsed by the Israelite king — happens to list some of the Psalm 15 temple entrance requirements within it, but verse 8 of the King James Version actually renders *yashar* as "straight." The reason all of this is relevant is that in both ancient Asia and ancient Mesopotamia, a good king was said to wield a "straight scepter."[16]

There is an intriguing section of the Old Testament where the rod image is tied together with the cord image, and both are mentioned along with an Israelite temple gate. When the prophet Ezekiel (who was a temple priest) was shown a visionary model of the Lord's sanctuary, he met an angel in the east entrance of that temple complex. This gateway seems to have served as a station for guards,[17] and so it was roughly equivalent to the veiled tabernacle gate with cherubim embroidered upon it. The angel who met with Ezekiel was holding two objects: a linen rope or cord and a measuring reed or rod (see Ezekiel 40:3 and Figure 12). The rod (*qaneh*)
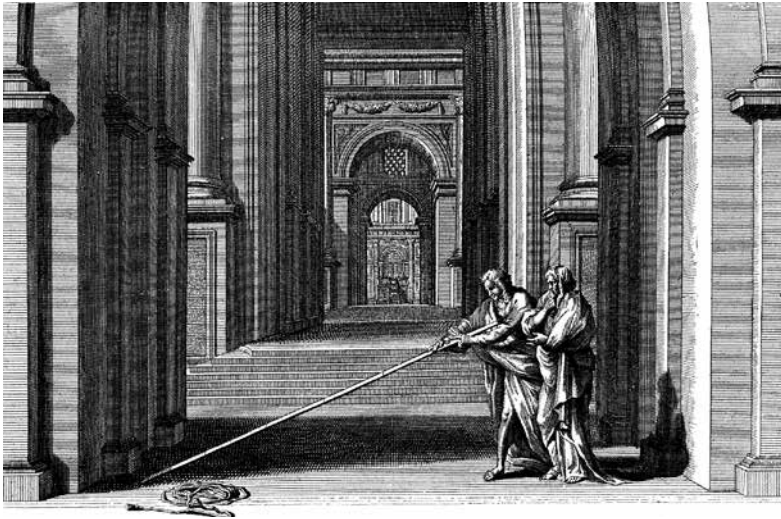
**Figure 12: Ezekiel with an angel holding a linen rope or cord
and a measuring reed or rod**

was used for measuring short distances, while the cord measured longer ones.[18] It should be noted that in ancient Mesopotamia, the "rod and ring" motif (which has been identified in some instances as a "rod and rope") is interpreted by several scholars as "surveying tools used for laying straight lines," "tools for laying out straight foundations." Ideologically, it is said that a deity would interact with the earthly Mesopotamian king so that he would be able to "guide the land straight." A deity is sometimes depicted on Mesopotamian monuments actually handing the aforementioned objects to the earthly king. It is believed by some writers that these two items signified "righteous kingship sanctified by the gods."[19]

It seems pertinent that the rod and cord motifs can be detected both directly and indirectly in association with the Holy of Holies cube described in the book of Revelation. Just like in the book of Ezekiel, the angel of Revelation uses a rod to measure the temple (Revelation 21:15-17). The text does not say that the Revelation angel carried a measuring cord like his counterpart in Ezekiel's book, but the cord is implied by the fact that Ezekiel's angel used his cord to measure the life-giving river of water coming out of the temple, while the book of Revelation actually describes the life-giving river of water issuing forth from God's throne inside the Holy of Holies cube.

There is one additional point to make with regard to Figure 12. The apostle John states in Revelation 11:1 that he was handed a "reed like unto a rod" by an angel and instructed to use it to measure people who

were in the temple. The word translated there as "rod" is *rhabados* and can be rendered as "scepter," which is appropriate because John indicates that at some point in time he himself had achieved the status of kingship (see Revelation 1:5–6) and, like it has previously been stated in this paper, kings measure people as an act of judgment.

Figure 13 displays a model of the visionary temple shown to the prophet Ezekiel and at the bottom can be seen an arrow pointing to the location of the gate where the angel stood with the cord and the rod. Off to the left is another arrow pointing to an inner gateway, and the explanation I will now give will provide the bridge to the concepts presented in the remainder of this chapter. It was at this temple gate that the king of Israel was to kneel and worship the Heavenly King at the gate of the inner court. Ezekiel 46:1–2 mentions that one of the times when the earthly king was required to do this was on the Sabbath — after "six working days" — which is a clear reference to the creation theme. Psalm 5, which has been "associated with the "entrance liturgies," depicts the Israelite king entering the temple complex and bowing down (*shachah*) or kneeling toward the temple proper, where the throne of God was located[20] (cf. Psalm 95:3, 5-6).

This all leads to a rather peculiar aspect of the temple entrance liturgy texts:
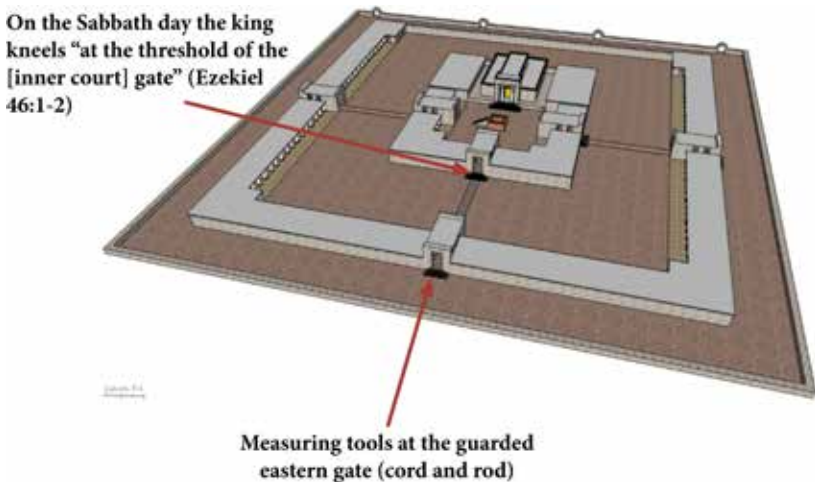

Figure 13: Exterior of the Temple of Solomon showing the location of the two gates mentioned

Psalm 24:1-2: The *earth* is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein. For he hath founded it upon the *seas*, and established it upon the floods.

Revelation 21:1, 5: And I saw a new heaven and a new *earth*: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more *sea* .… And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new.

At the very beginning of Psalm 24, there is a distinct reference to the creation of the earth which evokes the "center" or "navel" imagery mentioned earlier — i.e., the earth is founded on the sea. Some scholars find in this passage a reference to the "conquering chaos" theme and God's dominion or kingship.[21] The argument for a "conquering chaos" theme is strengthened by the fact that Revelation 21, verses 1 and 5, repeat the earth and sea motifs, and their context has been identified as that of creation and conquering chaos.[22]

The question to ask, then, is this: "Why are creation and conquering chaos themes placed in association with a temple gateway entrance liturgy?"

The answer may lie in a theme which has been discussed throughout this paper — measuring tools. "The Bible posits a God who builds," says one commentary, and so "God is portrayed [in the Bible] as a master builder in His work of creation."[23] Proverbs 8:27 states that during the cycle of creation, God marked out a circle on the sea or the abyss, which not only ties this verse to chaos ideology but also implies that God — as depicted in Figure 14 — used a compass to draw the circular boundary for the chaotic waves of the sea.[24]

Just two verses later, in Proverbs 8:29, there is another reference to God's creative activity: "I was there .… when [God] appointed (*chaqaq* — marked out) the foundations of the earth." If this action is thought of in architectural terms, then a specific measuring instrument readily suggests itself. In ancient Egypt — Israel's neighbor to the south — the foundation of a building would sometimes be marked out by first creating a base-line and then employing a set square in order to ensure that each of the foundation lines would be laid out at precise 90° angles.[25]

Finally, there is Job chapter 38, verse 5, to consider, where the Lord "describe[s] His creation of the earth as stretching out a line over it," implying that "everything about the earth's constitution was subject to His exact specifications."[26] Yet, it should also be remembered that in the context of kingly judgment, "God is depicted [in the Bible] as actively

Figure 14: "When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth" (Proverbs 8:27)

bringing chaos to bear on man's rebellion … . Isaiah reveals God as the 'builder' of chaos: paradoxically, the Creator God will 'stretch out the measuring line of chaos and the plumb line of destruction' (Isaiah 34:11). Like many images of judgment," says one author, "chaos is seen as a temporary reversal of the creation order."[27]

Additional scriptural references show that what has just been discussed did not apply only to the Heavenly King but also to His earthly vice-regent as well. On the day when the earthly king received his initiation into office, he was told that his hand would be placed on the sea to conquer it, just as God had done (Psalm 89:9, 25), and the mortal sovereign was also given a scepter as part of his regalia (Psalms 2; 110). Other scriptures report that the earthly king laid the foundation of Israel's temple (1 Kings 5:17; Ezra 6:3; Zechariah 4:9) and that he employed a measuring line while constructing

Figure 15: Egyptian depiction of stretching out a line

it (Zechariah 4:9-10). Hence, all of the objects associated with the King of Heaven earlier in this paper can also be linked with the early king of Israel.

In addition, there are references from acknowledged kingship initiation texts demonstrating that on the day when the mortal king

of Israel ascended the throne, he received the three attributes which were required for passage through the temple barriers: *righteousness*, *uprightness*, and *truth*. As previously mentioned in this study, it is known that these particular attributes can be identified with specific architectural tools:

> Psalm 72:1-2: Give the king … O God … thy *righteousness* ….
> He shall judge thy people in righteousness.

> Psalm 19:13: [God] keep [the king] … then shall [he] be *upright*
> (*tamam*; cf. Psalm 15 entrance liturgy).

> Psalm 89:24 (cf. Psalm 101:7): [God's] faithfulness (*emunah* =
> truth) … shall be with [the king].

> Finally, there is 1 Kings 3:6 to contemplate:

> And Solomon said, Thou hast shewed unto thy servant David
> my father great mercy, according as he walked before thee in
> *truth*, and in *righteousness*, and in *uprightness* of heart with
> thee.

Here it is confirmed that the king of Israel did, in reality, exemplify the three divine throne attributes which would enable a person to pass into the Lord's presence in His temple throne room.

In summary, this chapter has endeavored to demonstrate that there is a hitherto unrecognized but detailed, matching pattern embedded within the Old and New Testaments. This pattern shows that the cubic Holy of Holies in the Israelite temple represented the heavenly throne room of the Heavenly King. This room had three guarded gateways which could be passed only by those who possessed three royal attributes which were, in turn, connected with specific liturgical actions and tools. These tools of architecture and measurement were also associated with kingship motifs of creation and conquering chaos, and on the day when a person was initiated as a king in ancient Israel, all of these concepts were applied to him. From a much broader perspective, the material in this paper also points to the fact that certain temple ideologies and actions were not abandoned by the Christians of the biblical period but were, in fact, perpetuated by them.

Appendix

In Luke 13:22–30 Jesus Christ speaks of obtaining salvation in the kingdom of God and links the attainment of such a state with passing through a gateway. If this entire block of verses in the book of Luke is compared with the 21st and 22nd chapters of the book of Revelation a clear set of parallels materializes. Since the chapters in Revelation are describing the heavenly New Jerusalem (which is the prototype for the Holy of Holies of the Israelite temple) it can be deduced that Luke 13:22–30 is referring to the same thing. Here are the fourteen correspondences between these biblical texts which make this deduction possible.

- Luke 13:22 – "Jerusalem"
- Revelation 21:2 – "new Jerusalem"
- Luke 13:23 – "Lord, are there few that be saved?"
- Revelation 21:24 – "them which are saved shall walk in [New Jerusalem]"
- Luke 13:24 – "enter in at the … gate"
- Revelation 22:14 – "enter in through the gates [of New Jerusalem]"
- Luke 13:24 – "many … will seek to enter in, and shall not be able"
- Revelation 21:12 – "at the gates [of New Jerusalem] … [there are] angels"1; Revelation 21:27 – "there shall in no wise enter into [New Jerusalem] any … but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life"; Rev 22:14 – "they that do [God's] commandments [i.e., the obedient] … may enter in through the gates"
- Luke 13:25 – "the master of the house … . Lord"
- Revelation 21:5 – "God himself shall be with them [in New Jerusalem]"
- Luke 13:25 – "is risen up, and hath shut to the door"
- Revelation 21:25 – "the gates of [New Jerusalem] shall not be shut"
- Luke 13:25 – "I know you not"
- Revelation 21:27 – "they which are written in the Lamb's book of life [enter New Jerusalem]"
- Luke 13:26 – "We have eaten and drunk in thy presence"
- Revelation 22:1–2 – "a pure river of water of life … proceeding out of the throne [in New Jerusalem] … . and on either side of the river … [is] the tree of life, which bare[s] … fruits"
- Luke 13:26 – "thou hast taught in our streets"

- Revelation 22:2 – "the street of [New Jerusalem]"
- Luke 13:27 – "depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity"
- Revelation 21:27 – "there shall in no wise enter into [New Jerusalem] anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie"
- Luke 13:28 – "there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth"
- Revelation 21:4 – "there shall be no … sorrow, nor crying [in New Jerusalem]"
- Luke 13:28 – "ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God"
- Revelation 21:24 – "the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor into [New Jerusalem]"
- Luke 13:29 – "they shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south"
- Revelation 21:13 – "On the east [side of New Jerusalem] three gates; on the north three gates; on the south three gates; and on the west three gates"
- Luke 13:30 – "there are first which shall be last"
- Revelation 22:13 – "I am … the first and the last"

Considering that in this paper Revelation 21:17 has been shown to reflect the Psalm 15 temple entrance liturgy, it may be profitable to more closely consider the liturgical entrance aspects of Luke 13:22–30. There is a narrow, closed gate; a guard stands on the gate; the attention of the gatekeeper is obtained by knocking at the gate; a request for entry through the gate is made; a conversation takes place between the gatekeeper and the person seeking entrance; entry requirements are indicated by the gatekeeper; entrance is granted only if the entry requirements are met.

Since Luke 13 and Revelation 21 are Christian documents it is also noteworthy that some of the early Christians incorporated the Psalm 24 temple entrance text and the act of knocking into their ascension ideology and gateway liturgies.

The second century Christian writers Justin Martyr[28] (ca. AD 150) and Irenaeus[29] (ca. AD 185) applied the phraseology of Psalm 24:7–10 to Jesus Christ's ascent into heaven after He had been resurrected from the dead. And they both specified that the Savior entered heaven through its gates. This psalm would have held a place of great significance among the early Christians since it had been recited in the courts of the Israelite temple on the very day that Jesus Christ arose from the tomb.[30]

At some point in time the questions and answers associated with Psalm 24:7–10 were incorporated as a liturgical element in some of the

early Christians' church dedication rites.[31] This incorporation can be detected on 24 December 526 when the Hagia Sophia in Constantinople was rededicated. On this occasion a procession of the faithful sang Psalm 24 as the patriarch (holding a copy of the Gospels as a representation of Jesus Christ) passed through the doors.[32] One liturgist has pointed out that this ceremony fulfilled, "even if only symbolically, the ancient liturgy of entrance into the temple."[33] Paul the Silentiary (d. AD 575–580), who was an imperial officer in Emperor Justinian's palace, spoke of the Sanctuary or Holy of Holies area of the Hagia Sophia in this way: "the screen gives access to the priests through three doors."[34] This architectural arrangement is reminiscent of the three gateways on the east side of the Holy of Holies of the Israelite Tabernacle and also the three gates on each side of the New Jerusalem-Holy of Holies cube.[35]

In the records of subsequent dedication ceremonies the element of knocking on the church door is found coupled together with the questions and answers found in Psalm 24:7–10. The Gallican dedicatory ritual in France "at the beginning of the eighth century" records some of the points of drama that took place. A lone cleric would be shut up on the inside of the church; the bishop approached the door; the bishop then said the Psalm 24:7–10 antiphon while touching the lintel of the structure; while a similar psalm was being chanted, the door was opened and the bishop entered.[36] One commentator on the 8th century Gallican rite says that once the procession "reaches the entrance to the church … the bishop strikes the sill three times with his staff and orders the doors to be opened," and the procession continues through the entryway.[37]

The triple striking of the door and the interrogatories and responses of Psalm 24 are present in Christian church dedication documents of the mid-tenth century[38] and continue to be found throughout the Middle Ages.[39] One important clue about the meaning of all this can be found in the writings of Hugh of St. Victor. He stated that during the dedication ordinance, the bishop represented Jesus Christ, and it was he who enacted "the threefold striking of the lintel of the main door."[40] Thus, we are brought back to the idea put forward by Justin Martyr and Irenaeus, in much earlier times, that Psalm 24:7–10 was associated with Christ's ascent through the gates of heaven, or the heavenly Jerusalem.

Figure Credits

1. The Holy Place and the Holy of Holies of the Tabernacle. http://www.templebuilders.com/enlargement_tabernacle5.php.

2. Charles F. Horne and Julius A. Bewer, eds., *The Bible and Its Story Taught by One Thousand Picture Lessons* (New York: Francis R. Niglutsch, 1908), vol. 2. http://www.wcg.org/images/b2/_0303160501_039.jpg (accessed 2 October 2014).

3. Rendered by Jeffrey M. Bradshaw after a concept by Matthew B. Brown. Image: J. James Tissot, 1836-1902: *The Ark of the Covenant*, ca. 1896-1902. In J. James Tissot. The Old Testament: Three Hundred and Ninety-*Six Compositions Illustrating the Old Testament*, Parts 1 and 2. 2 vols. Paris, France: M. de Brunhoff, 1904, 1:229.

4. Rendered by Jeffrey M. Bradshaw after a concept by Matthew B. Brown. Image: J. James Tissot, 1836-1902: *The Ark of the Covenant*, ca. 1896-1902. In J. James Tissot. The Old Testament: Three Hundred and Ninety-*Six Compositions Illustrating the Old Testament*, Parts 1 and 2. 2 vols. Paris, France: M. de Brunhoff, 1904, 1:229.

5. Rendered by Jeffrey M. Bradshaw after a concept by Matthew B. Brown. Image: James Harpur, ed., *Great Events of Bible Times* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1987), 44–45.

6. Bishop knocking three times on a cathedral door. http://www.antigonishdiocese.com/BishopDunnsInstallationAsBishopofAntigonish/theritualbegins.html (accessed 2 October 2014).

7. Egyptian *merkhet* (plumb) line. http://www.ssplprints.com/lowres/43/main/16/94993.jpg (accessed 2 October 2014).

8. Egyptian leveling line. http://www.touregypt.net/featurestories/tomb.htm (accessed 2 October 2014).

9. Image from the J. Paul Getty Museum, French, ca. AD 1400. http://www.getty.edu/art/gettyguide/artObjectDetails?artobj=1666&handle=li (accessed 2 October 2014).

10. Rendered by Jeffrey M. Bradshaw after a chart by Matthew B. Brown.

11. Rendered by Jeffrey M. Bradshaw after a chart by Matthew B. Brown.

12. Charles F. Horne and Julius A. Bewer, eds., *The Bible and its Story Taught by One Thousand Picture Lessons* (New York: Francis R. Niglutsch, 1908), vol. 8. http://www.gci.org/files/images/b8/b8a%20%288%29.jpg (accessed 2 October 2014).

13. Rendered by Jeffrey M. Bradshaw after a concept by Matthew B. Brown. Image by Gabriel Fink, Wikipedia. http://en.wikipedia.org/

wiki/File:Temple-of-Solomon-Exterior.jpg (accessed 2 October 2014).

14. Photograph by Matthew B. Brown.

15. Egyptian stonemason with measuring line, New York Public Library.

Notes

1. Latter-day Saint writings which have previously dealt with themes in this paper include John Gee, "The Keeper of the Gate" in Donald W. Parry and Stephen D. Ricks, eds., T*he Temple in Time and Eternity* (Provo, UT: The Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, 1999) 233–73; Donald W. Parry, "Who Shall Ascend into the Mountain of the Lord? Three Biblical Temple Entrance Hymns" in Donald W. Parry, Daniel C. Peterson, and Stephen D. Ricks, eds., *Reason, Revelation, and Faith: Essays in Honor of Truman G. Madsen* (Provo, UT: The Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, 2002) 729–42. Hugh W. Nibley, "Return to the Temple." In *Temple and Cosmos: Beyond This Ignorant Present,* Don E. Norton, ed. (*The Collected Works of Hugh Nibley* 12. Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book, 1992) 42-90; Hugh W. Nibley, "The Early Christian Prayer Circle." In *Mormonism and Early Christianity*, Todd M. Compton and Stephen D. Ricks, eds. (*The Collected Works of Hugh Nibley* 4. Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book, 1987) 45-99; "Sacred Vestments"; *FARMS Review*, 8:2, 1996, 261; Hugh W. Nibley, "Sacred Vestments." In *Temple and Cosmos: Beyond This Ignorant Present*, Don E. Norton, ed. (*The Collected Works of Hugh Nibley* 12. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1992) 91-138; Michael Lyon, "Set Design for the Final Scene in The Magic Flute," *Brigham Young University Studies*, 43:3, 2004, 270–72; Daniel Belnap, "The Divine Warrior in Jacob's Speech of 2 Nephi 6–10," *Journal of Book of Mormon and Other Restoration Scripture*, 17:1, 2008, 20–39.

2. Tryggve N. D. Mettinger, "ʏʜᴡʜ sabaoth — The Heavenly King on the Cherubim Throne." In T. Ishida, ed., *Studies in the Period of David and Solomon and Other Essays* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1982) 109–38.

3. "As the navel is set in the middle of a person so is *Erez* Israel the navel of the world, as it is said: 'That dwell in the navel of the earth' [Ezekiel 38:12]. *Erez* Israel is located in the center of the world, Jerusalem in the center of *Erez* Israel, the Temple in the center of Jerusalem, the *heikhal* in the center of the Temple, the ark in the center of the *heikhal*,

and in front of the *heikhal* is the *even shetiyyah* ['foundation stone'] from which the world was started" (Tanh. B., Lev 78; and see Sanh. 37a; Song R. 7:5 no. 3). In the book of 2 Enoch "the metaphor 'navel of the earth' is connected with the site of Adam's creation" (Gerald Y. Bildstein,"*Even Shetiyya.*" In Michael Berenbaum and Fred Skolnik, eds. *Encyclopedia Judaica,* 2nd ed. (Detroit: Macmillan, 2007) 6:574-575. *Gale Virtual Reference Library*, http://go.galegroup.com/ps/i.do ?id=GALE%7CCX2587506158&v=2.1&u=imcpl1111&it=r&p=GV RL&sw=w&asid=5b2e3f11e8e710fb28e79870807eb950 (accessed 9 October 2014).

4. The Psalm 24 temple entrance text lists the same three requirements as Psalm 15 but in different terms: "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? Or who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean [*naqi* = guiltless, innocent (matches the *tamim* = 'upright'/'blameless' requirement of Psalm 15)] hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul [*nephesh* = appetite, passion] unto vanity (*shav* = moral ruin, opposite of the 'righteousness' of Psalm 15], nor sworn deceitfully [opposite of the 'truth' of Psalm 15]."

5. See Alan Cooper, "Psalm 24:7–10: Mythology and Exegesis," *Journal of Biblical Literature*, 102:1, March 1983, 41, footnote 28; Israel W. Slotki, "The Text and Ancient Form of Recital of Psalm 24 and Psalm 124," *Journal of Biblical Literature*, 51:3, September 1932, 220–21.

6. See John Barton and John Muddiman, eds., *The Oxford Bible Commentary* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001) 361.

7. Peter C. Craigie, *Psalms 1–50* (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1983) 150–51. The Psalm 15 promise is of "stability" and is implied in the Psalm 24 entrance liturgy by the phrase "Who may stand?" — i.e., the imagery of feet. In Psalm 24 the entrant is identified as a seeker of the face of God (Craig C. Broyles, "Psalms Concerning the Liturgies of Temple Entry." In Peter W. Flint and Patrick D. Miller, Jr., eds., *The Book of Psalms: Composition and Reception* [Boston: Brill, 2005] 251). Psalm 26:12 matches the 'stability' promise of Psalm 15 – "'I do not slip' because 'in Yahweh I have trusted'" (v. 1) / "'my foot stands on level ground' because 'I bless Yahweh'" (v. 12) (ibid., 266). Krause states that "verse 26 [of Psalm 118] is a special liturgical piece which now doubtlessly belongs to the liturgy of entry and the gate. From the inside of the sanctuary … the word of blessing is called out by priests to those coming in (cf. Psalm 24:5). He who enters the gates receives the blessing of Yahweh (Numbers 6:23 [and 24–27])" (2:400). The Psalm 118 entrance liturgy (which may have a royal background) pertains

to the eastern gate of the courtyard. "The king requests admission to the temple forecourt .… The gatekeepers willingly accede to the request for him … to enter .… This cultic occasion is opportunity … for receiving [a] priestly blessing .… [A request is made for a blessing from Yahweh and] in response the priests pronounce blessings … upon the king who is present." Psalm 118:26 "is a priestly blessing" (Leslie C. Allen, *Psalms 101–150* [Waco, TX: Word Books, 1983] 122–24). "The blessing pronounced by the priests [in Psalm 118] greets (vv. 26–27) at the gate of the temple those who enter through it" (Artur Weiser, *The Psalms: A Commentary* [Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1962] 724). The "name of God" in the answer of Psalm 24 [cf. the Numbers 6 priestly blessing] has the effect of a "key" by which the gate is opened and the glory of God appears or is manifest (ibid., 235).

8. Hans-Joachim Kraus, *Psalms 1–59: A Commentary* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Publishing House, 1988) 226–28. In the Psalm 118 entrance liturgy the doorkeeper informs the person seeking entrance that only the righteous can pass through the Lord's gate and the entrant replies by confirming that he meets that requirement (see S. B. Frost, "Asseveration by Thanksgiving," *Vetus Testamentum*, 8:4, October 1958, 380–81).

9. Gerhard Friedrich, ed., *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament,* 7:604.

10. Ibid., 1:134; cf. the content and context of Genesis 32:24–30.

11. Delbert R. Hillers, *Lamentations: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, 2nd ed. (New York: Doubleday, 1992) 99.

12. The book of Proverbs associates "truth" with a person's "heart" (3:3) and also states that truth preserves (guards, protects) the king (20:28).

13. Hence, for the king, the attribute of truth was also associated with the path or course he walked through life.

14. John Gill, *Expositions on the Old and New Testaments* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1982), commentary on Psalm 89:8.

15. Michael D. Coogan, Mark Z. Brettler, Carol A. Newsom, and Pheme Perkins, eds., *The New Oxford Annotated Bible with the Apocrypha*, 3rd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007) 779.

16. In ancient Mesopotamia the notion of having a "straight scepter" was applied to good or righteous kings at their coronation (*Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 118:1, January–March 1998, 89). In ancient Asia the same applied: "In poetry the king's scepter frequently functions as a symbol of his fitness as a ruler. The 'straight scepter'

(*ceṅkōl*) symbolizes the king who upholds dharma, and the 'bent scepter' (*koṭuṅkōl*) symbolizes the king who fails to do so" (Sheldon I. Pollock, *Literary Cultures in History: Reconstructions from South Asia* [Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2003], 298, footnote 69).

17. See Leslie C. Allen, *Ezekiel 20–48* (Dallas, TX: Word Books, 1990) 229.

18. See Daniel I. Block, *The Book of Ezekiel: Chapters 25–48* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1998) 512, 515.

19. Kathryn E. Slanski, "The Mesopotamian 'Rod and Ring': Icon of Righteous Kingship and Balance of Power between Palace and Temple" in Harriet Crawford, ed., *Regime Change in the Ancient Near East and Egypt* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007) 41, 57. In the Sumerian text called "Inana's Descent into the Nether World" mention is made of a person holding both the "measuring rod and measuring line" in their hand (line 25, ETCSL Translation, t.1.4.1). Set-square and level line amulets were "almost invariably found together" on the bodies of some mummified Egyptians of the Saite Period (664–525 BC) and later. "Possession of a set-square amulet would guarantee its owner everlasting rectitude, a plummet eternal equilibrium." The was-scepter mummy amulet — likewise associated with the Saite Period and later — stood for the royal "dominion" to be swayed by the deceased in the afterlife (Carol Andrews, *Amulets of Ancient Egypt* [Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1994] 80, 85–86). According to Chinese historian Sima Qian, the Emperor Yu of Xia (ca. 2205 BC) carried a plumbline in his left hand and a compass and square in his right hand while doing the survey work necessary to bring floods under control (Victor J. Katz, ed., *The Mathematics of Egypt, Mesopotamia, China, India, and Islam: A Sourcebook* [Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007] 191). As early as the Warring States Period (475–221 BC), the Chinese compass and square "symbolized fixed standards and rules that impose order on unruly matter." Eventually two Chinese creator deities began to be portrayed with these tools in their hands. The queen deity held the compass and was associated with bringing "ordered space out of the chaos of the flood" while the king deity was shown grasping the square and was "credited with the invention of kingship." In a funerary context these regal beings served as "doorkeepers" or "guardians of boundaries" who "marked the division between inner and outer" spaces (cf. Genesis 3:24; Exodus 26:31). The placement and depiction

of these deities signified "transfer to another realm" (Mark E. Lewis, *The Flood Myths of Early China* [Albany: State University of New York Press, 2006] 125–27).

20. Michael D. Coogan, Mark Z. Brettler, Carol A. Newsom, and Pheme Perkins, eds., *The New Oxford Annotated Bible with the Apocrypha,* 3rd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007) 779.

21. The first two verses of Psalm 24 are about "the dominion of God over the whole world" (i.e., His kingship) and "the fact that God conquered the chaotic powers of the primeval waters" (Artur Weiser, *The Psalms: A Commentary* [Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1962] 232–33). Psalm 24:2 refers specifically to "the chaotic primeval waters … defeated and pacified by God the creator" (Michael D. Coogan, Mark Z. Brettler, Carol A. Newsom, and Pheme Perkins, eds., *The New Oxford Annotated Bible with the Apocrypha*, 3rd ed. [New York: Oxford University Press, 2007] 794).

22. "In Revelation, as elsewhere in biblical and Second Temple literature, the sea represents the mythical forces of chaos" (Celia Deutsch, "Transformation of Symbols: The New Jerusalem in Revelation 21:1–22:5," *Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft*, 78:1–2, 1987, 106–26, at note 58). See also Gregory K. Beale, *The Book of Revelation: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1999) 990.

23. Leland Ryken, James C. Wilhoit, and Tremper Longman III, eds., *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery* (Downers Grove, IL: Inter Varsity Press, 1998) 128.

24. Some of the medieval artworks depicting God creating with an architect's compass were based on Proverbs 8:27 (see John B. Friedman, "The Architect's Compass in Creation Miniatures of the Later Middle Ages," *Traditio*, 30, 1974, 419–29).

25. See Dick Parry, *Engineering the Pyramids* (Stroud, England: Sutton Publishing, 2004) 64–66.

26. R. Laird Harris, ed., *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980) 2:791.

27. Leland Ryken, James C. Wilhoit, and Tremper Longman III, eds., *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery* (Downers Grove, IL: Inter Varsity Press, 1998) 136. "Job 38:5 pictures God using … tools to construct the cosmos out of chaos. Conversely, however, with a clear reference to Genesis 1:2 (where the precreational chaos is described as 'without form [Hebrew *tohu*] and void [*bohu*]'), Isaiah [34:11] prophesies that God will use 'the line of confusion [*tohu*] … and the plummet

of chaos [*bohu*]' as instruments of vengeance against a people who oppose His purposes" (Geoffrey W. Bromily, ed., *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* [Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1986] 3:295).

28. Justin Martyr, *Dialogue with Trypho,* chapter 36.

29. Irenaeus, *Against Heresies,* book 4, chapter 33, paragraph 13.

30. See Allen Cabaniss, "The Harrowing of Hell, Psalm 24, and Pliny the Younger: A Note," *Vigiliae Christianae,* 7:2, April 1953, 69.

31. It is generally accepted that the Christian church dedication ceremony ultimately had a Byzantine origin (see Irene R. Makaryk, trans., *About the Harrowing of Hell: A Seventeenth-Century Ukrainian Play in Its European Context* [Ottowa: Dovehouse Editions, 1989] 57).

32. See Vitaly Permiakov, "The Rite of Consecration of a Church in the Eastern Traditions," *Fifth International Theological Conference of the Russian Orthodox Church,* November 2007, 6.

33. Ignazio M. Calabuig, "The Rite of the Dedication of a Church," in Anscar J. Chupungco, ed., *Handbook for Liturgical Studies. Vol. 5: Liturgical Time and Space* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2000) 345.

34. Allan Doig, *Liturgy and Architecture from the Early Church to the Middle Ages* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2008) 72. The triple entryway into the most holy area of the Hagia Sophia was possibly a precursor to the three doors of the later iconostasis barriers for the Sanctuary/ Holy of Holies and the three doors found on the sides of some medieval cathedrals, such as Chartres.

35. "The Christian sanctuary is, liturgically and mystically, an image of the heavenly Jerusalem, the eschatological vision described by the Book of Revelation. The medieval dedication rite establishes this relationship in explicit terms." Medieval consecration/dedication liturgies characteristically include an exchange of the Psalm 24:7–10 text between bishop and deacon near the beginning. In addition, it should be noted that "the Epistle for the Mass of Consecration is from … Revelation 21:2–5, which serves as a standard lesson in virtually all consecration rites of the period" (Laurence H. Stookey, "The Gothic Cathedral as the Heavenly Jerusalem: Liturgical and Theological Sources," *Gesta*, 8:1, 1969, 35).

36. Louis Duchesne, *Christian Worship: Its Origin and Evolution,* 3rd ed. (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1910) 409.

37. Ignazio Calabuig, "The Rite of the Dedication of a Church," in Anscar J. Chupungco, ed., *Handbook for Liturgical Studies* (Collegeville,

MN: Liturgical Press, 1997-2000) 5:350. It is curious that the triple knocking on the church door appears in the dedication documents during this timeframe since the origin of this practice may possibly be traced back to the monasteries. In an Italo-Greek manuscript written after ad 842 at the monastery of St. John Studios in Constantinople it is said, "When the liturgy is finished, the wooden *semantron* is sounded three times" (John P. Thomas and Angela C. Hero, eds., *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents: A Complete Translation of the Surviving Founders' "Typika" and Testaments, Volume 1* [Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 2000] 109). The Syrian Christians have a long-standing tradition that the *semantron* originated with God telling Noah to create one out of wood and also a mallet of the same material to strike it with. The Almighty reportedly told the patriarch, "Strike this instrument three separate times every day" (John O'Brien, A History of the Mass and the Ceremonies in the Eastern and Western Church [New York: Benzinger Brothers, 1879] 148). An early seventh century author points to one of the liturgical uses of the *semantron* by posing the question: "Why do we sound the *naqosha* [or *semantron*] again at the last Session, and open the door of the sanctuary … ?" (Sebastian P. Brock, "Gabriel of Qatar's Commentary on the Liturgy," *Hugoye: Journal of Syriac Studies,* 6:2, July 2003, memra 3, #5, f. 115b). The sanctuary of some eastern Christian churches is called the Holy of Holies.

38. Aimé G. Martimort, "Liturgical Signs," in Irénée H. Dalmais, et al., *The Church at Prayer. Vol. 1: Principles of the Liturgy,* Revelation ed., (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1987) 220.

39. See the example recorded by William Durandus in John M. Neale and Benjamin Webb, trans., *The Symbolism of Churches and Church Ornaments* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1893) 92–93.

40. Paul F. Bradshaw, *The New Westminster Dictionary of Liturgy and Worship* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002) 132. The triple knocking on a church door, employment of the Psalm 24 question and answer dialogue, and the bishop representing Christ can all be found in the Harrowing of Hell dramas of the Middle Ages (AD 1358–1377), but this may simply be a variation of the dedicatory rite (see Ann Faulkner, "The Harrowing of Hell at Barking Abbey and in Modern Production," in Clifford Davidson and Thomas H. Seiler, eds., *The Iconography of Hell* [Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 1992] 141, 147). Harrowing themes with Christ on one side of a barrier and believers on the other side who petition Him

with the words, "open to us the door" (cf. Luke 13:25) are found in the forty-second Ode of Solomon (James R. Harris and Alphonse Mingana, *The Odes and Psalms of Solomon* [New York: Longmans, Green and Company, 1920] 2:405) — a document which some scholars have dated to AD 100–125 and classify as a normative or non-gnostic Christian initiation text (see James H. Charlesworth, *Critical Reflections on the Odes of Solomon* [Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998] 23, 25).

Matthew B. Brown *(1964–2011) earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in history from Brigham Young University, was an author and historian whose emphasis was on the history and doctrine of Joseph Smith and Brigham Young, and wrote several nonfiction books and research-based articles for the Neal A. Maxwell Institute of Religious Scholarship at BYU. He worked as compiler and editor of the* Journal for the Foundation for Apologetic Information and Research (FAIR; *now* FairMormon)*. He is survived by his wife Jamie.*

TABLE RULES:
A RESPONSE TO AMERICANIST APPROACHES TO THE BOOK OF MORMON

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Kevin Christensen

Review of Elizabeth Fenton and Jared Hickman, *Americanist Approaches to* The Book of Mormon (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019). 456 pages. $99 (hardback), $35 (paperback).

Abstract: Americanist Approaches to The Book of Mormon *is an ambitious collection of essays published by Oxford University Press. By "Americanist" the editors refer to their preferred mode of contextualization: to situate the Book of Mormon as a response to various currents of nineteenth-century American thought. The "table rules" in this case determine who gets invited to the table and what topics can be discussed, using what types of evidence. The approach is legitimate, and the contributors offer a range of interesting perspectives and observations. Several essays base their arguments on the notion that the Book of Mormon adapts itself to a series of racist tropes common in the nineteenth century. In 2015, Ethan Sproat wrote an important essay that undercuts the arguments of those authors, but none of them address his case or evidence. This raises the issue of the existence of other tables operating under different assumptions, confronting the same text, and reaching very different conclusions. How are we to judge which table's rules produce the best readings?*

*A*mericanist Approaches to The Book of Mormon is an ambitious collection of essays published in 2019 by Oxford University Press.[1] By "Americanist," the editors refer to their preferred mode

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1. Elizabeth Fenton and Jared Hickman, eds., *Americanist Approaches to* The Book of Mormon (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019). In *Americanist Approaches*, the editors chose to formally refer to the Book of Mormon as *The Book*

of contextualization: to situate the Book of Mormon as a response to various currents of nineteenth-century American thought.

> The authors of this collection's essays approach *The Book of Mormon* from a variety of methodological and theological perspectives, but all share a commitment to taking seriously the book's relationship to and impact on the culture into which it emerged. (10)

The editors provide an introduction and then seventeen essays grouped as "Plates and Print," "Scripture and Secularity," "Indigeneity and Imperialism," and "Genre and Generation." Each essay takes a serious academic tone (for the most part[2]), and the attitudes vary from respect rooted in deep devotion and broad knowledge (Terryl Givens, Grant Hardy, and Amy Easton-Flake) to friendly (Paul Gutjahr and Elizabeth Fenton) to deeply skeptical (Peter Coviello, Eran Shalev, and R. John Williams). For instance, Flake's essay "'Arise From the Dust, My Sons, and Be Men'" explores the Book of Mormon's view of masculinity in light of nineteenth-century concepts of male and female roles, and concludes that "we find a new vision of ideal Christian manhood that challenges the idea that American religion was feminized in the nineteenth century" (370). Grant Hardy writes about "*The Book of Mormon* and the Bible," exploring the typological trends in nineteenth-century Americans identifying with Israel as background for the early audience as well as biblical quotation and various kinds of intertextuality within the Book of Mormon, including anachronism. In his essay "*The Book of Mormon* and the Reshaping of Covenant," Terryl Givens writes that "*The Book of Mormon* emerges in the context of the period's pervasive pseudo-biblicism and, more particularly, within a long tradition of covenantal rhetoric" (341). Paul Gutjahr writes about

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of Mormon, with the leading "The" capitalized and the title in italic. In quotes from *Americanist Approaches* this stylistic choice will be honored, except in the book's title. In the nonquoted material in this article references to the Book of Mormon are made in the traditional style. It can be argued that choosing to italicize the Book of Mormon as a book title while not italicizing the Bible as a book title is a subtle indicator of how the editors view the Book of Mormon relative to the Bible — the books do not deserve to be treated, in reference or in prose, the same.

2. R. John Williams indulges in mischievous snark at times. For example, in a footnote he refers to FARMS and "its alpha-male intellectual Hugh Nibley" (74n8). His comments in his footnote on Lehi christening a river after Laman (77n30) show that while he may have an awareness of Nibley's stature, he does not display familiarity with his work. The same neglect of Nibley's work appears in his reference to the Liahona as a "magical ball" (78n38).

"Orson Pratt's Enduring Influence on *The Book of Mormon*." Elizabeth Fenton writes about "Nephites and Israelites: *The Book of Mormon* and the Hebraic Indian Theory." Peter Coviello writes about "How the Mormons Became White," beginning with a scathing denunciation of Book of Mormon and Latter-day Saint racism and ugliness (259–60), moving to suggest, against his own opening sentiments, that perhaps, since the Lamanites survive with prophetic promises, there is also a possible "racial counternarrative" (262). He then discusses Latter-day Saint social history through the nineteenth century and concludes that "one obstacle to seeing clearly the counterracialist possibilities of *The Book of Mormon* … is the arc of nineteenth-century Mormonism itself" (274). R. John Williams writes of the impossibility of actually bracketing the question of historicity, of just letting the text speak for itself, arguing that neither Grant Hardy nor Earl Wunderli managed to bracket historicity fully but drew on outside materials in interpreting the text. He also discusses stories from the Book of Mormon in which angels, prophets, and Jesus are supplemented by books, and books by angels, prophets, and Jesus, showing that neither the immediacy of oral witness and preaching nor "the plain meaning of the text" is ever enough. He also discusses nineteenth-century contextual issues against which to situate Joseph Smith, such as Emanuel Swedenborg,[3] interest in and speculation about hieroglyphics, Masonic legends of Enoch, and the practice of using stereotype plates to simplify the printing of Bibles in Joseph Smith's day as a meaningful parallel to the story of the Golden Plates. Other topics in *Americanist Approaches* range across anachronism and temporal dislocation, oral and literate cultures, contemporary readings by an indigenous member, fiction about Columbus by Orson Scott Card, and even poetry about the Book of Mormon by nineteenth-century readers.

As an extended survey of our founding text from a prominent publisher, *Americanist Approaches* will be of interest to Latter-day Saint academics as a book to read to get to know what such an eminent and

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3. For a detailed look at Swedenborg and Smith, see Craig W. Miller, "Emanuel Swedenborg and Mormonism" at *Mormon Universalism* (blog), April 22, 2014, http://mormonuniversalism.com/2112/emanuel-swedenborg-and-mormonism/. See also J. B. Haws, "Joseph Smith, Emanuel Swedenborg, and Section 76: Importance of the Bible in Latter-day Revelation," in *The Doctrine and Covenants: Revelations in Context*, ed. Andrew H. Hedges, J. Spencer Fluhman, and Alonzo L. Gaskill (Provo, UT, and Salt Lake City: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, and Deseret Book, 2008), 142–67, https://rsc.byu.edu/doctrine-covenants-revelations-context/joseph-smith-emanuel-swedenborg-section-76-importance-bible.

emerging group of scholars have to say about our community-defining book, its place in nineteenth-century discourse, and significance for current study. Everyday members with devotional interests may not be as broadly interested or rewarded or as able to cope with the sometimes dense and abstract writing style.[4] While it is not a formal attack on faith and historicity in the vein of *New Approaches to the Book of Mormon*,[5] *American Apocrypha*,[6] or *The New Mormon Challenge*,[7] the editors have a clearly defined secular position that frames which questions can be asked, what evidence and conclusions can be discussed as well as who can be seated or can be insulted at this particular "table." Unlike, say, the Truman Madsen edited *Reflections on Mormonism*,[8] which provided the results of an invitation to a set of non-Latter-day Saint scholars to contribute to an open discussion of things Latter-day Saints, these editors invite a mixed group of scholars to a table with clear rules and boundaries.

While I won't discuss in any depth the entire range of topics offered in *Americanist Approaches*, there are a few things about the foundations and implications of the approach implicit in this volume (and the type of undertaking it represents) that I find instructive and worth a response. For more than three decades I have been fascinated with the difference paradigms can make in how people investigate and perceive the same subject — even, as we shall see, how different people interpret the same words. The existence of *Americanist Approaches* in comparison to other approaches again highlights the problem of how to navigate our differences in ways that are not completely paradigm-dependent. It should not be just a matter of using tribal allegiances and ideologically dependent arguments to guide our perceptions and consequent decisions. If we can be both critical and self-reflective, we can experience more expansion of

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4.   For example, from R. John Williams, "Careful readers of Genette, however, will sometimes notice an occasionally irksome — perhaps even intentional — tension between what he offers as the categorical objectivity (the "undisputed territory," as he calls it) of paratextual mediation and what he acknowledges as the category's "potential for indefinite diffusion" (48).

5.   Brent Lee Metcalf, ed., *New Approaches to the Book of Mormon: Explorations in Critical Methodology* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1993).

6.   Dan Vogel and Brent Lee Metcalf, eds., *American Apocrypha: Essays on the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 2002).

7.   Francis J. Beckwith, Carl Mosser, and Paul Owen, eds., *The New Mormon Challenge: Responding to the Latest Defenses of a Fast-Growing Movement* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002).

8.   Truman G. Madsen, ed., *Reflections on Mormonism: Judaeo-Christian Parallels* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1978).

the mind and enlargement of the soul, a more fruitful discovery.[9] If we can explore and compare different perspectives and arguments and then can explain "Why us?" in terms of values that are both comparative and not completely ideologically dependent; we can see more and understand better, both ourselves and our fellow travelers through life. Indeed, I will be comparing a foundational assumption of the readings and arguments that generated *Americanist Approaches* and the table rules that guide its inquiries and conversations with an important essay by Ethan Sproat[10] that happens to completely undercut that assumption and, therefore, undermines the readings erected on them.

Setting the Table

This particular table has been set by editors Elizabeth Fenton and Jared Hickman. Fenton is a professor of English and a Catholic scholar at the University of Vermont. In a review of Grant Hardy's *Understanding the Book of Mormon* published in the *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies*, she recounted how she was given a Book of Mormon on Halloween by two sister missionaries that she had mistaken for trick-or-treaters. After reading the book, she reports that "I wanted to enter this conversation as a scholar of early US literature and as someone who loved the book immediately upon reading it but did not believe it to be a sacred text."[11]

Hickman is an associate professor of English, now teaching at John Hopkins University. He made a splash in academic circles by publishing an essay called "*The Book of Mormon* as Amerindian Apocalypse" in 2014.[12] Here is the abstract:

> *The Book of Mormon* is perhaps best known in Americanist circles as a version of the Indians-as-Israelites theory. It features the racialized division of the progeny of the text's founding diasporic Jewish figure, Lehi, into wicked "Lamanites," who are cursed with "a skin of blackness" and were understood by the earliest readers to be the ancestors

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9. For a scriptural exposition on expansion, enlargement, and fruitful discoveries, see Alma 32.

10. Ethan Sproat, "Skins as Garments in the Book of Mormon: A Textual Exegesis," *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 24/1 (2015), 138–64, https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1572&context=jbms.

11. Elizabeth Fenton, "Understanding the Book of Mormon," *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 25 (2016), 38, https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/jbms/vol25/iss1/5/.

12. Jared Hickman, "*The Book of Mormon* as Amerindian Apocalypse," *American Literature* 86.3 (September 2014), 429–61, https://doi.org/10.1215/00029831-2717371.

of Amerindian peoples, and the righteous "Nephites," the fair-skinned narrators of *The Book of Mormon*. This essay shows how *The Book of Mormon's* foundational raci(al)ist orthodoxy autodeconstructs, and in so doing not only offers a vision of racial apocalypse diametrically opposed to what would come to be known as Manifest Destiny — one resonant with contemporaneous Amerindian prophetic movements — but also challenges the literalist hermeneutics that found warrant for Euro-Christian colonization in the transcendental authority of "the Bible alone."

Hickman's essay has a clear influence on the construction and content of *Americanist Approaches*; though not included, it is cited by several authors in the volume. In their introduction, Fenton and Hickman describe the Book of Mormon's account of Nephites and Lamanites this way:

This spiritual distinction is underscored in the text in two ways: by privileging the Nephite perspective — they are the narrators of *The Book of Mormon*; and by racializing the Lamanites as undesirably nonwhite — the Nephite narrative describes them as "curs[ed]" with a "skin of blackness." However, the text also undermines this distinction: by depicting phases of Lamanite righteousness and Nephite wickedness, but, above all, by having the Lamanites eventually emerge, within the narrative frame, as the victors of a millennium of intermittent warfare and by making their descendants — widely understood by early Mormons to be contemporary Native American — the narrative's most pertinent addressees. (2)

Fenton and Hickman discuss the challenges in dealing with the Book of Mormon in an academic setting by nonbelievers:

On the basis of that description, one can perhaps readily see why *The Book of Mormon* has been deemed by many Americanist scholars as either too hot to handle or unworthy of handling with care. (2)

In the course of discussing various critical approaches they make a very good observation as to why different approaches to any text might be called for at different times:

When certain established ways of reading a text are perceived as having obscured key elements of the text, a recommitment

to the primariness of the primary text is justified, which of course skews the secondary field in different directions, requiring subsequent recommitments to the primary text. Indeed, this seems a working description of how the business of literary criticism actually works. (7)

I quote this passage to show the editors' approach and also to foreshadow what I intend to do further along. They describe their position as follows:

The thesis here is simple: An attentive surface reading of *The Book of Mormon* shows that it arguably never portrays itself as an ancient text, that is, a text in any conventional sense composed within and thus conditioned by the limited spatiotemporal context of seventh-century BCE Palestine or third-century CE Central America. (7)

They justify this thesis by citing what they perceive as "ostentatious anachronism" (9) and say that "Americanists are only doing what *The Book of Mormon* asks by reading it as a text that speaks primarily to the American nineteenth century in which it knew, so to speak, it would come forth" (9).

The first essay by Julian Sayre, "Books Buried in the Earth: *The Book of Mormon*, Revelation, and the Humic Foundations of the Nation," briefly discusses the famous "mound-builder theories" (35) in the relation to the Book of Mormon. In another essay, "How the Mormons Became White: Scripture, Sex, Sovereignty," Peter Coviello delves further:

In this way, *The Book of Mormon* adapts itself to a series of drearily familiar racist tropes of the American nineteenth century: about Indians as remnants of the lost tribes of Israel, or, more saliently, about nonwhiteness as a God-ordained and indelible accursedness. *The Book of Mormon*, we might say, swallows these conventional racist premises whole, and metabolizes them into an intractably racist cosmology, haphazardly wrought round with a settler-colonial white supremacism that will be unfamiliar to few students of antebellum America. (259)

Having administered this blow, Coviello then discusses the kinds of things Hickman had argued in his "Amerindian Apocalypse" essay, noting how the Lamanites do turn out to be the recipients of blessings and later Latter-day Saint appreciation. He produces some back and forth on the topic but makes pointed mention of an interpretive tendency "that reads *The Book of Mormon* as a text overspilling with

the racial presumptions of its moment of composition: a recapitulation of nineteenth-century colonizing racism at its most uncontoured" (261).

Fenton's follow-up essay, titled "Nephites and Israelites," makes further comparisons, and significant contrasts, between "*The Book of Mormon* and the Hebraic Indian Theory" (277). Kimberly Berkey and Joseph Spencer provide another related exploration in "'Great Cause to Mourn': The Complexity of *The Book of Mormon*'s Presentation of Gender and Race," which includes comparison and contrast of Jacob's early critique of Nephites compared to Lamanites (citing the racist-sounding curse) and the later critique offered by Samuel the Lamanite toward the Nephites from the position of despised outsider.

Several of the essays resonate with the perspectives of Hickman's "Amerindian Apocalypse":

> In sum, although the white Nephite narrators, like many nineteenth-century romantic racialists, accept being upstaged by the dark Other, they reserve for themselves the indispensable function of stage-managing the eschatological drama. For all its self-critique, the eschatology proffered by the white Nephite narrators preserves, in somewhat softer form, white Nephite superiority and centrality.[13]

Notice that in making this judgment and offering this reading, Hickman has occupied an analogous function of stage-managing his own twenty-first-century academic superiority. This is the sort of circumstance for which the Irony Police should exist. Though, of course, they will come for me too, this situation being "turtles all the way down," as the saying goes.[14]

Ethan Sproat as Uninvited to the Table

A few years ago I read a 2015 essay in the *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies,* called "Skins as Garments in the Book of Mormon," by Ethan Sproat, who has a PhD in English rhetoric and composition and teaches at Utah Valley University. He makes a detailed case that the racial reading of the Lamanite curse and Nephite whiteness was a distortion of Mormon's text caused by nineteenth-century readers seeing what they already thought they knew. I have already quoted several passages in which several contributors to *Americanist Approaches* emphasize that

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13. Hickman, "Amerindian Apocalypse," 443, https://archive.org/stream/pdfy-pfKehmZYZ4d6yse1/hickman-amerindian-apocalypse_djvu.txt.

14. See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Turtles_all_the_way_down.

the racism they see in the Book of Mormon reflects something that was preexisting and deeply rooted in American culture. Sproat, I noticed, had read Hickman's "Amerindian Apocalypse" essay and refers to its arguments in his essay.[15]

When I read Sproat's essay, I was powerfully impressed and immediately spent some time looking around the web to see how much discussion that essay has generated. At the time, I noticed only a couple of footnotes at the *Book of Mormon Central* website and one mention at the *By Common Consent* website in discussion of a Michael Austin post.[16] Fairly early in the blog discussion, a reader pointed to Sproat's recent essay and asked whether anyone had read it. The discussion of Austin's post went on for a few dozen comments, but apparently no one bothered to read Sproat's essay or consider its profound implications for the discussion. One commentator at *By Common Consent* made this statement as a direct response to the recommendation that Sproat's essay even be considered:

> I've seen arguments by those who try to explain that "skin" in the Book of Mormon really means a "spiritual skin," something metaphorical. But that is what we might call wresting the scriptures. It's an attempt to take the inherent racist attitudes that are plain in the book and twist them to something more politically correct. It's very obvious that "skin" in the Book of Mormon means "skin." Just as "north" means "north," not some other direction.[17]

That particular comment stands out to me in relation to this leading point in Sproat's essay:

> Alma 3:5–6 is comprised of two sentences, in each of which the word *skin(s)* appears. Commentaries handle the two

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15. Sproat refers to Hickman's essay in 143n12 and 143n13. It is also of interest that Joseph Spencer was the editor of the *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* when Sproat's essay appeared, and that Kimberly Berkey also had an essay in that same volume. However, in Berkey and Spencer's essay on gender and race for *Americanist Approaches* (298–320), while they approvingly cite Hickman's "Amerindan Apocalypse" (316n8, 318n24, 319n32), they do not mention Sproat. Why? If anyone in *Americanist Approaches* could have been expected to mention Sproat in an essay on race in the Book of Mormon, it was them.

16. Michael Austin, "Laman's Curse: Etiology and Race in the Book of Mormon," *By Common Consent* (blog), February 3, 2016, https://bycommonconsent.com/2016/02/03/65607/.

17. Comment by Lew Scannon, February 4, 2016, at 12:25 pm, https://bycommonconsent.com/2016/02/03/65607/#comment-366408.

sentences in one of three ways: (1) by treating both of them independently, as if two very different things were at issue; (2) by commenting on only the second of the two sentences, remaining silent about the first; or (3) by failing to comment on either sentence. All three of these approaches miss the fact that, when read in context, the use of *skins* in the second sentence appears to form part of a historical explanation of the use of *skin* in the first sentence. Here is the text:

> Now the heads of the Lamanites were shorn; and they were naked, save it were *skin* which was girded about their loins, and also their armor, which was girded about them, and their bows, and their arrows, and their stones, and their slings, and so forth. And the *skins* of the Lamanites were dark, according to the mark which was set upon their fathers, which was a curse upon them because of their transgression and their rebellion against their brethren, who consisted of Nephi, Jacob, and Joseph, and Sam, who were just and holy men. (Alma 3:5–6)

According to a reading I will defend in the course of this article, this passage suggests the possibility that "the skins of the Lamanites" are to be understood as articles of clothing, the notable girdle of skin that these particular Lamanites wear to cover their nakedness. Significantly, these are the only two references to skins in Alma 3, which contains the Book of Mormon's most thorough explanation of the Lamanite curse and the curse's relationship to skins. Thus situated, Alma 3:5–6 might serve as an interpretive Rosetta stone. If both instances of skins in Alma 3:5–6 refer to clothing, then the other five references to various-colored or cursed skins in the Book of Mormon could also refer to clothing and not — as traditionally assumed — to human flesh pigmentation.[18]

Notice the knee-jerk argument I quoted earlier, that "skin means skin," the appeal to "obviousness," the charge of "wresting the scriptures," and no evidence that the one who made the objection had read or considered the scriptural evidence cited in Sproat's essay. Notably in Alma 3:5-6, the reference to "skin girded about their loins" contradicts the objection that

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18. Sproat, "Skins as Garments," 139-40.

"skin means skin," that is the word *skin always* and obviously refers to human epidermis. Skins can also be garments.[19]

Not only did our dismissive commentator fail to read or consider Sproat's essay, but he justified his neglect by invoking a paradigmatic narrative: "It's an attempt to take the inherent racist attitudes that are plain in the book and twist them to something more politically correct." The narrative is based entirely on what he imagines of Sproat, rather than on any direct observation or engagement with Sproat's arguments.

Sadly, this sort of ideological dismissal is not uncommon in human experience. Ironically, it demonstrates exactly the sort of mental shortcut that supports any prejudice, including racism. We all filter and value our facts through a set of internalized stories and metaphors. Hayden White explains:

> We should no longer naively expect that statements about a given epoch or complex of events in the past "correspond" to some pre-existent body of "raw facts." For we should recognize that *what constitutes the facts themselves* is the problem that the historian, like the artist, has tried to solve in the choice of the metaphor by which he orders his world, past, present, and future.[20]

The commenter at *By Common Consent* solves the problem of addressing the arguments made in Sproat's essay by creating a narrative/metaphor by which he ordered his world — past, present, and indeed, future — in which "there is nothing to see here folks, move along." Yet, having read Sproat, I can affirm that there *is* something to see, and would invite readers to stop and take the time to feast.

Sproat's essay is important and profound and packs its pages with an extensive and coherent set of arguments that range far beyond the two passages in Alma 3, including Hebrew syntax, temple and covenant contexts, and priesthood vestments. He does mention several Book of Mormon passages that discuss clean and filthy garments, but he could have added many more. I, and others, have long noticed that Book of

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19. And on the commenter's related point about *north* means "north," see Brant A. Gardner, "From the East to the West: The Problem of Direction in the Book of Mormon," presentation at the 2012 Fair Conference, https://www.fairmormon.org/conference/august-2012/from-the-east-to-the-west-the-problem-of-directions-in-the-book-of-mormon. See also Lawrence Poulson, "Book of Mormon Geography," presentation at the 2008 FAIR Conference, https://www.fairmormon.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/11/2008-Larry-Poulsen.pdf.

20. Hayden V. White, "The Burden of History," *History and Theory* 5.2 (1966), 131, https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/pb-assets/assets/14682303/1BurdenofHistory1966-1526389876757.pdf.

Mormon passages consistently discuss garments and robes in ways that directly parallel the passages about white, pure, and filthy skins. Here I present a representative sampling of such passages.

- **1 Nephi 21:18:** "Lift up thine eyes round about and behold; all these gather themselves together, and they shall come to thee. And as I live, saith the Lord, thou shalt surely clothe them all, as with an ornament, and bind them on even as a bride."
- **2 Nephi 7:3:** "I clothe the heavens with blackness, and I make sackcloth their covering" (quoting Isaiah 50:3 in a section discussing how people forsake God by violating covenants).
- **2 Nephi 9:14:** "being clothed with purity, yea, even with the robe of righteousness" (Jacob speaking as a consecrated High Priest on the Day of Atonement)
- **Jacob 1:19:** "by laboring with our might their blood might not come upon our garments; otherwise their blood would come upon our garments, and we would not be found spotless at the last day."
- **Jacob 3:5:** "the cursing which hath come upon their skins"
- **Jacob 3:8–9:** "their skins will be whiter than yours … revile no more against them because of the darkness of their skins"
- **Mosiah 2:28:** "I have caused that ye should assemble yourselves together that I might rid my garments of your blood" (King Benjamin speaking at the temple as High Priest with a Day of Atonement context).
- **Alma 5:21–24:** Garments stained with blood and all manner of filthiness contrasted with prophets whose garments are cleansed and are spotless, pure, and white
- **Alma 7:25:** "having your garments spotless … in the kingdom of heaven"
- **Alma 13:11–12:** "garments were washed white through the blood of the Lamb ... garments made white, being pure and spotless before God"
- **Alma 34:36:** "in his kingdom … their garments should be made white through the blood of the Lamb"
- **Helaman 9:31–34:** A prophetic story in which the symbolic use and the literal use combine, as the blood on garments testify to a murder committed

- **3 Nephi 11:8:** "And it came to pass, as they understood they cast their eyes up again towards heaven; and behold, they saw a Man descending out of heaven; and he was clothed in a white robe."
- **3 Nephi 19:25:** "And it came to pass that Jesus blessed them as they did pray unto him; and his countenance did smile upon them, and the light of his countenance did shine upon them, and behold, they were as white as the countenance, and also the garments of Jesus; and behold the whiteness thereof did exceed all the whiteness, yea there could be nothing upon earth so white as the whiteness thereof."
- **3 Nephi 19:29–30:** Jesus prays "that they may be purified in me … as thou, Father, art in me; … and behold they did pray steadfastly, without ceasing, unto him; and he did smile upon them again; and behold they were white, even as Jesus" (compare with Moroni 7: the sons of God, … we shall be like him … purified even as he is pure").
- **3 Nephi 27:19:** "no unclean thing can enter into his kingdom … save it be those who have washed their garments in my blood."
- **4 Nephi 24:** pride and costly apparel again appear among the people.
- **Mormon 9:34:** Garments and the priestly obligation to testify to "rid our garments of the blood of our brethren"
- **Ether 12:37:** "thy garments shall be made clean, … sitting down in the place which I have prepared in the mansions of my Father."
- **Ether 12:38:** "my garments are not spotted with your blood"
- **Moroni 10:31:** "put on thy beautiful garments, O daughter of Zion"

Commentators such as Hugh Nibley, John Sorenson, Brant Gardner, and Matt Roper have long noted that in the Book of Mormon, *Lamanite* very early on becomes a generic political designation rather than one of genealogy, "friendlies and unfriendlies," rather than good guys and bad guys.

> Now the people which were not Lamanites were Nephites; nevertheless, they were called Nephites, Jacobites, Josephites, Zoramites, Lamanites, Lemuelites, and Ishmaelites. But I, Jacob, shall not hereafter distinguish them by these names, but I shall call them Lamanites that seek to destroy the people

of Nephi, and those who are friendly to Nephi I shall call
Nephites, or the people of Nephi. (Jacob 1:13–14)

The supposed division as white and righteous Nephites versus
cursed and dark and unrighteous Lamanites runs aground on the very
next verse in Jacob, which says that "the people of Nephi, under the
reign of the second king, began to grow hard in their hearts, and indulge
themselves somewhat in wicked practices" (Jacob 1:15).

Beyond this, Nibley, Sorenson, and Gardner have for decades cited
Ancient Near Eastern colloquialisms that use "skin of blackness" imagery
and language in the Book of Mormon for the same purpose that Sproat
discerns. Sproat mentions such work in his essay, but then states that
"it should also be noted that such Near Eastern cultural observations
ultimately originate outside the actual text of the Book of Mormon or
KJV."[21] His own argument focuses on the internal Book of Mormon text.

While several of the authors in *Americanist Approaches* note and
appreciate the role-shifting tension between Nephites and Lamanites
in the Book of Mormon, any consideration of authors who brought in
Ancient Near Eastern or Mesoamerican cultural backgrounds has been
ruled out by the premises of their Americanist approach.

> Science does not deal in all possible laboratory manipulations.
> Instead, it selects those relevant to the juxtaposition of a paradigm
> with the immediate experience that the paradigm has partially
> determined. As a result, scientists with different paradigms
> engage in different concrete laboratory manipulations.[22]

The conspicuous lack of mention or response to Sproat's essay — let
alone response to any significant work done by people such as Nibley,
Sorenson, Roper, Welch, Gardner, and scores of others — is a consequence
of how *Americanist Approaches* embodies a paradigmatic limitation on
the acceptable "methods, problem-field, and standards of solution."[23]
Indeed, *Americanist Approaches* takes a frankly and formally hostile
attitude toward any serious discussion of the work of by Latter-day Saint
scholars who argue for the historicity of the Book of Mormon.

> When it repudiates a past [or current rival] paradigm,
> a scientific community simultaneously renounces, as a fit

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21. Sproat, "Skins as Garments," 145n14.
22. Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions,* 4th ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012), 126
23. Ibid., 103.

subject for professional scrutiny, most of the books and articles in which that paradigm had been embodied.[24]

The limitation on "methods, problem-field, and standards of solution" in *Americanist Approaches* is done for understandable purposes, to enable a conversation, "an experiment upon" even "a portion" of the words (Alma 32:27) in the Book of Mormon. But such choices also limit what we, as readers, can see and consider. At least, such choices limit what is served at that table. There are, though, other tables to choose from, and that means some means of comparison is necessary.

On the Problem with Seeing What We Expect and Obviousness

Thomas Kuhn reports that "no part of the aim of normal science is to call forth new sorts of phenomena; indeed those that will not fit the box are not often seen at all. … Normal-scientific research is directed to the articulation of those phenomena and theories that the paradigm already supplies."[25] He describes an experiment in which subjects were to "identify on short and controlled exposure a series of playing cards. Many of the cards were normal, but some were made anomalous, e.g., a red six of spades and a black four of hearts."[26] He describes how initially, "the anomalous cards were almost always identified, without apparent hesitation or puzzlement, as normal. The black four of hearts might, for example, be identified as the four of either spades or hearts. Without any awareness of trouble, it was immediately fitted to one of the conceptual categories prepared by prior experience."[27] It generally took time before subjects noticed that something was off, and that led to a period of confusion, until *most* subjects finally learned to see what was there, instead of what they expected to see.

I've personally experienced a similar sort of blindness when, for example, my wife asks me to get some food item in the kitchen, and my expectation of one kind of package blinds me to the presence of what I seek in a different form. Kuhn tells the story to make the point that "in science, as in the playing card experiment, novelty emerges only with difficulty, manifested by resistance, against a background provided by expectation."[28] This sort of thing is also the point of the New Testament story in which Nicodemus says to Jesus, "How can a man be born when

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24. Ibid., 166, bracketed text inserted by me.
25. Ibid., 24.
26. Ibid., 62-63.
27. Ibid., 63.
28. Ibid., 64.

he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb, and be born?" (John 3:4). After making an explanation based on the Temple traditions and Nicodemus still resists, Jesus asks, "Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?" (John 3:10). As Margaret Barker explains, the point of this kind of story in John is to demonstrate that the "Jews no longer understood their own heritage."[29]

One of the important observations made by several of the authors in *Americanist Approaches* who discuss apparent racial issues in the Book of Mormon is that the nineteenth-century readers did not approach the text as blank slates, but came as readers prepared by their times and cultures with a set of conceptual categories and preexisting narratives such as the "Mound Builder Myth." Indeed, I noted how several *Americanist Approaches* authors make a point of commenting on how it seems to them the Book of Mormon expresses "all too familiar" nineteenth-century racial attitudes. If we take Sproat's observations seriously, that inherent, preexisting cultural baggage was the problem, and their cultural preconditioning too easily becomes an obstacle to our understanding the Book of Mormon text. That is, the nineteenth-century view seriously handicaps our perception.[30]

The problem of preexisting attitudes and expectations as impediments to learning is one of the themes of the Book of Mormon and the Bible. Nephi pointedly discusses how "there is none other people that understand the things which were spoken unto the Jews like unto them, save it be that they are taught after the manner of the things of the Jews" (2 Nephi 25:5). Jesus states that we're much better off being self-critical first, examining our own eyes for beams, before rushing to judgment; "then shalt thou see clearly" (Matthew 7:5). Jesus uses the parable of the sower (Mark 4:1–33) to explain that the same words can

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29. See Margaret Barker, *Temple Mysticism: An Introduction* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 2011), 100–103. Also Margaret Barker, *King of the Jews: Temple Theology in John's Gospel* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 2014), 198–205. "Nicodemus did not understand this language of divine birth, and yet it had once been in the Hebrew Scriptures; the royal birth ritual was described in Psalm 110, but 'corrected' out of the Hebrew text as a blasphemy, and then rebranded and redefined by Deuteronomy" (Ibid., 200).

30. My review of Dan Vogel's *Indian Origins and the Book of Mormon* makes a case that even the Wentworth Letter misreads the Book of Mormon in several ways due to this kind of cultural preconditioning. See Kevin Christensen, "Dan Vogel, *Indian Origins and the Book of Mormon*," *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon* 2/1 (1990), 214–57, https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1073&context=msr.

yield very different harvests, depending on the context in which they are placed and the care and nurture given.

For instance, in the Book of Mormon the word *language* sometimes refers to Hebrew, Egyptian, Reformed Egyptian, or the unknown language of the 24 Jaredite plates. Other times, though, it refers to what is literally "on the tongues" of the people in the sense of the topics of conversation and the attitudes expressed. At times, readers should be cautious as to which meaning best applies, as in the appearance of Sherem in Jacob 7:4. In 3 Nephi, Jesus talks about the notion of other sheep, and how the Old World disciples "because of stiffneckedness and unbelief they understood not my word" (3 Nephi 15:18). Even though they were committed disciples, they misunderstood in large measure because they "supposed" they understood what Jesus was talking about (3 Nephi 15:22). Later, Jesus tells the multitude at the Temple in 3 Nephi that "ye are weak, that ye cannot understand all my words" and urges them to go and "prepare your minds" (3 Nephi 17:2–3). In the New Testament, Jesus talks about how nobody "having drunk old wine straightway desireth new: for he saith, The old is better" (Luke 5:39).

Personally, I've tried the new wine, and I like it better. I admit the appeal of having a foundational text that is not inherently racist, but I also assert that I have broader basis for my preference than a desire to adhere to learned, modern cultural values. Before reading Sproat I had read Nibley, Sorenson, Gardner, Roper, and others, as well as the Book of Mormon on my own. I believe Sproat's general case is testable, accurate in its key predictions, comprehensive and coherent over a broad range of material, with cultural evidence previously asserted by Nibley, Sorenson, Gardner and others. I find the approach fruitful, aesthetically pleasing, and promising. For those reasons, I find it a better reading than those offered in *Americanist Approaches* on this issue. Sproat himself concludes:

> Rather than attempting, like earlier interpretations, to make the Book of Mormon cohere with current sensibilities, I mean here to examine the text itself more closely to suggest a different interpretive model that is more internally coherent than previous models. As with any new contribution to any larger conversation of textual interpretations, I look forward to seeing how those who adhere to previous interpretations might respond to the interpretive model I've articulated throughout this article.

> More to the point, those who want to claim that the Nephites are white and the Lamanites are black in a racial sense must especially justify their position through careful reanalysis of the relevant texts.[31]

What reasons might there be for resisting or dismissing or ignoring Sproat's approach? There is appeal to tradition and the opinions of traditional Latter-day Saint authorities, as well the opinions of those highly educated writers in *Americanist Approaches* who build their cases within that traditional view. Even Kuhn indicates that one notable reason scientists sometimes use to justify a paradigm choice and resist new ideas is the reputation or nationality of particular teachers.[32] However, Kuhn does not recommend such appeals to authority and tradition as the most important and relevant values upon which to base important decisions. And the Latter-day Saint scriptures do not enshrine traditional understandings and traditional authorities as absolute or infallible. Quite the opposite.

What about Latter-day Saints and what we can realistically expect from our leaders? The Lord has recognized their humanity from the beginning, bluntly stating, "inasmuch as they erred it might be made known" (D&C 1:25) and declares that learning is conditioned on both inquiry and knowledge that comes from time to time. And our regular ritual of sustaining our leaders is based on a word whose meanings include "endure," "suffer," and "allow."

Of the Latter-day Saints, Joseph Smith observes that

> there has been a great difficulty in getting anything into the heads of this generation. It has been like splitting hemlock knots with a corn-dodger for a wedge, and a pumpkin for a beetle. Even the Saints are slow to understand.
>
> I have tried for a number of years to get the minds of the Saints prepared to receive the things of God; but we frequently see some of them, after suffering all they have for the work of God, will fly to pieces like glass as soon as anything comes that is contrary to their traditions: they cannot stand the fire at all.[33]

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31. Sproat, "Skins as Garments," 165. Further, if racial language was intended, why not red Lamanites, rather than black? What language would make the most sense for Joseph Smith to use in a nineteenth-century environment, in a text about "the former inhabitants of the land?"

32. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 152–53.

33. *History of the Church*, 6:184–85; from a discourse given by Joseph Smith on January 21, 1844, in Nauvoo, Illinois. Reported by Wilford

Jesus himself asks, "Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?" (Matthew 15:3) and tells the parable of the wine bottles, targeting the minds of those who reflexively assume that "the old is better" (Luke 5:37-39). Again, Nephi says that we cannot "understand the things which were spoken unto the Jews … save [we] are taught after the manner of the things of the Jews" (2 Nephi 25:5). Kuhn illustrates the process:

> Looking at a contour map, the student sees lines on paper, the cartographer a picture of a terrain. Looking at a bubble-chamber photograph, the student sees confused and broken lines, the physicist a record of familiar subnuclear events. Only after a number of such transformations of vision does the student become an inhabitant of the scientist's world, seeing what the scientist sees and responding as the scientist does.[34]

So it takes practice and experience for a newcomer to see what the practiced and experienced see as obvious. But there are circumstances in which what a person has learned to see as "obvious" can be tragically misleading, as Shakespeare's Othello would be all too able to tell you. That is also the point of Kuhn calling his book *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, describing the kind of circumstances in which, "led by a new paradigm, scientists adopt new instruments and look in new places. Even more important, during revolutions scientists see new and different things when looking with familiar instruments in places they have looked before. It is rather as if the professional community had been suddenly transported to another planet where familiar objects are seen in a different light and are joined by unfamiliar ones as well."[35]

Some critics, seeing themselves as obviously superior moral beings, savor comparing their views to retrograde attitudes seemingly expressed in the Book of Mormon and those expressed by various Latter-day Saints, past and present. If I accept Sproat's reading, I have to acknowledge my own past errors and my personal and community susceptibility to misreading. I have to acknowledge that there have been beams in my own eye that I had to remove to see clearly (Matthew 7:1-5). I have to acknowledge that I might have to repent of something. However, by rejecting Sproat and others who argue in consonant ways, I would remain in a position to judge the Book of Mormon as racist and would

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Woodruff, journal available at https://catalog.churchofjesuschrist.org/assets/09e6d1b1-cd59-41d4-bc46-e3d74899ceac/0/195.

34. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 112.

35. Ibid., 111

have leverage and reason to position myself in moral opposition (and moral superiority) to it and the community that it defines. That reading of inherent racism removes my personal need to repent and leaves that necessity in the laps of the benighted Latter-day Saints. For some people, the reversal of moral high ground that accepting Sproat's case involves would be undesirable for social reasons.

> Like the choice between competing political institutions, that between competing paradigms proves to be a choice between incompatible modes of community life. Because it has that character, the choice is not and cannot be determined merely by the evaluative procedures characteristic of normal science, for these depend in part upon a particular paradigm, and that paradigm is at issue. When paradigms enter, as they must, into a debate about paradigm choice, their role is necessarily circular. Each group uses its own paradigm to argue in that paradigm's defense.[36]

On Puzzles and Counterinstances

Kuhn observes that "every problem that normal science sees as a puzzle can be seen, from another viewpoint, as a counterinstance and thus as a source of crisis."[37] And "since no paradigm ever solves all the problems it defines and since no two paradigms leave all the same problems unsolved, paradigm debates always involve the question: Which problems is it more significant to have solved?"[38]

From the outset, Fenton and Hickman declare that anachronism is the most important problem to have solved with respect to defining their approach to the Book of Mormon. That is, they see apparent anachronism as definitive counterinstances that determine both the validity of their approach and the futility of even considering historicity. In their words, the Book of Mormon "is a remarkably assured and comprehensive prolepsis. Its anachronism is unembarrassedly integral" (7).

> That is, the text is self-consciously and committedly anachronistic and asks to be entertained as such. … If this premise is granted, the historicity debate suddenly looks quite different. Specifically, arguments for *The Book of Mormon*'s modernity become depolemicized to the extent it is conceded that the text actually does not pretend to be ancient or artifactual but rather flaunts the

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36. Ibid., 94
37. Ibid., 80.
38. Ibid., 109.

fact that its narrative form and content are ultimately determined by an implied reader — or, more strongly, a prophetically presenced reader — that is modern. (8–9)

What evidence is offered that the Book of Mormon is a modern composition? Various authors mention Hebrew origin theories circulating before and during Joseph Smith's lifetime, the supposed conformity of the Book of Mormon to unsavory white supremacy narratives, and New Testament language anachronistically appearing in the Book of Mormon. But there is, by design, no serious engagement with the Latter-day Saint scholarship that makes the case for antiquity and that has addressed the question of anachronism. The one passage that gets cited by various authors in *Americanist Approaches* is this passage: "I speak the same words unto one nation like unto another. And when the two nations shall run together the testimony of the two nations shall run together also" (2 Nephi 29:8). They see it as a possible "reasonable" explanation, and also a possible "get out of jail free" card that the Saints uncritically use to cover a multitude of intellectual and textual sins.

But there is much more to the topic of anachronism than has been allowed at the *Americanist Approaches* table. As Kuhn says, "No part of the aim of normal science is to call forth new sorts of phenomena; indeed those that will not fit the box are often not seen at all."[39] I've been exploring the charge for more than three decades, being attentive to the work of others and occasionally making my own contributions. Consider one offhand remark by Grant Hardy in his contribution to *Americanist Approaches*, drawing on Blake Ostler's famous 1987 *Dialogue* essay on "The Book of Mormon as a Modern Expansion of an Ancient Source."

> For instance, Blake Ostler has pointed out how a discussion at 2 Ne 9:12–18 concerning deliverance from spiritual death and temporal death (a nonbiblical distinction common in the nineteenth century) incorporates multiple phrases from Matthew, Hebrews, and Revelation. At the same time, he notes that this is not simply a linguistic overlay: "Jacob's speech reinterprets the KJV snippets into a new synthesis on death, resurrection, and judgement. … These phrases may represent interpretation of an original text using the KJV New Testament and a nineteenth-century theological framework. Yet it is clear that the KJV New Testament phrases have become part of the structure itself. (128)

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39. Ibid., 24.

Now while both Hardy and Ostler make numerous excellent observations, I, at least, notice that it is possible to compare the same 2 Nephi 9:12–18 passages with various Old Testament and *1 Enoch* passages as well as composition techniques demonstrated in the Dead Sea Scrolls. I did just that in an essay published in 1990.[40] I have seen claims to have found that decisively telling anachronism be undercut by new information scores of times.[41] Indeed, I took the notion that the Book of Mormon is

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40. Christensen, "Dan Vogel, *Indian Origins and the Book of Mormon*," 241–46.

41. Consider a review by Matt Roper of Jerald and Sandra Tanner's *Covering Up the Black Hole in the Book of Mormon* (Matthew Roper, "Jerald and Sandra Tanner, *Covering Up the Black Hole in the Book of Mormon*," *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon* 3/1 (1990), 171–81, https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1054&context=msr). Roper responds to the Tanners' charges of anachronistic New Testament plagiarism based on computer research. Roper notes that he used the same computer media and that the Tanners failed to note where the New Testament phrasing they cited had Old Testament verbal and conceptual equivalents. John Tvedtnes provided a separate review in the same volume (John A. Tvedtnes, "Jerald and Sandra Tanner, *Covering Up the Black Hole in the Book of Mormon*," *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon* 3/1 (1990), 188–230, https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1057&context=msr). Tvedtnes's review also includes a detailed discussion of supposed New Testament anachronisms.

In a subsequent issue of the *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon* 6/2 (1994), 235–36, Tvedtnes also showed how much of the Gettysburg address uses Biblical language, while remaining an original composition, applying "Bible words to *entirely different circumstances,* yet were appropriate to those circumstances." (See John A. Tvedtnes, "Jerald and Sandra Tanner, *Answering Mormon Scholars: A Response to Criticism of the Book 'Covering Up the Black Hole in the Book of Mormon*," *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon* 6/2 (1994), 137, https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1227&context=msr.)   See, also, John A. Tvedtnes and Matthew Roper, "'Joseph Smith's Use of the Apocrypha': Shadow or Reality?," *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon* 8/2 (1996), 326–72, https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1306&context=msr.

In a recent essay Nicholas Frederick indicated that "the task of identifying New Testament parallels within the Book of Mormon has largely been taken up by those hostile to the Book of Mormon, such as Jerald and Sandra Tanner" (Nicholas J. Frederick, "Evaluating the Interaction between the New Testament and the Book of Mormon: A Proposed Methodology," *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 24/1 (2015), 4n6, https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1567&context=jbms.). Frederick does not mention the detailed responses to the Tanners by Tvedtnes and Roper, nor the several others who would be relevant to the issue. I noticed, for instance, several places where Margaret Barker's work would be relevant to his concerns. For example, compare Frederick, "Evaluating the Interaction," 7, around "believing on his name" with Margaret Barker, *The Great Angel: A Study of Israel's Second God* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1992),

obviously "too Christian before Christ" as a puzzle to consider, rather than as a counterinstance that settles the whole problem by itself. There is an important dimension of the Book of Mormon as "too Christian before Christ" that these authors do not touch.[42] It was my awareness of the puzzle that enabled me to see the significance of Margaret Barker's scholarship.[43] With no thought whatsoever of the Book of Mormon but rather a desire to explore Christian origins, she sought to recover First Temple Judaism and to independently describe what was going on in Jerusalem in the days of Josiah and Jeremiah as crucial for finding the roots of Christianity. If I had despaired of the puzzle before chancing upon Barker's *The Great Angel* on a visit to a Dallas bookstore in 1999, I would not only have missed crucial knowledge and what has become a great intellectual and spiritual adventure, but I also would not have even known what I was missing.

I've often quoted Ian Barbour on the limits of verification and of falsification:

> No scientific theory can be *verified*. One cannot prove that a theory is true by showing that conclusions deduced from it agree with experiment, since (1) future experiments may

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208–12, on what "the name" meant in First Temple theology. But Frederick does not consider Barker. The *Book of Mormon Central* website also addresses the issue of New Testament phrasing, see https://knowhy.bookofmormoncentral.org/knowhy/why-do-new-testament-words-and-phrases-show-up-in-the-book-of-mormon

42. One book mentioned by several *Americanist Approaches* authors is Ethan Smith's *View of the Hebrews*. In a review of BYU's 1996 edition of that book, Andrew Hedges considers the "long and venerable" tradition that book exemplified, and shows that "it is generally so complex as to be quite inflexible, based as it is on a relatively conservative reading of the biblical text and a number of suppositions so independent that if one of them should prove false, the whole model would collapse" (Andrew H. Hedges, *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon* 9/1 (1997), 65, https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1325&context=msr). "In positing the Indians as a remnant of the lost tribes, for over 200 years, the churchmen never "at any time debate the possibility that the Indians' ancestors knew of Christ's birth before the event, had engaged in such New Testament practices as baptism in Old Testament times, and had been visited by Christ after his resurrection. This was because the mere suggestion of these things would have done violence to their understanding of the Bible, contemporary evidence from Indian cultures themselves, and other parts of the model" (ibid.).

43. Kevin Christensen, "Paradigms Regained: A Survey of Margaret Barker's Scholarship and Its Significance for Mormon Studies," *FARMS Occasional Papers* 2 (2001).

> conflict with the theory, and (2) another theory may be equally compatible with present evidence.[44]

> Discordant data *do not always falsify a theory*. One can never test an individual hypothesis conclusively in a "crucial experiment"; for if a deduction is not confirmed experimentally, one cannot be sure which one, from among the many assumptions on which the deduction was based, was in error. A network of theories and observations is always tested together. Any particular hypothesis can be maintained by rejecting or adjusting other auxiliary hypotheses.[45]

In proposing the notion of "ostentatious anachronism" (9), consider the network of assumptions involved in justifying such judgments. The Book of Mormon claims that it is an inspired translation and interpretation of ancient records. One of the meanings of *translate* from the 1828 Webster's dictionary is to "carry across." In latter-day revelation, the Lord describes how he gives commandments "unto my servants in their weakness, after the manner of their language, that they might come unto understanding" (D&C 1:24). So according to the believing account, we have a text with multiple authors and editors, the first of whom had access to more than what we have in the Hebrew Old Testament (1 Nephi 13:23–41); and some of whom report that at one point the resurrected Jesus takes a role not only as a provider of words (3 Nephi 11–28) but also in some respects as an editor of their records (3 Nephi 23:6–14). Finally the last editors/contributors report "I was visited of the Lord and I tasted and knew of the goodness of Jesus" (Mormon 1:15) and "that I have seen Jesus, and that he hath talked with me face to face" (Ether 12:39). So neither the Book of Mormon authors nor the editors nor the translator who gave us the version we have can be assumed to be participating in a double-blind test, isolated from any exposure to language and ideas that we find in the New Testament, or without access to important non-biblical writings that we do not have.

Indeed, regarding the translator, the King James New Testament language was an inescapable part of Joseph Smith's language and understanding. For that matter, the New Testament authors clearly had access to many writings discovered since Joseph Smith's time and many that have been lost to history. We don't know for sure what, if anything,

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44. Ian Barbour, *Myths, Models, and Paradigms: A Comparative Study of Science and Religion*, (New York: Harper and Row, 1974), 98.

45. Ibid., 99.

was completely original to them.[46] For instance, the discovery of *1 Enoch* made it possible to identify over 100 places where Bible writers quote or allude to it, something difficult or impossible beforehand. Old Testament and New Testament authors and editors also interacted with texts, selecting, editing, and at times Targumizing. So the ways in which allegedly anachronistic New Testament language that disproves the Book of Mormon's claims to antiquity always rest on a network of significant relationships and multiple possibilities of sources, authors, editors, and the language and inspiration of the translator. The circumstance does not support a one-dimensional, simple assessment leading to an unassailable, dead-certain, once-and-for-all "gotcha!" Consider, for example, Robert F. Smith's exploration of the supposed Hamlet quote in the Book of Mormon[47] as well as my own response to David Wright's claims about the Melchizedek material.[48] Some *Americanist Approaches* authors mention the Isaiah problem, but, of course, I do not expect to find reference to or engagement with Latter-day Saint defenses of the presence of those chapters[49] or even Margaret Barker's case that Isaiah 53 was directly inspired by Hezekiah's bout with the plague which, conveniently for us, makes it preexilic and available to Abinadi.[50]

Of course, in *Americanist Approaches* and elsewhere, anyone has the perfect right to assume that even the appearance of anachronism is telling and conclusive *as far as they are concerned*. But that leaves us in a position to consider this:

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46. See John W. Welch, *Illuminating the Sermon at the Temple & the Sermon on the Mount: An Approach to 3 Nephi 11-18 and Matthew 5-7* (Provo, UT: Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, 1999), especially Chapter 7, "The Common Israelite Background," showing "biblical antecedents and precedents drawn upon by Jesus in the Sermon" (153).

47. Robert F. Smith, "Evaluating the Sources of 2 Nephi 1:13-15: Shakespeare and the Book of Mormon," *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 22/2, 98-103, https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1526&context=jbms.

48. Kevin Christensen, "The Deuteronomist De-Christianizing of the Old Testament," *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon* 16/2 (2004), 59-90, https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1621&context=msr.

49. I have a section on the topic in Christensen, "Paradigms Regained," called "Open Questions and Suggestions Regarding Isaiah in the Book of Mormon."

50. See Margaret Barker, "Hezekiah's Boil," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 26 (September 1, 2001), 31–42, https://doi.org/10.1177/030908920102600102. Also available as "The Original Setting of the Fourth Servant Song" (unpublished paper, 2000), http://www.margaretbarker.com/Papers/FourthServantSong.pdf.

> It makes a great deal of sense to ask which of two actual and competing theories fits the facts better.[51]

> Particularly persuasive arguments can be developed if the new paradigm permits the prediction of phenomena that had been entirely unsuspected while the old one prevailed.[52]

So when I read Fenton and Hickman's claim that 1 Nephi 1 is saddled with anachronisms, I have to consider, for instance, my own work in comparing Margaret Barker's Temple Theology with what I find there.[53] And having read the work of literally hundreds of authors who have explored the Book of Mormon from a variety of angles and areas of expertise, I have much to consider when I decide whose approach fits the facts better. For instance, Fenton's interesting essay, in passing, states this:

> The Mulekite's ancestral line, it turns out, traces back to nothing. Mulek does not exist in the Bible, and his descendants do not appear in the original prophesy of Nephite ascendance and decline. (291)

Back in 1992, observations by Robert Smith were published:

> Jeremiah 38:6 speaks of a "dungeon of Malchiah the son of Hammelech … in the court of the prison." But the Hebrew name here, *MalkiYahu ben-hamMelek*, should be translated "MalkiYahu, son of the king," the Hebrew word *melek* meaning "king."[54]

In 2003, Jeffery Chadwick produced a detailed article on the implications of a Judean stamp seal with the Hebrew form of the Biblical name.[55] So, contrary to Fenton's comment, Mulek apparently exists within the Bible as a son of Zedekiah. Learned though they are, these authors don't know all of the important information. None of us do. But a great deal of believing scholarship explores questions and evidence not addressed at all in *Americanist Approaches*.

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51. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 146.

52. Ibid., 153.

53. Kevin Christensen, "The Temple, The Monarchy, and Wisdom: Lehi's World and the Scholarship of Margaret Barker" in John W. Welch, David Rolph Seely, and Jo Ann H. Seely, eds., *Glimpses of Lehi's Jerusalem* (Provo, UT: Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, 2004), 449–522.

54. John W. Welch, ed., *Reexploring the Book of Mormon: A Decade of New Research* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1992), 143.

55. Jeffery R. Chadwick, "Has the Seal of Mulek Been Found?," *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 12/2 (2003), 72–83, 117–18, https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1327&context=jbms.

On Colonialism and Postcolonialism
in Book of Mormon Studies

With the decline of empires in world history has come literature and thought assessing the tensions between the worldview of the colonizers and the self-image and voice of the colonized. Wikipedia has this:

> Postcolonialism encompasses a wide variety of approaches, and theoreticians may not always agree on a common set of definitions. On a simple level, it may seek through anthropological study to build a better understanding of colonial life from the point of view of the colonized people, based on the assumption that the colonial rulers are unreliable narrators.[56]

The notion of sitting down at a table and discussing our culture and founding texts with other scholars certainly has positive aspects even if, at times, some voices are uncomfortably critical and ideologically secular. Jesus emphasizes the importance of being self-critical before judging others, and it is worth reminding ourselves from time to time that *discerning* is another word for *critical*. Criticism precedes repentance, which is something we all must do. On the other hand, the notion of letting outsiders "colonize" our thinking carries with it the risk of letting others completely define who and what we are and how we see ourselves.

Commenting on wider manifestations of the same cultural issue, Toni Morrison has this:

> What I think the political correctness debate is really about is the power to be able to define. The definers want the power to name. And the defined are now taking that power away from them.[57]

For instance, one of the most telling characteristics of literature published about The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints by Evangelical Christians is that it largely amounts to boundary maintenance. It is not intended to describe us sympathetically, but to define us primarily by what most clearly, in their view, makes us "not them." Supposedly, universities and academia would be more universal

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56. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Postcolonialism

57. Claudia Dreifus, "Chloe Wofford Talks About Toni Morrison," *The New York Times Magazine* (September 11, 1994), 73, https://www.nytimes.com/1994/09/11/magazine/chloe-wofford-talks-about-toni-morrison.html. Think about this in relation to what Jesus has in mind when He asks us to take upon ourselves His name.

and tolerant. But Margaret Barker notes the reality in the relationship between the universities and the churches.

> There is a major crisis in biblical studies of which the churches seem unaware, and there is need for urgent action to ensure that at least in theological colleges something is taught that does not simply rely on university departments and replicate their syllabus and interests. Theological colleges and university departments now have very different agendas.[58]

> The agreement between church and academy, made a century earlier, had indeed been a Faustian pact. Prof. Philip Davies from Sheffield, who has a completely secular approach to Biblical studies, read a paper entitled 'Ownership? Responsibility? What is the Guild to do with the Bible?' He looked at the various disciplines which now have some sort of interest in biblical studies: cultural studies, literary theory, feminist issues, sociology and such like, and hailed this as a great liberation for biblical studies. When asked about the Church he was nonplussed. This implies that there is a need for university departments to make biblical studies relevant to all these latest trends in academe, and therefore, by implication, give it some sort of respectability, but no need to make it relevant to those who are the major users of the texts.[59]

Americanist Approaches certainly has its virtues, and the idea of doing similar things has an understandable appeal. But of course the desire to sit at tables like the one that produced *Americanist Approaches* is exactly what led to the 2012 change at the Maxwell Institute, a deliberate turn to serve the agenda of the universities at the expense of the "major users of the texts."[60]

So what are we to do? Keep our own tables occupied and productive so we have good resources for defending and extending our own self-definition. Keep our own tables occupied and busy producing resources relevant to the users of our texts. Keep busy so that when we consider what is produced at other tables, we have the means to ask

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58. Margaret Barker, "Reflections on Biblical Studies in the Twentieth Century" (paper presented to the Society of St. Alban and St. Sergius, 2000), 2, http://www.margaretbarker.com/Papers/ReflectionsOnBiblicalStudies.pdf.

59. Ibid., 4.

60. Though remember, too, that I have cited Sproat's important 2015 essay, which came after the changes at the Maxwell Institute.

"Which is better? Which problems are more significant to have solved?" And remember that what we ought to most urgently seek at our own table is the fruit of the tree of life. For that, it is very much worth enduring the occasional slog through darkness, and even the occasional pointing and mockery from the great and spacious building.

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The Tabernacle:
Mountain of God in the Cultus of Israel

L. Michael Morales

Abstract: *In this article, Michael Morales considers how the building of the Tabernacle had been pre-figured from the earliest narratives of Genesis onward. It describes some of the parallels between the creation, deluge, and Sinai narratives and the tabernacle account; examines how the high priest's office functions as something of a new Adam; and considers how the completed tabernacle resolves the storyline of Genesis and Exodus, via the biblical theme of "to dwell in the divine Presence."*

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See L. Michael Morales, "The Tabernacle: Mountain of God in the Cultus of Israel," in *Ancient Temple Worship: Proceedings of The Expound Symposium 14 May 2011,* ed. Matthew B. Brown, Jeffrey M. Bradshaw, Stephen D. Ricks, and John S. Thompson (Orem, UT: The Interpreter Foundation; Salt Lake City: Eborn Books, 2014), 27–70. Further information at https://interpreterfoundation.org/books/ancient-temple-worship/.]

Introduction

That the narratives leading up to the tabernacle have had its cultus in view as a major goal may be surmised by the centrality of the cultus in the Torah, as well as the parallels (lexical and thematic) between those narratives and the tabernacle account.[1] By way of introduction,

we will consider briefly the former, the centrality of the tabernacle cultus. Unfolding through the events at Sinai recorded in Exodus 19 through Numbers 10, worship via the tabernacle is the literary heart and theological apex of the Torah.[2] Even the sheer amount of this narrative is misleading, moreover, inasmuch as much of the literature outside Exodus 19—Numbers 10 has also been demonstrated to be concerned with cultic matters and likely, in Genesis 1—Exodus 18, in such a way as to anticipate Israel's tabernacle cultus.[3]

More narrowly, chapters 19-40 of Exodus may be considered, formally, a meticulously composed, coherent story that culminates with the glory cloud's descent upon the completed tabernacle.[4] Justifiably, then, Davies believes "worship" has a strong claim to be the central theological theme of Exodus, linking together salvation, covenant, and law — a theology, what's more, going back as far as can be discerned in the history of the tradition.[5] Now beyond all else to which the tabernacle/המשכן cultus and its rituals pertain, one must keep in view the fundamental understanding of it as the dwelling/שכן of God (cf. Exodus 25.8-9; 29.45-46), so that "worship" may be defined broadly as "dwelling in the divine Presence." Already, then, the bookends of the Genesis-through-Exodus narrative begin to emerge: the seventh day/garden of Eden (Genesis 1-3) and the tabernacle Presence of God among his cultic community (Exodus 40).

The building of the tabernacle, then, with the establishment of its cult, may be seen as a major goal of the exodus — a goal that includes the constitution of Israel as a cultic community (עדה *'edah*) living in the divine Presence.[6] This goal is evident not only by the centrality of worship in the Torah, but also by explicit statement. At the very outset of the tabernacle narrative, Yhwh's purpose is manifested: "Let them make me a sanctuary that I may dwell among them" (Exodus 25.8). This narrative goal is repeated in 29.45-6:

> I will dwell among the sons of Israel, and I will be their God. They shall know that I am Yhwh their God, who brought them out of the land of Egypt that I might dwell among them; I am Yhwh their God.

That these explicit lines are not merely incidental but programmatic is evident, further, by the lengthy description of the follow-through on the "let them make me a sanctuary" directive. While modern sensibilities find tedious the mass of repetitive material constituting thirteen of the remaining sixteen chapters of Exodus, yet from the ancient Near East

(ANE) perspective this concentration manifestly brings one to the heart of the narrative.[7] The overall movement from slavery to worship, from building for Pharaoh to building for Yʜwʜ[8] is in line with parallel ANE literature, such as the Ugaritic epic of Baal and the Babylonian "Epic of Creation," whereby the building of a victorious deity's house/temple forms the epic's climax.[9] Thus, comparisons with other building narratives from the Bible (1 Kings 5.15-9.25) and Mesopotamian and Ugaritic sources manifest, not only that the tabernacle story's overall structure is deliberate and well ordered, following a standard literary pattern or building genre,[10] but also the ideological weight of the tabernacle itself. The building section within the larger cycle, furthermore, is itself unified by the recurrent theme that Moses was shown the "pattern" (תבנית *tabnît*) of the tabernacle by God while he was on the mountain (25.9, 40, 26.30, 37.8),[11] a theme functioning to underscore the importance of the cultus. Because insufficient consideration of the tabernacle account necessarily results in a "superficial grasp" of the book's significance,[12] the literary weight of the tabernacle material must be balanced by its theological weight. The dramatic question — and tension — of how the prospect of a return to dwelling in the divine Presence will be made possible via a tabernacle constructed according to the divinely revealed heavenly "pattern," and this prospect in light of the thunderous fury of the fiery Presence just experienced at Sinai — all this must be impressed upon the reader. The balance of the book of Exodus, to summarize, is devoted to the tabernacle, the establishment of which, far from being a subsidiary interpolation, is the climax of the epic, the resolution toward which that narrative has progressed.[13]

Glimpsing now a sketch of the tabernacle's centrality within the narrative progression leading up to it, its function as dénouement will appear more clearly. As the creation account of Genesis 1-3 would surely have catechized its original audience, the high goal of worshiping the Creator in the glory of his Presence upon the holy mount had been frustrated by Adam's transgression and the consequent exile from the garden.[14] The ensuing narrative, rather than normalizing life outside of Eden (so as to make the account merely a story about "lost innocence" or "why things are the way they are," i.e., an etiology), intensifies the predicament and underscores the issue as crucial to the drama (and, thus, an *eschatological* point). For example, the use of "to banish" גרש in the Cain narrative (4.14; cf. 3.24) suggests that "in some sense Cain's exile is a repetition and intensification of Adam and Eve's exile."[15] This intensification reaches an apex as the profanation of creation (as macro-

temple) finally calls for an end/return to chaos, righteous Noah, with his household and a remnant of creatures, being delivered through an ark whose plans are divinely revealed, one of several features serving to portray it as a kind of typological temple. The scattering from the tower of Babel may be interpreted, through an anti-gate liturgy pattern, as a further removal from the Presence of God whose own deliberate plan for allowing re-entrance into the divine Presence begins with the call of Abraham and culminates in the divine in-filling of the tabernacle, Babel and the tabernacle being antipodes in the narrative arc.[16] New mediated access to that Presence of life thus becomes, not merely a means of "worship" for the Israelite, but the means by which the order and purpose of creation is reestablished—that is, creation and cult are of a piece.[17] Thus Hurowitz is correct in positing that the "crucial event around which all the activities focus is God's entry and manifestation within the newly built abode."[18] If, as we have seen, the creation account is oriented toward the Sabbath, i.e., life in the divine Presence, then it makes sense that the account of history itself should be like oriented. Understanding the loss of the divine Presence as the central catastrophe of the biblical drama, then one begins to see the tabernacle as *mishkan*, the locus of God's Presence in the midst of his people,[19] as the (at least initial) resolution.[20] As already stated, this dénouement is in accord with the general tenor of the Pentateuch in which numerous stories reflect points of priestly interest.[21] The pattern of Exodus, then, offers a glimpse, a micro-narrative, of the entire biblical narrative itself.[22]

I. THE TABERNACLE PRE-FIGURED

In this chapter we will consider further how the tabernacle cultus "fulfills" plot expectation, the tabernacle's significance being derived from and infused into the previous narrative(s). We will, accordingly, (1) rehearse some of the parallels between the creation, deluge, and Sinai narratives and the tabernacle account; (2) examine how the high priest's office functions as something of a new Adam, as the righteous one able to ascend the mount of YHWH; and (3) consider how the completed tabernacle resolves the storyline of Genesis—Exodus, via the biblical theological theme of "to dwell in the divine Presence."

A brief overview of the parallels between the creation and deluge accounts and the tabernacle will be considered before we turn to the parallels between Sinai and the tabernacle. Our point will be to understand that the tabernacle subsumes meaning and significance

from those previous accounts — it is, in many respects, the Pentateuch's centripetal force and goal.

A. From Creation to the Tabernacle

Creating the cosmos and building the tabernacle are literarily linked, the latter being a microcosm of the former.[23] Blenkinsopp identifies precisely these two accounts as the first two major "nodal points" of (P's narrative in) the Pentateuch: the creation of the cosmos as a precondition for worship (Genesis 1.1-2.4a), and the building and dedication of the wilderness sanctuary (Exodus 40.1-33).[24] While the creation may be understood legitimately in terms of a temple, it is also important to see that the tabernacle/temple constitutes something of a new creation within the old, a micro-cosmos within the macro, designed to mediate the paradisal Presence of the Creator. Thus one is not surprised to find the literary parallels between the creation and tabernacle narratives.[25] While not rehearsing those parallels here, we merely recall how the רוח of God is instrumental both in the building of the cosmic temple, the world (Genesis 1.2), and in the micro-cosmic world, the tabernacle (Exodus 31.1-11), the former amidst the chaos of water (תהו), the latter amidst the chaos of wilderness (תהו Deuteronomy 32.10).[26] This like source of wisdom/skill/power is matched by like method, both creation and tabernacle construction featuring "separation"/בדל: whereas the firmament is created to "separate" (*hiphil* participle of בדל) the waters (Genesis 1.6), so the tabernacle veil is to "separate" (*hiphil qatal* of בדל) the holy place from the holiest place (Exodus 26.33).[27] Finally, the chronology of the building projects are also linked: the consecration of the tabernacle lasted seven days, a heptadic pattern connected to the Sabbath ordinances.[28] Perhaps above all other parallels, it is the Sabbath linking of the tabernacle to creation that generates the theological profundity and function of the cultus: via the mediation of the tabernacle cultus alone, the purpose of creation may be realized.[29] The Sabbath, therefore, forms a bridge, an *inclusio*, linking creation with cultus as its climax,[30] the tabernacle manifestly created as a mini-cosmos oriented to the Sabbath.[31]

The cosmological parallels between creation and the tabernacle are in accord, further, with the cosmological import of several of the tabernacle appurtenances, as later explained within the temple system.[32] The altar is called הראל (also referred to as אראיל) "the mountain of God" (Ezekiel 43.15-16) with its base named חיק הארץ "the bosom of the earth" (Ezekiel 43.14).[33] The Basin הים מוצק as well is likely to be read with cosmic

significance as "The Sea has been restrained!"[34] It also appears evident that the menorah was a stylized tree of life (cf. Exodus 25.31-40).[35]

The tabernacle, then, "is a microcosm of creation, the world order as God intended it writ small in Israel."[36] The parallels thus established, when Yʜwʜ fills the tabernacle, this is "a sign that the new 'creation' has been achieved."[37] Interestingly, the sixth century Egyptian Christian Cosmas, in his book *Christian Topography*, posited that the creation account of Genesis 1 was Moses' description of the תבנית shown him atop Sinai, and that "the tabernacle prepared by Moses in the wilderness …was a type and copy of the whole world":

> Then when he [Moses] had come down from the Mountain he was ordered by God to make the tabernacle, which was a representation of what he had seen on the Mountain, namely, an impress of the world. …Since therefore it had been shown him how God made the heaven and the earth, and how on the second day he made the firmament in the middle between them, and thus made the one place into two places, so Moses, in like manner, in accordance with the pattern which he had seen, made the tabernacle and placed the veil in the middle and by this division made the one tabernacle into two, the inner and the outer.[38]

B. From the Ark of Noah to the Tabernacle

One might also recall the "striking parallels between the tabernacle and the ark of Noah,"[39] the ark itself a micro-cosmos. Again, while not detailing the parallels here, we merely note the general correspondence that even as "Noah did according to all that God had commanded him, thus did he" (Genesis 6.22) in relation to the ark, so "according to all that Yʜwʜ had commanded Moses, thus did the Israelites all the work" (Exodus 39.42) in relation to the tabernacle, both narratives emphasizing the New Year (Genesis 8.13; Exodus 40.2).[40]

When the tabernacle narrative is made to include the broader context of Exodus, then many more parallels are manifest: God "remembering" for the sake of deliverance (Genesis 8.1; Exodus 2.24); sending a "wind" (Genesis 8.1; Exodus 14.21); the appearing of "dry ground" (Genesis 8.13-14; Exodus 14.21-22).[41]

Ross, further, captures both the parallels and the pattern (through the waters → to the mountain → for worship) when he writes:

Just as God had judged the world in Noah's day and brought Noah's family through the Flood, compelling them to worship the Lord with a sacrifice, so he judged Egypt and brought Israel through the waters of the Red Sea to worship and serve him on the other side.[42]

Scholars have also noted how the salvation found in the ark during the forty-day period of rain parallels that amidst the presence of the tabernacle during the forty-year period in the wilderness.[43]

As mentioned already with regard to creation parallels, so now with regard to deluge parallels with the tabernacle: while it is legitimate to view the ark in terms of temple symbolism, one has not satisfied the significance of those parallels until the tabernacle itself, as the narrative goal, has subsumed something of the meaning of the ark. Likely, it is the redemptive aspect that informs the parallels between ark and tabernacle, the tabernacle constituting the divinely revealed means of refuge. Here, protology swirls into eschatology, and the cosmogonic pattern proves to be mythic in the sense of being in *illo tempore*.[44] From one perspective, it may be said that Adam's transgression and expulsion "interrupted" the eschatological goal of the original cosmogonic pattern. For our purposes, we simply note the deluge narrative, as with the creation account, has been shaped with a view to the tabernacle cultus.

C. From Mount Sinai to the Tabernacle

On Mount Sinai, Clifford notes, Yнwн has his tent, and the earthly copy of the tent will mediate his Presence to his people.[45] What we would like to consider here is the narrative transition from the former to the latter. To be sure, the narrative accounts of each are linked together. For example, the motifs in Exodus 24.15b-18a of (1) Sabbath chronology, (2) the כבוד of Yнwн, (3) use of the term שׁכן, and (4) the introduction speech formula ויקרא, serve to link the mountain of God with the tabernacle pericope, essentially transforming the covenant ceremony into a preparation in worship for the establishment of the tabernacle cult.[46] More specifically, we note first, and simply, that the tabernacle structure itself comes into existence within the sacred space established by the presence of the mountain of God.[47] But further, and as early as the elders' vision of God on Mount Sinai in Exodus 24.10-11, we find a description of the heavenly sanctuary, its blue sapphire being a common feature of temples in the ancient Near East, so that already the theophany of the mountain "gives way to temple imagery," to "the vision of God in the heavenly temple."[48]

Then, of course, the תבנית for the tabernacle is revealed precisely from Sinai's summit. Dozeman and Niccacci note, significantly, it is upon the seventh ascension that the tabernacle cultus is revealed,[49] so that the "revelation and construction of the wilderness sanctuary participate fully in the mythology of the cosmic mountain."[50] This participation in mythology also includes a sharing of terminology. Indeed, the great statement of Exodus 24.16 that would ever after symbolize Sinai, namely, that "the glory of Yʜwʜ dwelled upon Mount Sinai," begins with the word וישכן, offering a preview of the following section's subject, the work of the משכן, so that the tabernacle is a kind of miniature Sinai.[51] Consistently, the sacred mountain in Exodus 15.17 (whether precisely identified with Sinai or not),[52] the tabernacle (Exodus 25.8; Leviticus 16.33), and the Jerusalem temple (1 Chronicles 22.19; Isaiah 63.18) are each referred to as מקדש *miqdāš*.

Now since a defining feature of any ANE temple is its being an "architectural embodiment of the cosmic mountain,"[53] one would expect parallels between them in that embodiment — such is, in fact, the case. In the following ways the narrative brings out the tabernacle's function as a portable Sinai:[54]

1. the three districts of holiness common to each;
2. Yʜwʜ communicates with Moses from the mountaintop and the Holy of Holies;
3. the glory cloud envelops both;
4. the two tablets derived from Sinai's summit are placed in the tabernacle's parallel Holy of Holies;
5. mediation of the divine Presence is via sacrifice.

To flesh out each of these points now, Rodriguez offers a helpful summary of (1) some of the architectural similarities between Sinai and the tabernacle, followed by his illustration, in Figure 1:[55]

> The similarity of arrangement here [Sinai] with that of the subsequent tabernacle is striking. The fence around the mountain, with an altar at the foot of the mountain, would correspond to the court of the sanctuary with its altar of burnt offering; the limited group of people who could go up to a certain point on the mountain would correspond to the priests of the sanctuary, who could enter into the first apartment or "holy place"; and the fact that only Moses could go up to the very presence of Yahweh would correspond to the activity of the high priest, who alone could enter into the presence of

MOUNT SINAI

TABERNACLE

MOST HOLY PLACE

HOLY PLACE

COURT
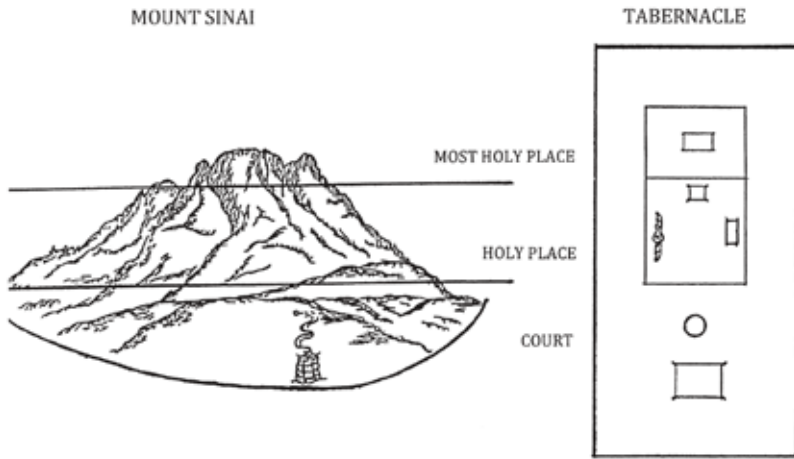
Figure 1: Mount Sinai and the Tabernacle (Sketch by Angel M. Rodriguez)

Yahweh in the inner apartment of the sanctuary, or "most holy place."

The Torah, further, brings out the (2) parallel function between mountain and tabernacle as the locus of divine speech (מן־ההר *min-hāhār*//מאהל *mē'ōhel*), so that chapters 19-40 may be said to be a story "dedicated to the divine movement from mountain to tent":[56]

And Yнwн called to him from the Mountain, saying…
And Yнwн called to Moses and spoke to him from the Tent of Meeting, saying…

Knohl highlights the significance of the tabernacle as a locus of revelation:

Prior to the construction of the tabernacle, God said to Moses, "There I will meet with you, and I will impart to you—from above the cover, from between the two cherubim that are on top of the Ark of the Pact—all that I will command you concerning the Israelite people" (Exodus 25.22). After it was set up, we read, "When Moses went into the Tent of Meeting to speak with Him, he would hear the voice addressing him from above the cover that was on top of the Ark of the Pact between the two cherubim: thus He spoke to him" (Numbers 7.89). God, who is seen above the cover (כפרת), meets Moses there and commands the children of Israel.[57]

Continuing, Weinfeld provides evidence that (3) the building of the tabernacle is stylistically paralleled to Mount Sinai, specifically with reference to the glory cloud — an idea, he notes, is found already in Nachmanides:[58]

Exodus 24.15-16	Exodus 40.34-Leviticus 1.1
When Moses had ascended the mountain, the cloud covered (הענן ויכס) the mountain. The Presence of Yhwh (כבוד־יהוה) abode on Mount Sinai and the cloud hid it for six days. On the seventh day He called to Moses (ויקרא אל־משׁה) from the midst of the cloud.	… the cloud covered (ויכס הענן) the Tent of Meeting, and the Presence of Yhwh (יהוה וכבוד) filled the Tabernacle. Moses could not enter because the cloud had settled upon it (cf. 1 Kings 8.10-11). Yhwh called to Moses (ויקרא אל־משׁה) … from the Tent of Meeting.

Cassuto had already noted the poetic parallelism of 40.34 is entirely similar to 24.15-16:[59]

And the cloud covered the tent of meeting,/
and the glory of Yhwh filled the tabernacle (40.34)

And the cloud covered the mountain;/
and the glory of Yhwh dwelt upon Mount Sinai (24.15-16)

Briefly, with reference to (4) the tables of the Law, we simply point out that the places of their origin (Sinai's summit) and keeping (Holy of Holies) correspond to each other typologically. Finally, another parallel between Sinai and the tabernacle cultus is found in (5) how the problem of the divine Presence amidst a sinful people is remedied — namely, by sacrifice:

The divine Presence in the midst of Israel necessitated sacrifice. This is implied in the connection between the end of Exodus, where the glory fills the 'tent of meeting' (Exodus 40.34-35), and the opening verse of Leviticus where Yhwh calls Moses to give him instruction regarding sacrifice. Leviticus 9 records the occasion when the entire worship system commenced operation. The essence of the ceremony is summarized in Leviticus 9.22-24. All elements of Exodus 24.1-11 are repeated: (1) Yhwh appears to the people (the central benefit of the covenant), (2) the priests make sacrifice and peace offerings (a communal meal would follow that celebrates covenant

fellowship), and (3) Aaron speaks a word of blessing to the people (implying benefits of the covenant, perhaps similar in content to the blessings defined in Leviticus 26.4-13). The Levitical sacrifices functioned to maintain and celebrate covenant relationship, sanctifying the nation in service of the holy God in her midst.[60]

Because of the cultic remedy for sin, "the fire that dwells in their midst" does not consume Israel (40.34-38; cf. 3.3, 24.17).[61]

In conclusion, there appears to be a deliberate narratival catechesis regarding the transition from Sinai to the tabernacle cultus, so that one may understand with Childs that what happened at Sinai "is continued in the tabernacle."[62] This however amounts to a fundamental understatement unless one first views Sinai as the culminating cosmic mountain (subsuming Eden and Ararat in the narrative trajectory toward the tabernacle), the fulfillment of the cosmogonic pattern: through the Sea (Exodus 14) → to Mount Sinai (Exodus 19) → for worship (Exodus 24), and as the summit from which the divine blueprint for the tabernacle, as with the ark of Noah, is revealed. In sum, when the glory cloud transitions from Sinai to the tabernacle Holy of Holies, what is continued in the tabernacle includes Sinai's summation of creation (Genesis 1-3) and deliverance (Genesis 6-9).

II. THE GATE LITURGY

Throughout the creation, deluge, and Sinai narratives, the gate liturgy question ("Who shall ascend the mount of Yʜwʜ?") — so we have advanced — runs like an undercurrent. Finding liturgical expression within the context of the Solomonic temple (Psalms 15, 24), the gate liturgy becomes somewhat expected in the setting of the tabernacle. Such is, in fact, the case, as we will go on to demonstrate below. The gate liturgy will be found, however, in much the same way and manner as in the previous narratives — that is, as an undercurrent within the depths of the narrative, a narrative-unfolding ideology shaped by the cosmic mountain. In our attempt to make manifest the gate liturgy within the tabernacle cultus, we will consider the high priest as symbolizing Adam, and then his entrance into the Holy of Holies on the Day of Atonement as an "ascent."

A. The High Priest as Adam

One cannot understand the tabernacle cultus adequately apart from considering its personnel, the priesthood.[63] The role of the priesthood must be understood in light of the overarching conceptual pattern of the tabernacle as a renewed cosmos.[64] For his part, the priest represented the restored creation as pertaining to humanity — he had to be perfect as a man.[65]

Fletcher-Louis fills in a key piece when he notes that "the high priest was also believed to be the true or second Adam. This idea is probably present already in Ezekiel 28.12-16 and is otherwise clearly attested in Sirach 49.16-50.1 (Hebrew text)."[66] He notes further that "the Adamic identity of Aaron is fundamental to the theology of P," with the priest/new Adam "doing what Adam failed to do in the temple-as-restored-Eden,"[67] so that, according to the cultic worldview, "the God-intended humanity of Genesis 1 is thus recapitulated, and sacramentally reconstituted, in Israel's priesthood, in the temple-as-microcosm."[68] That Adam may be considered justly in priestly terms, even as an archetypal high priest, has already been addressed in our second chapter, and such an understanding is also evident from early sources of interpretation.[69] In his *Legends of the Jews*, for example, Ginzberg notes: "On the sixth, the last day of creation, man had been created in the image of God to glorify his creator, and likewise was the high priest anointed to minister in the tabernacle before his Lord and creator."[70] It may even be precisely because he is an Adam-figure that the priest's sin propagated guilt among the entire people (Leviticus 4.3).[71] Even the terms for the priestly garments, כבוד ("glory") and תפארת ("honor"), forming an *inclusio* around the account of the vestments in Exodus 28, are used of the glory theophany of Yʜᴡʜ, demonstrating that "the priest was appropriately attired to enter a renewed cosmos and stand in the presence of the divine resident of this cosmic temple."[72] Thus the priest in the representation or *drama*[73] of the cultus, dressed in such glorious raiment, portrayed humanity in its newly created purity, no longer separated from the divine Presence through the rebellion and expulsion recounted in Genesis 3, but able — as the pre-eminent "holy" person — to ascend the mount, to enter the Holy of Holies.[74] It is important to see, further, that the high priest inherited Moses' role, discussed earlier, as mediator:

> One might picture priests as mediating an ascending movement toward God in their installation rite of passage and their holy and clean life-styles and a concurrent descending movement

of oracular messages from God, authoritative declarations, trustworthy torah, and effective blessings in Yahweh's name. The mediating and revelatory role of the priest, the one who by virtue of his office was "near" Yahweh (Ezekiel 42.13; 43.19; compare Exodus 19.22), is well expressed in a popular saying about priests that has God declare: "Through those near me I will make myself holy, and before the entire people I will glorify myself " (Leviticus 10.3).[75]

Another parallel between Moses and the high priest's office may be found in relation to their deaths. As Wenham notes, the high priest's atonement labors were not only accomplished on the high holy Day of Atonement, but even, finally, through his own death:

> At the pinnacle of the system stood the high priest. … These day of atonement ceremonies enabled God to continue dwelling among his people despite their sinfulness. The atoning work of the high priest culminated in his death. This purged the land of the blood guilt associated with violent death and allowed those convicted of manslaughter to leave the cities of refuge and return home (Numbers 35.28, 32).[76]

This in mind, and returning to Moses, Israel's hope of entering the land appears throughout the book of Deuteronomy to be theologically connected to the death of Moses — a final gesture of atonement from the one who as mediator served as something of a paradigm for the high priest.[77] Moses is portrayed, so notes von Rad, as a "suffering mediator," whose death outside the land is to some extent depicted as "vicarious for Israel."[78]

In relation to the tabernacle, then, there is a sense where Aaron's role (who, incidentally, was not allowed to enter the top of the mount) was to portray in the drama of liturgy the role of Moses in relation to the cosmic mountain (and thus of Adam to Eden's mount) — that is, via entering the tabernacle Holy of Holies, the high priest as mediator[79] represents the one "able to ascend" the summit of the cosmic mountain.[80] To be sure, "ascending the mountain and entering the Holy of Holies amount to the same thing."[81] The cosmogonic pattern in mind, moreover, it is interesting that in the construct of the tabernacle, Aaron and his sons would wash themselves at the laver (cosmic waters?) upon every approach to the altar (cosmic mountain?).[82] Precisely as the one who inherits Moses' mediatory role in the Pentateuch, then, "Aaron, the chief priest, is the messiah."[83]

The high priest alone is הכהן המשיח *hakkōhēn hammāšîaḥ* (cf. Leviticus 4.3, 5, 16; 6.22). We turn now to consider the primary purpose of that anointing.

B. Who Shall Ascend the Mountain of Yʜwʜ?

The tabernacle, immediately dominating the literary landscape and encircled by the tribes of Israel, constituted sacred space, guarded by the Levites so that anyone who did not belong to the priestly families and who attempted entrance was subject to the death penalty: "any outsider who encroaches shall be put to the death" (Numbers 3.10, 38).[84] Its three zones of intensifying holiness (outer courtyard, holy place, Holy of Holies) corresponded respectively to the mountain of God's base, midsection, and peak, a symbolism naturally generating the question of who may approach (ascend). Only those ordained may draw near to God (Numbers 16.5, 9, 10; 17.5; Leviticus 21.17).[85] Significant to the gate liturgy theme already developed with reference to Moses and Mount Sinai, especially given our consideration of "door" (פתח) and its relation to the gate liturgy in previous chapters, the presentation of the ordination of Aaron and his sons in Leviticus 8-9 "is focused spatially on the door of the tent of meeting (Leviticus 8.3, 33). Indeed, the entire seven day period of the priests' ordination is a time when Aaron and his sons are to remain at the door of the tent."[86] The essence of the priestly role, then, was access to the Presence, as evident by the vocabulary used to describe such movement: עמד, נגש, קרב, along with phrases in relation to Yʜwʜ that utilize the prepositional form לפני, and with priests being defined as: הנגשים אל־יהוה ("the ones who draw near to Yʜwʜ," Exodus 19.22), קרובים ליהוה ("those who approach Yʜwʜ," Ezekiel 42.13; cf. 43.19; Leviticus 10.3).[87] Thus, while uncertainty remains concerning the original meaning of the word translated "priest," the suggestion, widely accepted by scholars, that כהן *kōhēn* derives from the verb כון ("to stand"), so that the priest is defined as one who stands before the divine Presence, appears plausible.[88] This is, of course, especially the case with the high priest whose "special status emerges from the entire structure of the priestly cult according to which only the High Priest may minister inside the tent of meeting, before the ark, whereas ordinary priests may officiate only outside the tent,"[89] that is, his special status emerges from his being the sole ascender to the (typological) mount's summit, the "who" in the question: "Who may ascend the mount of Yʜwʜ?"

The focus of Israel's cultic calendar was upon entering the Holy of Holies, after elaborate preparations (Leviticus 16.2-17), one day out of

the year, the Day of Atonement, a privilege granted the high priest alone[90] — his "most critical role."[91] Indeed, this annual ritual of penetrating into the divine Presence may be considered the archetypal priestly act,[92] whereupon Adam-like he fulfills the cosmogonic pattern:

> Once a year on *Yom Kippur*, the Day of Atonement, Adam's eastward expulsion from the Garden is reversed when the high priest travels west past the consuming fire of the sacrifice and the purifying water of the laver, through the veil woven with images of cherubim. Thus, he returns to the original point of creation, where he pours out the atoning blood of the sacrifice, reestablishing the covenant relationship with God.[93]

Significantly, then, in the consecration of the priesthood, only Aaron is anointed (Exodus 29.7; cf. Leviticus 8.12), his anointing constituting a "gesture of approach" with particular reference to the gate liturgy.[94] "Priestly unction was a rite of passage to a new status and effected passage from the outer, profane world to the sanctity of the tabernacle precinct."[95] Even for the high priest, however, this privileged entrance was permissible merely one day a year and by measured obedience alone.[96] The Day of Atonement narrative begins, in fact, with the command for Aaron *not* to enter (at just anytime), and this command is itself bracketed by a threefold mention of death — that of his sons (for having approached in an unauthorized manner) and the prospect of his own (for doing likewise, cf. 16.13):

> Yhwh spoke to Moses after the death (מות) of the two sons of Aaron, when they drew near (קרב) before the face of Yhwh and died (וימתו). Thus Yhwh said to Moses, "Speak to Aaron your brother that he not enter (אל־יבא) at just any time into the holy place within the veil…lest he die (לא ימות). – Leviticus 16.1-2

Furthermore, only as representative of the renewed humanity—as a new Adam, were Aaron and his descendants permitted access to the cultic mount of Yhwh:

> Speak to Aaron, saying, "Any man of your seed in their generations, if he has a blemish, shall not draw near to bring near (לא יקרב להקריב) the bread of his God. For any man who has a blemish shall not draw near (לא יקרב): a man blind or lame, who has a mutilated face or any limb too long, or a man with a broken foot or broken hand, or is a hunchbank or dwarf, or a man with a defect in his eye, or scaled skin or scab, or is

a eunuch. Any man with a blemish of the seed of Aaron the priest shall not approach to bring near (לא יגש להקריב) the fire offerings of Yнwн. He has a blemish—he shall not approach to bring near (לא יגש להקריב) the bread of his God. – Leviticus 21.17-21

Returning to the Day of Atonement, the weight of this annual drama (and thus of the gate liturgy itself) is manifest by its literary centrality: Leviticus is the center of the Torah,[97] and atonement is the central theme of Leviticus,[98] with its own center, chapter 16,[99] highlighting the Day of Atonement chiastically:[100]

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FRAME:   "And Yнwн said to Moses…" (16.1)
                        A. Aaron should not go into Holy of Holies any time he wishes (16.2)
                        B. Aaron's sacrificial victims, special vestment (16.3-4)
                        C. Sacrificial victims provided by people (16.5)
                        D. Aaron's bull, goat for sin-offering, goat for Azazel (16.6-10)
A. Genesis              E. Aaron sacrifices bull (16.11-14)
  B. Exodus             F. Goat sacrificed as sin-offering (16.15)
    X. Leviticus – chapter 16 →   X. Atonement (16.16-20a)
  B.' Numbers           F.' Goat sent to wilderness (16.20b-22)
A.' Deuteronomy         E.' Aaron's closing activities (16.23-25)
                        D.' Goat for Azazel, Aaron's bull, goat for sin-offering (16.26-28)
                        C.' People rest and humble themselves (16.29-31)
                        B.' Anointed priest officiates wearing special garments (16.32-33)
                        A.' Anointed priest makes atonement once a year (16.34)
FRAME:   As Yнwн commanded Moses…" (16.34)
```

In the drama of liturgy, the Day of Atonement was the "most intimate of the representations of access" to the divine Presence.[101] Indeed, the importance of this day to the theology of the cult cannot be overestimated:

> The goal of the Torah is holiness, which can be symbolically achieved in the cult. This occurs properly through atonement. The act of dedication to God, by which the distance from what is holy is symbolically bridged by the substitutionary offering of blood, is so central for the cult of the Priestly Document, that not only is the great day of atonement the highest holy day, but also every sacrifice takes on the nature of atonement, for it is only atonement, not offering a gift, that can express the meaning of the cult.[102]

Given the concentric structure of the Pentateuch, with the central book of Leviticus being organized as something of a literary tour of the tabernacle so that the reader, in the footsteps of the high priest,

penetrates into the holiest,[103] then it becomes apparent that the height of the gate liturgy — the concern for who may approach the divine Presence (and how) — has been reached within the tabernacle Holy of Holies in Leviticus 16, the cultic peak of Yнwн's mount which extends outward to the literary edges of the Pentateuch. Subsuming meaning from the surrounding narratives, the Day of Atonement also exerts a centrifugal force upon the rest of the Torah. R. M. Davidson's diagram illustrates the architectural centrality of this once-per- year mythic event of approaching the divine Presence:[104]

This most intimate approach to the divine Presence, moreover, begins with the ceremonial washing of the high priest (Leviticus 16.4: את־בשׂרו ורחץ במים), likely via the laver (cf. Leviticus 8.6-9; Exodus 30.17-21), thus fulfilling the cosmogonic pattern: through the waters (laver) → to the summit of Yнwн's mountain (Holy of Holies) → for worship (with cultic atonement signifying the highest gesture of worship). Viewing the Day of Atonement rite as a particularly cosmogonic ritual, what is more, fits logically with its position within Israel's cultic year. While the completion of the tabernacle, as a new "creation," resonates with the New Year, the Day of Atonement ritual has also been associated with the New Year,[105] often compared to the Babylonian *akitu* festival.[106] This correspondence with the New Year appears sound, furthermore, inasmuch as the Day of Atonement ritual functions to renew the cosmos, seeking "both to address and repair the breakdown in divinely established distinctions of holy/profane, pure/impure, and order/chaos," and thus sustains and reclaims the divine intention for the created order.[107] In priestly theology,
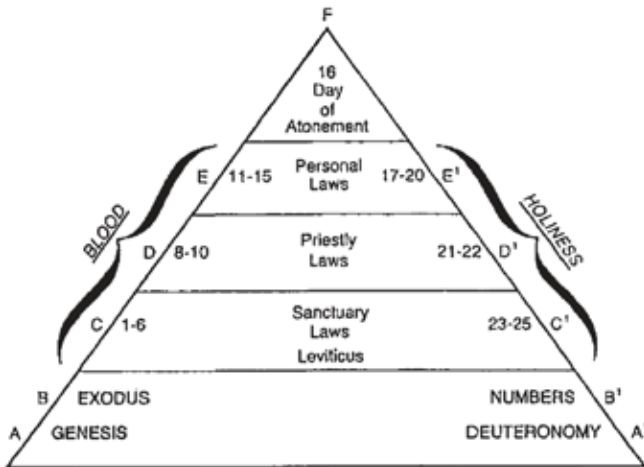

Figure 2: Diagram of Leviticus

"liturgy realizes and extends creation through human reenactment of cosmogonic events."[108]

Finally, the gate liturgy theme continues to run as an undercurrent throughout the book of Numbers, particularly evident in chapters 16-17, with the focus having shifted from mountain to tabernacle and from Moses to Aaron, precisely in relation to the latter's role as high priest. Here three episodes take place, the third being a symbolic reenactment of the previous events, to vindicate not merely "the exclusive right of the Levites to draw near to God" as commentators widely acknowledge,[109] but the special prerogative of Aaron to draw near within the holiest as the appointed high priest. Wenham provides an exceptional summary:[110]

> In the first of these [episodes] the non-Levites and Levites try to usurp the priestly prerogatives of Aaron's family and offer incense within the tabernacle and die in divine judgment (chapter 16). In the second story a plague breaks out and Aaron saves the nation by offering incense (17.1-15). The first set of traditions about Korah, Dathan and Abiram shows the special status of Aaron in a negative way, by relating what happens to those who usurp his prerogatives. The second gives a positive demonstration of his effective mediation making atonement for the people's sin.

The third story, culminating with the budding of Aaron's rod, symbolically reenacts the previous narratives. Wenham provides four lines of reasoning to demonstrate this: (1) the Hebrew word מטה *maṭṭeh* means both "tribe" and "rod"; (2) the names of the tribes are written on the rods illustrating that the latter represent the former; (3) the rods are deposited in the tent of meeting before the testimony, in the divine Presence, paralleling the instructions given previously to Korah and his company (16.16); (4) the demonstration of Aaron's unique status takes two days, just as for the previous two trials.[111] Thus there are

> three consecutive tales each making much the same point: that only Aaron and his tribe have a right to draw near to God. … Aaron's rod was put back "before the testimony," symbolically confirming that he alone has the right to draw near to God (17.25, cf. 16.5, 17.5). Once the symbolic equation of the rods with the tribes has been noted, other features in the story are clarified. When the rods are removed from the tent of meeting, they show no signs of life. Their deadness symbolizes the death that will overtake these tribes if they attempt to enter God's

presence. Hence their outcry to Moses, "Behold, we perish, we are undone, we are all undone. Everyone who comes near… to the tabernacle of the Lord, shall die. Are we all to perish?" (v 27-28). These verses form the climax to the story of Aaron's rod.[112]

Significantly, the almond blossom of Aaron's rod also has relevance to the gate liturgy, and the Day of Atonement:

[Almond trees] blossom early, which may explain their name, *šāqēḏ*, "watcher" … It was the duty of the priests and Levites to guard the nation spiritually, by teaching the people of Israel and keeping trespassers out of the tabernacle (Leviticus 10.11; Numbers 3-4). Finally almond blossom is white. In many cultures white symbolizes goodness, purity, authority and divinity. In Israel white linen was worn by the high priest when he entered the Holy of Holies on the day of atonement (Leviticus 16.4).[113]

These stories, in sum, clearly catechize Israel regarding who may and who may not approach the divine Presence. That is, their meaning unfolds within the context of cosmic mountain ideology and the cultic question of the gate liturgy: "Who shall ascend the mountain of Yhwh?" Indeed, and independently confirming our study, Nihan, who believes P's narrative culminates with the Day of Atonement, writes: "The gradual restitution of the divine presence in Israel's sanctuary is thus structured on the model of an ancient Near Eastern ritual of temple entrance, which finds its climax in the great ceremony of Leviticus 16."[114]

Thus far, then, we have traced the evolution of the gate liturgy as a symbol: cosmogonic pattern (Genesis 1-3) → cosmogonic + redemptive/eschatological pattern (Genesis 6-9) → micro-cosmogonic + redemptive/eschatological pattern (Exodus 14-24) → ultimately, to the cultic pattern (Leviticus 16), which subsumes the cosmogonic and redemptive/eschatological significance even while lending them a liturgical context. The shift to the cultic pattern follows Yhwh's cloud of glory as it descends from the height of Mount Sinai upon the tabernacle Holy of Holies, to which movement we now turn.

III. TO DWELL IN THE DIVINE PRESENCE

The biblical-theological goal and dénouement of the narrative arc from Genesis 1-3 to Exodus 40 may be surmised from the descent of the glory

cloud upon the tabernacle. Justly does Rodriguez mark Exodus 25.8 as a key text, the divine command forming a link between the first twenty-four chapters of Exodus and the final fifteen: "And let them make me [Yʜwʜ] a sanctuary, that I may dwell in their midst."[115] The tabernacle cultus perpetuates the purpose and goal of the exodus deliverance, first fulfilled at the foot of Sinai: worship, variously described as "sacrifice"/זבח (Exodus 3.18; 5.3; 8.27-29; 10.25); "celebrate a festival"/חגג (Exodus 5.1; 8.20; 10.9); "serve," "worship"/עבד (3.12; 4.23; 7.16; 8.1, 20; 9.1, 13; 10.3, 7, 8, 11, 24, 26; 12.31).[116] Indeed, this was the sign given Moses: "When you have brought forth the people from Egypt you [pl.] will worship God upon this mountain" (3.12). As the archetype of the tabernacle,[117] Mount Sinai—the eschatological experience of being delivered through the waters and brought to the mountain of God for worship — would thus be prolonged and maintained via the tabernacle cultus.[118] As cosmic mountain, furthermore, Sinai's summit corresponds to Eden, paradisiacal features and symbolism also being subsumed by the tabernacle. The key link here is that the תבנית is "a model of the cosmic Tabernacle of Yahweh," with "the earthly shrine as a microcosm of the cosmic shrine."[119] Thus returning to Exodus 25.8, we find the divine intention clearly expressed as "to dwell/tabernacle" (שׁכן)[120] amidst his people. It is a sound suggestion, then, that *the cultic mediation of the Presence of Yʜwʜ via the tabernacle has been in view in the Torah's narrative ever since that Presence was lost with the exile out of paradise in Genesis 1-3, informing the tabernacle symbolism found therein.*

The central plot of the story of Exodus 19-40 being "dedicated to the divine movement from mountain to tent,"[121] the book of Exodus thus ends with a climax that may serve as something of a bookend with the creation account in as much as it describes a completed temple-building project sanctified by the presence of Yʜwʜ (40.34-35):

> Then the cloud covered the tabernacle of meeting, and the glory of Yʜwʜ filled the tabernacle.
>
> And Moses was not able to enter the tabernacle of meeting, because the cloud rested above it, and the glory of Yʜwʜ filled the tabernacle.

The cloud and Presence of glory[122] that is, "the visible manifestation of the divine Presence, not a substitute for it,"[123] having rested atop Mount Sinai now moves upon the tabernacle, the building project that is both a proclamation of Yʜwʜ's cosmic rule and something of an "incarnation" of the triumphant King amidst his vassals.[124] As Buber has it, the כבוד is

that "fiery 'weight' or 'majesty' of God radiating from the invisible, which now 'fills' again and again the 'dwelling' of the tent (40.34), just as it had 'taken dwelling' upon the mount (24.16)."[125] In this profound gesture, the God of the Patriarchs, *El Shaddai*, becomes the God of the sons of Israel, of the nation of Israel, to be worshiped corporately through the tabernacle cultus alone.[126]

The story of chapters 19-40 as a whole, framed by 19.3 and Leviticus 1.1, "presents how the locus of theophany was changed from mountain to tabernacle."[127]

This transference and transformation, it may be argued, moves literarily via three steps: (1) establishing the God of creation as the God of the Patriarchs through the narratives of Genesis; (2) establishing the God of the Patriarchs as the God who calls Moses (Exodus 3.6, Yнwн declares: "I am *the God of your father* — the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob"; cf. Exodus 15.2);[128] (3) the glory cloud's moving from the cosmic mountain (religion of the Patriarchs) to the tabernacle (cultus of Israel).[129] That there appears to be deliberate narrative intention to demonstrate continuity between the cosmic mountain religion of the forefathers and the tabernacle/temple cultus of the original audience seems beyond question — and our suggestion, that the creation, deluge, and exodus narratives "pre-figure" the tabernacle cultus, thereby follows as well. Moses' "mountain experience" in Exodus 24 will thus become the community's via the tabernacle:

> At first, the encounter is reserved for Moses. But the central significance of the Sinai narrative is to demonstrate how this encounter is made transferable, so that it can happen for the whole congregation. Therefore Moses, within the fire, receives the model for the sanctuary, which undoubtedly is heaven itself, the place where God's own glory shines forth. Therefore the tent of meeting is built, and the cloud of God's presence moves from Sinai, the world mountain, into the sanctuary, where it is possible for all to encounter God in cultic praise.[130]

After being tutored in Moses' ability to ascend, the utterly unexpected statement in 40.35 that he is "not able (לא־יכל) … to enter (לבוא)" is indeed remarkable. In Exodus 33.20, Yнwн had prohibited Moses from entering his Presence too directly ("You are not able (לא תוכל) to see my face…"), so that the prohibition here would seem to imply that Yнwн's Presence via the tabernacle though mediated is nonetheless a real Presence not to be trifled with — the tabernacle, in other words, provides

for Yʜwʜ's immanence while safeguarding his transcendence,[131] with the ritual divine Presence becoming "the highest form of religiosity."[132] The tabernacle thus becomes the one locus in all the earth for God's Presence to dwell, and the intensity of this glorious mystery is so powerful, Moses is not able to enter.[133] Brisman expresses the sublimity of the account well:

> Here the sense of God as beyond human activity is troped as the presence of God before human activity: Filling that Tabernacle, God prevents ("goes before" and thwarts) Moses from filling his duty. It is a happy prevention, this dedicatory vision of the presence of God. … For the Priestly writer to conclude Exodus with a vision of God filling the Tabernacle, he needs to look beyond the priestly business of God's work to a vision of the Divine Presence that prevents and overwhelms the priesthood — and even Moses himself.[134]

More to the point, with Yʜwʜ's descent upon the tabernacle, the new cosmos has been sanctified by his Presence. *While there is a new creation, however, as yet there is no new humanity* — a dramatic tension to be remedied in Leviticus 1-9, as Aaron is consecrated to be the new Adam, approaching the divine Presence via divinely sanctioned sacrifices.[135]

As the cloud descends upon the tabernacle, God entering his dwelling place and filling it with the כבוד, the book's end not only forms a counterpart to the *deus absconditus* of the opening chapters of Exodus,[136] although Yʜwʜ's "filling" (מלא) the tabernacle (40.34, 35) forms an *inclusio* with the sons of Israel "filling" (מלא) the land of Egypt (1.7),[137] but also a bookend with the prologue to the Torah, the creation account of Genesis 1-2.3, where upon completing the cosmic temple, God enters his dwelling place in the enthronement of the Sabbath.[138] It might even be said that the creation begun in Genesis 1 comes to fulfillment, however partial, with the establishment of the tabernacle cultus.[139] Moreover, the re-creation account of the deluge is also fulfilled by the tabernacle climax of Exodus since the "arrival of the Israelites at Sinai sets in motion acts of atonement, administered by a sanctified priesthood, which will provide the antidote to the pollution, which causes the flood."[140] The tabernacle was "raised" (הוקם), what's more, on "the first day of the first month" (40.2, 17), the same day the covering was removed from the ark for Noah to gaze upon a renewed creation (Genesis 8.13), that is, on New Year's Day.[141] This new beginning marks the creation (בראשית Genesis 1.1), deluge (בראשון Genesis 8.13), and tabernacle (40.17 הראשון) narratives. The undercurrent of these accounts, the drama and *telos* of the biblical

narrative, particularly as it culminates in the tabernacle story, is the gaining of life in the Presence of the Creator:

> [T]he tent located in the heart of the camp was first and foremost a place where the Glory of God was constantly present. God appeared in the cloud above the cherub covering that rested on the ark of the Pact: "for I appear in the cloud over the cover" (Leviticus 16.2). Consequently, the Tent of Meeting was called a tabernacle מִשְׁכָּן (from the root שָׁכַן 'to dwell'), because it was the fixed dwelling place of the Divine Glory. The constant presence of the Glory in the Tent is expressed in the cult of the fixed daily offering (תָּמִיד), in whose framework the priests offered the daily burnt offering, burned the incense, lit the eternal light, and arranged the showbread on the table. Only the perpetual presence of God's glory within the Tent of Meeting can explain the complex of acts performed in the daily worship.[142]

The period from the expulsion from paradise until Sinai had been marked by God's dealings with humanity "from afar."[143] Now, so the message of the tabernacle narrative, the divine Presence is "not merely on an ethereal, cosmic plane" (lost through the expulsion), but is "historically present to Israel."[144] Similarly, Nihan writes:

> Yahweh's return, eventually reported in Exodus 40.34, corresponds to the restitution of the divine presence *in Israel* after the Flood; the significance of this event is highlighted by the various inclusions with the creation account in Genesis 1. This device, with its mythical background, indicates that in Israel's sanctuary, as a space set apart from the profane world and as a "model" (תבנית) of the divine palace, *the order initially devised by God at the creation of the world can now be partly realized.* … Accordingly, it is in Israel's sanctuary, specifically, that the creator God has chosen to dwell (Exodus 25.8-9; 29.45-46; 40.34) and where, therefore, he can be permanently encountered (root יעד, see especially Exodus 25.22 and 29.43), as in the creation before the Flood. Conversely, this means that it is Israel's cult which guarantees the permanence of the divine Presence, and hence the stability of the cosmic order.[145]

The Presence of Yʜᴡʜ among his people, then, is a — perhaps, *the* — major theme of Exodus, and indeed of biblical theology.[146] The book of

Exodus may be traced according to the movement of the divine Presence, as Moshe Greenberg had already noted in 1969:

> It is possible to epitomize the entire story of Exodus in the movement of the fiery manifestation of the divine presence. At first the fire burned momentarily in a bush on the sacred mountain, as God announced his plan to redeem Israel; later it appeared for months in the sight of all Israel as God descended on the mountain to conclude his covenant with the redeemed; finally it rested permanently on the tent-sanctuary, as God's presence settled there. The book thus recounts the stages in the descent of the divine presence to take up its abode for the first time among one of the peoples of the earth.[147]

Ending where Genesis had begun,[148] the book of Exodus marks the historic cultic return to the lost Presence of the Creator, the tabernacle mediating paradise to the exiled descendants of Adam.[149] Israel thus becomes a "microcosm of life in creation as God originally intended it," lived worshipfully in the Presence of God dwelling in — or, perhaps better, "incarnated" through — the tabernacle, "a kind of *material 'body' for God*."[150] Because this crescendo at the end of Exodus also provides the dénouement for the beginning of the Exodus narrative,[151] the theme of slavery and liberation is taken up into the understanding of the cultus: true freedom is the life of worship where Yʜwʜ is in the midst of his people.

In sum, the "encounter with God at Sinai represents the beginning of legitimate cultic worship,"[152] the beginning of humanity's return through the gates of Yʜwʜ's holy mount, and thus a "foretaste of the final joys of life in the Presence of God"[153] — this, then, is what the tabernacle cultus signifies as the cultic mountain of God.

CONCLUSION

We have seen how the cosmic mountain, as expressed through historical mounts in the narrative of the Pentateuch, gave way to the tabernacle cultus informed by it: the כבוד moved from Sinai to the tabernacle, the three part structure of the tabernacle corresponding to the three parts of the mountain with the Holy of Holies representing the clouded summit. As the peaks of Sinai and the Ararat mount had echoed Eden in their respective narratives, so the Holy of Holies corresponds to Eden and the blessing of the divine Presence, and the high priest portrays Adam (/Noah/Moses). Thus the narrative arc from Genesis 1-3 to Exodus 40

may be traced as the expulsion from the divine Presence to the gained re-entry into the divine Presence via the tabernacle cultus, from the profound descent of Adam to the dramatic "ascent" of the high priest into the Holy of Holies, particularly on the Day of Atonement.[154]

Notes

1. For discussion of the tabernacle from a historical perspective, see F. M. Cross, Jr., "The Tabernacle: A Study from an Archeological and Historical Approach," *Biblical Archaologist* 10.3 (1947) 45-68; F. M. Cross, "The Priestly Tabernacle in the Light of Recent Research," pp. 91-105 in *Temple in Antiquity: Ancient Records and Modern Perspectives*, T. G. Madsen, ed. (*RSMS* 9; BYU Religious Studies Center, 1984); R. de Vaux, *Ancient Israel: Its Life and Institutions*, J. McHugh, trans. (1961; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997) 294-97; M. Haran, "Shiloh and Jerusalem: the Origin of the Priestly Tradition in the Pentateuch," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 81.1 (1962) 14-24; V. W. Rabe, "The Identity of the Priestly Tabernacle," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 25.2 (1966) 132-34; W. H. Shea, "New Light on the Exodus and on the Construction of the Tabernacle: Gerster's Protosinaitic Inscription No. 1," *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 25.1 (1987) 73-96; G. J. Wenham, "Deuteronomy and the Central Sanctuary," *Tyndale Bulletin* 22 (1971) 103-18.
2. S. E. Balentine, *The Torah's Vision of Worship* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1999) 66-68. Cf. E. G. Newing ("Rhetorical and Theological Analysis of the Hexateuch," *South East Asia Journal of Theology* 22 [1981] 7-11) for the divine Presence of Exodus 33, within the Sinai Covenant (Exodus 19–Numbers 10), being central to the Hexateuch.
3. G. J. Wenham notes, e.g., how the high points of Genesis involve sacrifice (Cain/Abel - Genesis 4, Noah - 8, Abraham - 22) ("The *Akedah*: A Paradigm," pp. 399-404 in *Pomegranates and Golden Bells: Studies in Biblical, Jewish, and Near Eastern Ritual, Law, and Literature in Honor of Jacob Milgrom*, D. P. Wright, D. N. Freedman, A. Hurvitz, eds. [Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1994]), and S. D. Walters reads the *akedah* account of Genesis 22 as prefiguring the entire cultic system ("Wood, Sand and Stars: Structure and Theology in Genesis 22:1-19," *Toronto Journal of Theology* 3.2 [1987] 301-30).
4. M. R. Hauge, *The Descent from the Mountain: Narrative Patterns in Exodus 19-40* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001) 100.

5. G. Davies, "The Theology of Exodus," pp. 137-52 in *In Search of True Wisdom: Essays in Old Testament Interpretation in Honour of Ronald E. Clements* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999) 138, 149.

6. B. W. Anderson, *Contours of Old Testament Theology* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress) 86, 107. See also G. von Rad, *Old Testament Theology*, vol. 1 (1962; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001) 233-34; G. Davies, "The Theology of Exodus," 144.

7. P. Enns, *Exodus* (NIVAC; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000) 506.

8. T. E. Fretheim, *Exodus* (Int; Louisville: John Knox Press, 1991) 263-64.

9. T. E. Fretheim, *Exodus*, 263-64. Cf. P. Miller, Jr., *The Divine Warrior in Early Israel* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1973) 117; F. M. Cross Jr., "The Divine Warrior in Israel's Early Cult," *Biblical Motifs: Origins and Transformations*, A. Altman, ed. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1966) 19ff; A. C. Leder, "The Coherence of Exodus: Narrative Unity and Meaning," *Calvin Theological Journal* 36 (2001), 262-65; T.B. Dozeman, *Exodus* (ECC. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009) 573-74. For *Enuma elish* see A. Heidel, *The Babylonian Genesis: The Story of Creation*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: U of Chicago Press, 1969). For the Baal and Yamm story, see A. Herdner, *Corpus des tablettes en cunéiformes alphabétiques découvertes à Ras Shamra - Ugarit de 1929 à 1939*, 2 vols. (Paris: Imprimerie nationale et librairie orientaliste Paul Geuthner, 1963); K. L. Sparks, "Enuma Elish and Priestly Mimesis: Elite Emulation in Nascent Judaism," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 126.4 (2007) 625-48 (esp. 635-42).

10. V. A. Hurowitz, "The Priestly Account of the Building of the Tabernacle," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 105.1 (1985) 21-30.

11. B. A. Levine, "Tabernacle Texts of the Pentateuch," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 85.3 (1965) 308. Cf. F. M. Cross Jr., "The Tabernacle," 54.

12. Cf. A. C. Leder, "Reading Exodus to Learn and Learning to Read Exodus," *Calvin Theological Journal* 34 (1999) 16.; T. E. Fretheim, *Exodus*, 263.

13. W. W. Hallo, "Exodus and Ancient Near Eastern Literature," pp. 367-77 in *The Torah: A Modern Commentary*, W. G. Plaut, ed. (New York: UAHC, 1981) 376-77.

14. A. C. Leder, "The Cohehrence of Exodus," 254.

15. R. Hendel, "Leitwort Style in the J Primeval Narrative," pp. 93-109 in *Sacred History, Sacred Literature: Essays on Ancient Israel, the Bible,*

and Religion in Honor of R. E. Friedman on his Sixtieth Birthday, S. Dolansky, ed. (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2008) 99.

16. The "stairway" connecting heaven and earth is a theme running through the tower of Babel (Genesis 11.4), and Jacob (Genesis 28.12, 17) narratives, culminating at the end of Exodus. Cf. J. L. McKenzie, *A Theology of the Old Testament* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1974) 51.

17. See T. E. Fretheim, "The Reclamation of Creation: Redemption and Law in Exodus," *Interpretation* 50.3 (1996) 364; L. Brisman, "On the Divine Presence in Exodus." *Exodus: Modern Critical Interpretations.* H. Bloom, ed. (New York: Chelsea House, 1987) 106.

18. V. A. Hurowitz, "The Priestly Account of Building the Tabernacle," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 105.1 (1985) 22. Cf. J. I. Durham, *Exodus* (WBC. Waco: Word, 1987) 499.

19. B. W. Anderson, *Contours of Old Testament Theology,* 108.

20. Cf. G. Davies, "The Theology of Exodus," 140, 150; T. E. Fretheim, *Exodus*, 264.

21. P. J. Budd, "Priestly Instruction in Pre-Exilic Israel," *Vetus Testamentum* 23.1 (1973) 6.

22. A. C. Leder, "The Coherence of Exodus," 255-56.

23. A. C. Leder, "Reading Exodus to Learn," 19; C. H. T. Fletcher-Louis, "God's Image, His Cosmic Temple and the High Priest," pp. 81-99 in *Heaven on Earth: The Temple in Biblical Theology*, T. D. Alexander, S. Gathercole, eds. (Carlisle, Cumbria: Paternoster, 2004) 89.

24. J. Blenkinsopp, "Structure and Meaning in the Sinai-Horeb Narrative (Exodus 19-34)." *A Biblical Itinerary: In Search of Method, Form and Content; Essays in Honor of George W. Coats.* E. Carpenter, ed. (*JSOTSup* 240; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997) 113; J. Blenkinsopp, "The Structure of P," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 38 (1976) 275-92. Therefore, if, as Propp states, "Creation is complete only when God's reign on earth commences at Sinai" (William C. H. Propp, *Exodus 1-18*, (AB 2. New York: Doubleday, 1999) 561), then that reign must be understood as continuing via the two revealed gifts of Sinai's summit: Torah and the tabernacle תבנית, or, as T. B. Dozeman has it, "the revelation of the law and the cult at the mountain of God" (*Exodus*, 349-50). For the relation of law to sacred mountains, see J. M. Lundquist, "Temple, Covenant, and Law, in the Ancient Near East and in the Old Testament." *Temples of the Ancient World: Ritual and Symbolism.* Donald W. Parry, ed. (Provo, UT: FARMS, 1994) 281-84. For the *tabnit*, see D. N. Freedman, "Temple without Hands." *Temples and High Places in Biblical Times.* (Jerusalem: Nelson Glueck School

of Biblical Archaeology of Hebrew Union College — Jewish Institute of Religion, 1981) 26; J. D. Levenson, *Sinai and Zion: An Entry into the Jewish Bible* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1987), 140-41. The connection between the cosmic mountain of God, temple worship, and creation is firmly established for ANE culture.

25. See summary in J. A. Davies, *A Royal Priesthood: Literary and Intertextual Perspectives on the Image of Israel in Exodus 19.6* (*JSOT Supplement* 395; London: T&T Clark, 2004) 144-49.

26. This observation is noted in many commentaries. See, e.g., T. E. Fretheim, *Exodus*, 269-71.

27. P. H. Seely, "The Firmament and the Water Above, Part II: The Meaning of 'The Water Above the Firmament' in Genesis 1.6-8." *Westminster Theological Journal* 54 (1992) 40.

28. J. L. Morrow, "Creation and Liturgy: The Liturgical Background of Genesis 1-3." Trends of Ancient Jewish and Christian Mysticism Seminar at the University of Dayton, Dayton, OH, February 26, 2008, 5. The Sabbath, in fact, appears to tie the creation (Genesis 2.1-3), deluge (Genesis 8.6-12), Sinai (Exodus 24.16-18), and tabernacle accounts (Exodus 35.1-3), the tabernacle not only being completed in seven speeches (with the seventh addressing the Sabbath) and by seven acts of Moses who did "just as Yнwн commanded" (cf. Exodus 40.19, 21, 23, 25, 27, 29, 32), but structurally forming something of an inner frame in the tabernacle pericope.

29. J. D. Levenson, "The Temple and the World," *The Journal of Religion* 64.3 (1984) 288. Cf. also P. Elbert, "Genesis 1 and the Spirit: A Narrative-Rhetorical Ancient Near Eastern Reading in Light of Modern Science," *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 15.1 (2006) 27ff.

30. B. W. Anderson, *Contours of Old Testament Theology*, 108.

31. The Sabbath, then, must be considered of a piece with temple theology. See D. C. Timmer, *Creation, Tabernacle, and Sabbath*: *The Sabbath Frame of Exodus 31:12-17; 35:1-3 in Exegetical and Theological Perspective* (Göttingen, Germany: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 2009) 144.

32. S. Il Kang, "The 'Molten Sea,' or Is It?" *Biblica* 89 (2008) 102.

33. S. Il Kang, "The 'Molten Sea,' or Is It?" 102.

34. S. Il Kang, "The 'Molten Sea,' or Is It?" 101-03. This would, to be sure, be a direct link to Genesis 1, the constraining of the sea being a major expression of Yнwн's kingship (cf. Genesis 1; 6-9; Exodus 14-15; Psalms 104.9; 33.7; Job 26.10; Jeremiah 5.22). Il Kang ties the Basin to a possible New Year's enthronement festival whereby Yнwн's

kingship was declared (cf. Psalm 89). Cf. Genesis 1.9-10 and 1 Kings 7.23; D. W. Parry, "Garden of Eden: Prototype Sanctuary." *Temples of the Ancient World*. D. W. Parry, ed. (Provo, UT: FARMS, 1994) 138; J. L. McKenzie, *A Theology of the Old Testament* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1974) 52.

35. See C. L. Meyers, *The Tabernacle Menorah* (Missoula: Scholars, 1976) 36-38; G. J. Wenham, "Sanctuary Symbolism in the Garden of Eden Story." *I Studied Inscriptions From Before the Flood: Ancient Near Eastern, Literary, and Linguistic Approaches to Genesis 1-11*. Richard S. Hess and David T. Tsumura, eds. (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1994) 401; D. Parry, "Garden of Eden," 128-29; J. V. Fesko, *Last Things First: Unlocking Genesis with the Christ of Eschatology*. (Fearn, Ross-shire, GB: Mentor, 2007) 62.

36. T. E. Fretheim, "'Because the Whole Earth is Mine': Theme and Narrative in Exodus." *Interpretation* 50.3 (1996) 238.

37. P. J. Kearney, "Creation and Liturgy: The P Redaction of Exodus 25-40," *Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenshaft* 89.3 (1977) 381.

38. Cosmas, *The Christian Topography of Cosmas, an Egyptian Monk*, tr. J. W. McCrindle (London: The Hakluyt Society, 1897) 24, 145, 150. Cosmas even describes the earth as a rectangular box (30ff.), that is, in the shape of the tabernacle/temple (and, significantly, the ark of Noah). Cf. M. Barker, *The Great High Priest: The Temple Roots of Christian Liturgy* (London: T&T Clark, 2004) 195; M. Barker, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ* (2000; London: T&T Clark, 2004) 17-18.

39. T. E. Fretheim, "Because the Whole Earth is Mine," 238.

40. J. Blenkinsopp, "The Structure of P," 283. Cf. J. Blenkinsopp, "Structure and Meaning," 113; W. W. Hallo, "Exodus and Ancient Near Eastern Literature," 377.

41. J. H. Sailhamer, *The Pentateuch as Narrative: A Biblical Theological Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992) 127. See T. E. Fretheim's summary, *Exodus*, 268-69.

42. A. Ross, *Genesis* (CBC; Carol Stream: Tyndale, 2008) 74.

43. J. H. Sailhamer, *The Pentateuch as Narrative*, 126; B. Waltke (with C. J. Fredericks), *Genesis: A Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001) 135, 152.

44. Cf., e.g., M. Barker's discussion, on the temple's symbolizing the "eternal present," *The Gate of Heaven: The History and Symbolism of the Temple in Jerusalem* (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2008) 58-65. Thus, when Asaph approached "the sanctuary of God" (מקדשי־אל *miqdᵉšê-'ēl*), he understood "their end" (לאחריתם *lᵉ'aḥᵃrîṯām*).

45. R. J. Clifford, *The Cosmic Mountain in Canaan and the Old Testament* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1972) 191.

46. J. McCrory, "'Up, Up, Up, and Up': Exodus 24.9-18 as the Narrative Context for the Tabernacle Instructions of Exodus 25-31," *SBL Seminar Papers* (1990) 570-82. Cf. D. Gowan, *Theology in Exodus: Biblical Theology in the Form of a Commentary* (Louisville: Westminster Joun Knox, 1994) 183.

47. E. Carpenter, "Exodus 18: Its Structure, Style, Motifs and Function in the Book of Exodus." *A Biblical Itinerary: In Search of Method, Form and Content; Essays in Honor of George W. Coats.* E. E. Carpenter, ed. (*JSOTSup* 240; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997) 105.

48. T. B. Dozeman, *Exodus*, 6, 563. Cf. also 567-75. He refers to the Exodus 24 event as "a worship service on the cosmic mountain before the heavenly temple of God" (*God on the Mountain: A Study of Redaction, Theology and Canon in Exodus 19-24* (SBLMS 37. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1989) 113).

49. T. B. Dozeman, "Spatial Form in Exodus 19.1-8a and in the larger Sinai Narrative," *Semeia* 46 (1989) 87-101; A. Niccacci, "Workshop: Narrative Syntax of Exodus 19-24." *Narrative Syntax and the Hebrew Bible: Papers of the Tillburg Conference.* E. van Wolde, ed. (Leiden: Brill, 1997) 224.

50. T. B. Dozeman, *Exodus*, 574.

51. U. Cassuto, *A Commentary on the Book of Exodus.* I. Abrahams, trans. (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1961) 316, 484. Cf. B. S. Childs, *The Book of Exodus: A Critical, Theological Commentary* (Louisville: Westminster Press, 1974) 638; P. Enns, *Exodus*, 493.

52. See B. D. Russell, *The Song of the Sea: The Date of Composition and Influence of Exodus 15:1-21* (SBL 101. New York: Peter Lang, 2007) 54-55; C. Meyers, *Exodus* (NCBC. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005) 208.

53. Indeed, this is Lundquist's primary proposition. Cf. his "What is a Temple? A Preliminary Typology" pp. 205-19 in *The Quest for the Kingdom of God: Studies in Honor of George E. Mendenhall*, H. B. Huffmon, F. A. Spina, A. R. W. Green, eds. (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1983) 207.

54. Cf. N. M. Sarna, *Exploring Exodus: The Heritage of Biblical Israel* (New York: Schocken, 1966) 203-04. See also P. Enns, *Exodus*, 391; Edwin C. Kingsbury, "The Theophany Topos and the Mountain of God," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 86.2 (1967) 205-10; J. A. Davies, *A Royal Priesthood*, 140; R. J. Clifford, *The Cosmic Mountain*, 123; M. Haran,

"The Non-Priestly Image of the Tent of MOʻED," pp. 260-275 in *Temples and Temple Service in Ancient Israel: An Inquiry into Biblical Cult Phenomena and the Historical Setting of the Priestly School*, M. Haran (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1985) 267; O. Keel, *Symbolism*, 129-34; R. E. Clements, *God and Temple* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1965) chapters 2, 5 (17-27, 63-78); M. Fishbane, "The 'Eden' Motif," *Biblical Texts and Texture*, 114. The term "portable Sinai" is utilized by various commentators, such as, e.g., T. E. Fretheim (*Exodus*, 274), N.M. Sarna (*Exodus*. (JPS Torah Commentary. Philadelphia: JPS, 1991) 237); P. Enns (*Exodus*, 493).

55. A. M. Rodriguez, "Sanctuary Theology in Exodus," *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 24 (1986) 132-34. Cf. N. M. Sarna's synopsis of parallels in *Exodus*, 105.

56. Cf. M. R. Hauge, *The Descent from the Mountain*, 22. Cf. A.C. Leder, "The Coherence of Exodus," 268.

57. I. Knohl, "Two Aspects of the 'Tent of Meeting,'" pp. 73-79 in *Tehillah le-Moshe: Biblical and Judaic Studies in Honor of Moshe Greenberg*, M. Cogan, et al., eds. (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1997) 73; T. E. Fretheim, *Exodus*, 277.

58. M. Weinfeld, "Sabbath, Temple and the Enthronement of the Lord: The Problem of the *Sitz im Leben* of Genesis 1:1-2:3." *Mélanges bibliques et orientaux en l'honneur de M. Henri Cazelles.* A. Caquot and M. Delcor, eds. (*Alter Orient und Altes Testament* 212. Kevelaer: Butzon and Bercker, 1981) 504-05. See also J. I. Durham, *Exodus*, 500; M. Oliva, "Interpretación teológica del culto en la perícopa del Sinaí de la Historia Sacerdotal," *Biblica* 49 (1968) 345-54; V. P. Hamilton, "כן‎ שׁ,dwell, tabernacle," in *Theological Words of the Old Testament.* R. L. Harris, G. L. Archer Jr., B. K. Waltke, eds. (Chicago: Moody, 1980) 2:926.

59. U. Cassuto, *Exodus*, 484.

60. J. W. Hilber, "Theology of Worship in Exodus 24." *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 39.2 (1996) 187. Cf. D. Janzen, "Priestly Sacrifice in the Hebrew Bible: A Summary of Recent Scholarship and a Narrative Reading," *Religion Compass* 2.1 (2008) 38-52.

61. A. C. Leder, "The Coherence of Exodus," 260.

62. B. S. Childs, *Exodus*, 540. Cf. B. S. Childs, *Old Testament Theology in Canonical Context* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986) 163. Cf. R. E. Clements, *God and Temple*, 22; D. Gowan, *Theology in Exodus*, 185; N. M. Sarna, *Exploring Exodus*, 190-91, 203; U. Cassuto, *Exodus*, 319.

63. See R. de Vaux, *Ancient Israel*, 348; M. Barker, *The Gate of Heaven*, 17; C. H. T. Fletcher-Louis, "The High Priest as Divine Mediator in the Hebrew Bible: Daniel 7.13 as a Test Case," pp. 161-93 in *SBL 1997 Seminar Papers* (*SBLSP* 36; Atlanta: SBL, 1998) 188.

64. Thus J. A. Davies (*A Royal Priesthood*, 150) asks the key questions: "If the tabernacle had an overarching conceptual rationale along the lines sketched above, what role did the person of the priest play in that rationale? What impression was conveyed to the Israelite community as day by day they saw their priests, dressed in their finery, enter God's house to attend upon him and to enjoy his company in the surroundings of an ideal world?" See also his comments on 164-65.

65. See M. Douglas, *Purity and Danger* (London and New York: Routledge, 1966) 64. Cf. G. J. Wenham, *Leviticus* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979) 24; A. T. M. Cheung, "The Priest as the Redeemed Man: A Biblical-Theological Study of the Priesthood," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 29.3 (1986) 265-75.

66. C. H. T. Fletcher-Louis, "God's Image, His Cosmic Temple and the High Priest," 96; C. H. T. Fletcher-Louis, *All the Glory of Adam: Liturgical Anthropology in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (*STDJ* 42; Leiden: Brill, 2002) chapters 3, 7 and 11. Cf. also M. Barker, "The High Priest and the Worship of Jesus," pp. 93-111 in *The Jewish Roots of the Worship of Jesus*, C. C. Newman, et al., eds. (*JSJSup* 63; Leiden: Brill, 1999). For the traditional correlation between the vision of Moses in the Sinai pericope and Ezekiel 1, see L. Teugels, "Did Moses See the Chariot? The Link Between Exodus 19-20 and Ezekiel 1 in Early Jewish Interpretation," pp. 595-602 in *Studies in the Book of Exodus: Redaction-Reception-Interpretation*. M. Vervenne, ed. (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1996).

67. C. H. T. Fletcher-Louis, "Jesus as the High Priestly Messiah: Part I," *Journal for the Study of the Historical Jesus* 4.2 (2006) 159 and fn 8 (see also 159 fn 10).

68. C. H. T. Fletcher-Louis, "Jesus as the High Priestly Messiah: Part 2," *Journal for the Study of the Historical Jesus* 5.1 (2007) 76. A. T. M. Cheung similarly states: "The purpose of the sacrificial duties was not simply for the putting away of sin. This was but a means to the ultimate end of regaining the priesthood, which entailed access to God's sanctuary (which access was free for Adam, the primal man-priest, before the fall) and hence the restoration of fellowship with God. ("The Priest as the Redeemed Man," 268).

69. J. Marcus, "Son of Man as Son of Adam, Part II: Exegesis," *Revue Biblique* 110 (2003) 374 and footnote 14.

70. L. Ginzberg, *The Legends of the Jews*, vol. 3 (Philadelphia: JPS, 1911) 150.

71. Cf. R. D. Nelson, *Raising Up a Faithful Priest: Community and Priesthood in Biblical Theology* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1993) 73.

72. J. A. Davies, *A Royal Priesthood*, 158. For "glory" ascribed to Yнwн, see Exodus 24.16-17; Isaiah 4.5; Psalm 57.6 [5]; for "honor," see Isaiah 46.13, 63.15; Psalms 71.8; 96.6; 1 Chronicles 29.11. Fletcher-Louis, further, posits five lines of reasoning to argue that "within the cult at least, the high priest takes on some of God's identity in the victory over the forces of chaos," an argument that, if valid, strengthens the Chaoskampf parallel between creation and cult (C. Fletcher-Louis, "The High Priest as Divine Mediator," 186-92). Cf. M. Carden, "Atonement Patterns in Biblical Narrative: Rebellious Sons, Scapegoats and Boy Substitutes," *The Bible and Critical Theory* 5.1 (2009) 04.5.

73. This term "drama" is used here advisedly. See R. D. Nelson, *Raising Up a Faithful Priesthood*, 71.

74. R. D. Nelson, *Raising Up a Faithful Priesthood*, 158-59, 166, 168, 202. Because, among other things, the high priest represented the people to God, it is important to see the nation of Israel, God's son (cf. Exodus 4.22), as symbolizing a new Adam as well. C. Dohmen notes how via the covenantal agreement Israel in effect becomes a new entity, a cultic community (Exodus 19-40, 60f). Cf. J. H. Hayes, "Atonement in the Book of Leviticus," *Interpretation* 52 (1998) 8; S.W. Hahn, "Worship in the Word: Toward a Liturgical Hermeneutic." *Letter and Spirit* 1 (2005) 111.

75. R. D. Nelson, *Raising Up a Faithful Priest*, 52.

76. G. J. Wenham, *Numbers. (Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries* 4. Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity, 2008) 54.

77. See D. T. Olson, *Deuteronomy and the Death of Moses: A Theological Reading* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 1994). Throughout his work, Olson points out how the theme of Moses' self-denial pervading Deuteronomy and climaxing with his death and burial, is consistently portrayed as the means of life and continuing journey for Israel—that is, for the sake of Israel (57-58; 61; 67). He further notes: "The atoning death of the young heifer (21.1-9) resembles in theme and vocabulary the interpretation of Moses' death outside the land as

vicarious atonement for Israel (Deuteronomy 1.37; 3.26; 4.21)" (124). Olson justly notes throughout the complexity of Deuteronomy's portrayal of Moses' death as he is also dying for his own sin — he does not merely die in their stead but ahead of Israel (165),

78. G. von Rad, *Old Testament Theology,* vol 1, D. M. G. Stalker, trans. (New York: Harper & Row, 1962) 294-95.

79. Cf. C. H. T. Fletcher-Louis, "The High Priest as Divine Mediator." He also notes that, in extra-biblical literature, Enoch's heavenly ascent "looks most like the high priest's annual visit to the Holy of Holies on the Day of Atonement" (180).

80. See C. Meyer, *Exodus*, 282-83.

81. N. Wyatt, "Degrees of Divinity: Some Mythical and Ritual Aspects of West Semitic Kingship," pp. 191-220 in *"There's Such Divinity Doth Hedge a King": Selected Essays of Nicolas Wyatt on Royal Ideology in Ugaritic and Old Testament Literature* (*SOTS*; Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005) 198.

82. Cf. Exodus 40.32. Furthermore, the approach to the altar was eastward (this is made explicit in Ezekiel 43.17).

83. C. H. T. Fletcher-Louis, "Jesus as the High Priestly Messiah," 161.

84. I. Knohl, "Two Aspects of the 'Tent of Meeting,'" 73.

85. C. H. T. Fletcher-Louis, "Jesus as the High Priestly Messiah: Part 2," 78. M. Barker notes well: "The mediators who passed between the two worlds were vital to the cult" (*Gate of Heaven*, 62).

86. F. Gorman, *The Ideology of Ritual: Space, Time and Status in the Priestly Ideology* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1990) 49. Furthermore, the tabernacle veil, the פרכת, "functions as an objective and material witness to the conceptual boundary drawn between the area behind it and all other areas" (33). While Gorman here refers specifically to the כפרת within the Inner Sanctum, it is the veil that marks the separation.

87. Cf. R. D. Nelson, *Raising Up a Faithful Priest*, 52, 61.

88. Cf. F. B. Holbrook, "The Israelite Sanctuary," pp. 3-36 in *The Sanctuary and the Atonement*, F. B. Holbrook, ed. (Silver Spring, MD: BRI, 1989) 20-21; R. Abba, "Priests and Levites," *Interpreters Dictionary of the Bible* (1962) 3:877; J. J. Davis, *Moses and the Gods of Egypt* (Grand Rapids: BMH Books, 1971) 270-71; R. de Vaux, *Ancient Israel*, 346.

89. B. A. Levine, "Tabernacle Texts of the Pentateuch," 311. For the emphasis on Aaron particularly throughout the prescriptive section, chapters 28 and 29, his name mentioned some sixteen times in chapter 28 alone, see C. Meyers, "Incense Altar and Lamp Oil in

the Tabernacle Texts," pp. 13-21 in *Sacred History, Sacred Literature: Essays on Ancient Israel, the Bible, and Religion in Honor of R.E. Friedman on his Sixtieth Birthday*, S. Dolansky, ed. (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2008).

90. J. A. Davies, *A Royal Priesthood*, 162. For the emphasis of on the Day of Atonement in the Priestly writing, see R. D. Nelson, *Raising Up a Faithful Priest*, 127ff. Cf. M. Barker, *Temple Theology: An Introduction* (London: SPCK, 2004) 10; 53-73; M. Barker, "Atonement: The Rite of Healing," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 49.1 (1996) 1-20.

91. R. D. Nelson, *Raising Up a Faithful Priest*, 13. Nelson also notes that the Urim and Thummim became obsolete except for their use on the Day of Atonement, for the selection of goats (42).

92. R. D. Nelson, *Raising Up a Faithful Priest*, 148.

93. D. W. Parry, "Garden of Eden," 135. Cf. S. W. Hahn, "Worship in the Word," 112; M. Barker, "Beyond the Veil of the Temple: The High Priestly Origin of the Apocalypses" (Presidential address to the Society for Old Testament Study; published in *Scottish Journal of Theology* 51.1 [1998]) accessed at: www.jbburnett.com/resources/barker/barker_beyond%20 the%20veil.pdf.

94. D. W. Parry ("Ritual Anointing with Olive Oil in Ancient Israelite Religion," pp. 262-89 in *The Allegory of the Olive Tree: The Olive, the Bible, and Jacob 5*, S. Ricks, J. Welch, eds. [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1994]) refers to this anointing as a "gesture of approach," linking it with the entrance liturgies of Psalms 15, 24, and Isaiah 33.14-17 ("'Who Shall Ascend into the Mountain of the Lord?': Three Biblical Temple Entrance Hymns," pp. 729-42 in *Revelation, Reason, and Faith: Essays in Honor of Truman G. Madsen*, D.W. Parry, et al., eds. [Provo: FARMS, 2002]). Thus the long-awaited "Anointed One" might well be defined by his "entrance" work (cf. Hebrews 10.19-22; 12.22-24).

95. C. Meyers, *Exodus*, 246. Cf. R. de Vaux, *Ancient Israel*, II, 348; D. Fleming, "The Biblical Tradition of Anointing Priests," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 117.3 (1998) 401-14; S. Niditch, *The Symbolic Vision in Biblical Tradition* (*HSM*, 30; Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1980) 110; J. A. Davies, *A Royal Priesthood*, 160-61.

96. Cf. C. Nihan: "As regards Leviticus 16, it is undoubtedly the most important ritual in the whole book of Leviticus. It occurs once a year, and it is on this occasion that both the sanctuary (cf. 16.14-19) and the community (16.20ff.) are purified from all the impurities contracted during the year, whether physical or moral in nature. It is

the *only* ceremony in the entire book during which Aaron is admitted into the inner-sanctum, and therefore in the presence of the deity. … Moreover, the central character of chapter 16 is also supported by a series of formal devices. Its introduction in v 1-2aa is absolutely unique in Leviticus and … chapter 16 is concluded in v 34b by a notice reporting the execution of "all what Yahweh had commanded to Moses," a feature unparalleled so far in Leviticus …" (*From Priestly Torah to Pentateuch* [*FAT* 25; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007] 96-97 [emphasis original]).

97. Many scholars have noted that this five-book structure, with Leviticus at the center, is not likely to have been coincidental. The notion that it simply took five scrolls to fit the entire Torah does not adequately account for the cutoff points of each book, including chronological markers (M. S. Smith, "Matters of Space and Time in Exodus and Numbers," pp. 182-207 in *Theological Exegesis: Essays in Conversation with Brevard S. Childs*, C. Seitz, K. Greene- McCreight, eds. [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999] 201; R.P. Knierim, *The Task of Old Testament Theology* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995] 353), nor for the symmetry of the pentad: Exodus and Numbers are nearly the same exact length (16,713 and 16,413 words respectively) while Leviticus, the central book, is by far the shortest (11,950 words— half the length of Genesis). Furthermore, that the Psalter was deliberately divided into five books manifests an early awareness that the Pentateuch's five-fold structure is theologically significant. Cf. G. A. Klingbeil, *Bridging the Gap: Ritual and Ritual Texts in the Bible* (*BBRSup* 1; Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2007) 155ff.; Y. Radday, "Chiasm in Tora," *Linguistica Biblica* 19 (1972) 21-23; W. Shea, "Literary Form and Theological Function in Leviticus," pp. 131-68 in *The Seventy Weeks, Leviticus, and the Nature of Prophecy,* F. Holbrook, ed. (Washington, DC.; BRI, 1968); D. L. Christensen, "The Pentateuchal Principle within the Canonical Process," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 39.4 (1996) 537-48 (539); M. Carden, "Atonement Patterns in Biblical Narrative," 04.11; A. C. Leder, *Waiting for the Land* (Phillipsburg: P&R, 2010) 34-35. Sailhamer marginalizes the Pentateuch's fivefold structure (*The Pentateuch as Narrative* [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992] 1-2), a point that may be connected to his downplaying the significance of the cultus. Cf. C. Nihan, *From Priestly Torah to Pentateuch*, 69-76.

98. M. Douglas, *Leviticus as Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000) 231-34.

99. Apart from taking the space to justify this assertion, suffice it to note that the widest consensus on any "center" for Leviticus appears to mark chapter 16. See, e.g., R. M. Davidson, "The Eschatological Structure of the Old Testament," pp. 349-66 in *Creation, Life, and Hope: Essays in Honor of Jacques B. Doukhan*, Jirí Moskala, ed. (Berrien Springs: AUTS, 2000); J. E. Hartley, *Leviticus 1-27* (*WBC* 4; Dallas: Word, 1992) 217; G. A. Klingbeil, *Bridging the Gap*, 155ff; D. Luciani, *Sainteté et pardon. Vol 1: Structure littéraire du Lévitique* (Leuven: Peeters, 2005); R. Rendtorff, "Leviticus 16 Als Mitte Der Tora," *International Review of Biblical Studies* 11.3/4 (2003) 252-58; D. W. Rooke, "The Day of Atonement as a Ritual of Validation for the High Priest," pp. 342-64 in T*emple and Worship in Biblical Israel*, J. Day, ed. (New York: T&T Clark, 2007) 342; W. H. Shea, "Literary Form and Theological Function in Leviticus," pp. 131-68 in *The Seventy Weeks, Leviticus, and the Nature of Prophecy*, F. B. Holdbrook, ed. (DRCS; Washington, DC: BRI, 1986); C. R. Smith, "The Literary Structure of Leviticus," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 70 (1996) 17-32; T. Seidl, "Levitikus 16 – 'Schlussstein' des priesterlichen Systems der Sündenvergebung," pp. 219-48 in *Levitikus als Buch*, H.-J. Fabry, H.-W. Jüngline, eds. (*BBB* 119; Berlin: Philo, 1999); W. Warning, *Literary Artistry in Leviticus* (Leiden: Brill, 1999); E. Zenger ("Das Buch Levitikus als Teiltext der Tora/des Pentateuch Eine synchrone Lektüre mit kanonischer Perspektive," in *Levitikus als Buch*, 71) and B. Jürgens (*Heiligkeit und Versöhnung: Leviticus 16 in seinem literarischen Kontext* [*HBSt* 28; New York: Herder, 2001] 126-86) both posit chapters 16-17 as the center. Besides, a few who have posited Leviticus 19 as the center of Leviticus, nonetheless suggest that atonement appears thematically central to the book. Mary Douglas infers that atonement is the central theme of Leviticus (*Leviticus as Literature*, 231-34), as does Kline, illustrated by this quote: "This structure can be interpreted as an analogical representation of the Tabernacle with chapter 19 parallel to the Ark of the Covenant, the inner array the Holy of Holies, the middle array the Holy Place, and the outer array the courtyard. The experience of reading Leviticus, according to this analogy, places the reader in a position analogous to the High Priest on the Day of Atonement. Like the High Priest, the reader follows the inner path to holiness at the center of the book, passing through the courtyard and the Holy Place to the Holy of Holies. This path is reversed in the second half as the reader-High

Priest returns to society when exiting the Tabernacle" ("The Literary Structure of Leviticus," *The Biblical Historian* 2.1 [2006] 11).

100. A. M. Rodriguez, "Leviticus 16: Its Literary Structure," *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 34.2 (1996) 269-86 (283). The chiasm presented varies slightly from that of Rodriguez. D. Luciani's chiastic outline of Leviticus 16 contains significant overlap, tending to confirm the focus upon the accomplished purgation of the tabernacle (*Sainteté et pardon*, 386). Cf. also G. A. Klingbeil, *Bridging the Gap*, 155ff; J. E. Hartley, *Leviticus*, 232. For Leviticus 19 as the ring center, see M. Douglas, "Poetic Structure in Leviticus," pp. 239-56 in P*omegranates and Golden Bells: Studies in Biblical, Jewish, and Near Eastern Ritual, Law and Literature in Honor of Jacob Milgrom*, D. P. Wright, D. N. Freedman, A. Hurvitz, eds. (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1995).

101. J. A. Davies, *A Royal Priesthood*, 162. Ultimately, then, the gate liturgy is via substitutionary atonement, the mythic pattern of (substitutionary) death and rebirth being at the heart of the sacrificial system of Israel's cultus. Cf. "Rebirth," pp. 696-97 in *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery*, Ryken, Wilhoit, Longman III, eds. (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 1998) 697. Every sacrifice had atonement at its heart, both pointing toward and deriving significance from the high Day of Atonement.

102. H. Gese, *Essays on Biblical Theology* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1981) 74.

103. See Mary Douglas, *Leviticus as Literature*; M. Kline, "The Literary Structure of Leviticus"; G. A Rendsburg, "The Two Screens: On Mary Douglas's Proposal for a Literary Structure to the Book of Leviticus," *JSQ* 15 (2008) 175-89.

104. R. M. Davidson, "Assurance in the Judgment," *Adventist Review* (1988) 20, based on W. H. Shea, "Literary Form and Theological Function in Leviticus," pp. 131-68 in *The Seventy Weeks, Leviticus, and the Nature of Prophecy*, F.B. Holbrook, ed. (Washington, DC: BRI, 1986) 18.

105. Cf., e.g., J. Morgenstern, "The Cultic Setting of the 'Enthronement Psalms,'" *HUCA* 35 (1964) 1-42 (esp. 8-14). His discussion of the enigmatic "closing of the gate" ceremony (13f) may be informed by the gate liturgy we have developed, including reference to Yʜᴡʜ's shutting of the ark's door.

106. See, e.g., R. E. Gane, *Cult and Character: Purification Offerings, Day of Atonement, and Theodicy* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns,

2005) 362-78; R. E. Gane, "The Nanshe New Year and the Day of Atonement," Paper presented at SBL in San Francisco, CA, 1998; J. Milgrom, *Leviticus 1-16* (*AB* 3; New York: Doubleday, 1991) 1067-71. On the *akitu* festival, see W. G. Lambert, "The Great Battle of the Mesopotamian Religious Year: The Conflict in the *Akitu* House (A Summary)," *Iraq* 25 (1963) 189-90; J. A. Black, "The New Year Ceremonies in Ancient Babylon: 'Taking Bel by the Hand' and a Cultic Picnic," *Religion* 11 (1981) 39-60; B. D. Sommer, "The Babylonian Akitu Festival: Rectifying the King or Renewing the Cosmos?" *Journal of the Ancient Near Eastern Society* 27 (2000) 81-95; S. A. Pallis, *The Babylonian Akitu Festival* (Copenhagen: A. F. Horst, 1926); H. Zimmern, *Das babylonische Neujahrfest* (Leipzig: JC. Hinrichs, 1926); C. Nihan, *From Priestly Torah to Pentateuch*, 508ff; 613, who notes: "the entire ceremony of chapter 16, as the Mesopotamian *akitu* Festival, corresponds to the re-establishment of cosmic order and may therefore be regarded as a ritual re-enactment of God's primeval victory over chaos at the creation of the world. *This ritual process of re-creation makes possible God's permanent presence in Israel*…" (613; emphasis original).

107. S. E. Balentine, *The Torah's Vision of Worship*, 65. F. H. Gorman states: "Thus, the ritual [of the Day of Atonement] reflects the need for an annual reestablishment of the order of creation, an order consisting of cosmic, social, and cultic categories. As such, the ritual reflects characteristics of annual new year festivals. This is an annual ritual concerned with the reestablishment of the prescribed and founded order of creation in which the community situates itself in the world, a world constructed and enacted ritually" (*Ideology of Ritual*, 61-62).

108. J. D. Levenson, *Creation and the Persistence of Evil: The Jewish Drama of Divine Omnipotence* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988) xxvi.

109. G. J. Wenham, "Aaron's Rod (Numbers 17.16-28)," *Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenshaft* 93.2 (1981) 280-81.

110. G. J. Wenham, "Aaron's Rod," 280.

111. G. J. Wenham, "Aaron's Rod," 280. C. Nihan, moreover, links these stories via the censer-incense to that of the deaths of Nadab and Abihu in Leviticus 10, claiming the point of the latter is the same: the high priest's sole prerogative to enter the Holy of Holies (*From Priestly Torah to Pentateuch*, 582).

112. G. J. Wenham, "Aaron's Rod," 280-81. Their reaction is similar to Isaiah's after being ushered into the heavenly sanctuary (Isaiah 6.5).

113. G. J. Wenham, "Aaron's Rod," 281.

114. C. Nihan, *From Priestly Torah to Pentateuch*, 614; see also 350.

115. A. M. Rodriguez, "Sanctuary Theology in the Book of Exodus," 128.

116. This is recognized in most commentaries.

117. J. Milgrom, *Studies in Levitical Terminology* 1 (Los Angeles: U of CA Press, 1970) 44-46. P. Enns, among other commentators, also posits Mount Sinai as the "pattern" for the tabernacle (*Exodus*, 488).

118. A. M. Rodriguez, "Sanctuary Theology in the Book of Exodus," 134.

119. F. M. Cross, Jr., "The Priestly Tabernacle in the Light of Recent Research," 93-94.

120. Cf. F. M. Cross, Jr., "The Tabernacle," 64-66; A. M. Rodriguez, "Sanctuary Theology in the Book of Exodus," 129-30.

121. M. R. Hauge, *The Descent from the Mountain*, 22. This connection, he suggests, is connected with the role of the human actors who may not ascend the mountain, making the divine descent to the tabernacle necessary (99).

122. For the cloud of Glory symbolizing the divine Presence, cf. J. Plastaras, *The God of Exodus: The Theology fo the Exodus Narratives.* (Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing, 1966) 272-73.

123. G. Davies, "The Theology of Exodus," 141. He further supports this understanding in footnote 12 of the same page, noting that the LXX renders the phrase *wᵉšāḵantî bᵉṯôḵām* in 25.8 with καὶ ὀφθβσομαι êν ὕμ/ν.

124. Cf. A. C. Leder, "The Coherence of Exodus," 268.

125. M. Buber, "Holy Event (Exodus 19-27)," pp. 45-58 in *Exodus: Modern Critical Interpretations*, H. Bloom, ed. (New York: Chelsea House, 1987) 51, originally published in *On the Bible: Eighteen Studies by Martin Buber* (New York: Schocken, 1968).

126. For a similar succession of the names for the deity, cf. B. W. Anderson, *Contours of Old Testament Theology*, 86. The "alone" here derives from our understanding of the function and role of Exodus 32 set in the midst of tabernacle instruction and construction. Note the parallels between Exodus 24 and 32, A. Phillips, "A Fresh Look at the Sinai Pericope: Part 1," 51; F. Polak, "Theophany and Mediator: The Unfolding of a Theme in the Book of Exodus." *Studies in the Book of Exodus: Redaction-Reception-Interpretation.* M. Vervenne, ed. (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1996) 141. Further, the making, breaking, and remaking of the covenant

in Exodus 19-34 corresponds with the overall pattern of Genesis 1-11, old creation, destruction, new beginning (J. Blenkinsopp, "Structure and Meaning," 111; T. E. Fretheim, *Exodus*, 272). See also R. E. Hendrix, "A Literary Structural Analysis of the Golden-Calf Episode in Exodus 32.1-33.6," *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 28.3 (1990) 211-17; R. W. L. Moberly, *At the Mountain of God: Story and Theology in Exodus 32-34* (*JSOTSup* 22; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1983).

127. M. R. Hauge, *The Descent from the Mountain*, 62.

128. P. D. Miller, e.g., considers this the oldest attestation identifying Yhwh with the God of the fathers (*The Divine Warrior in Early Israel* [*HSM* 5; Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973] 114). Cf. P. Enns, *Exodus*, 297-98. Moses is thus portrayed as the "last Patriarch," Yhwh meeting him at the entrance of his own (Moses') tent (Exodus 33.7-11; cf. Genesis 18.1; A. Cooper and B. R. Goldstein, "At the Entrance to the Tent: More Cultic Resonances in Biblical Narrative," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 116.2 [1997] 201-15). With the movement of the glory cloud to the tabernacle, worship shifts from family clan to national cultus.

129. This is not unlike M. Buber's observation that while the deity remains the same from the patriarchal age to that of the Exodus tradition, it is the people (Israel as a nation) that changes. See "Holy Event (Exodus 19-27)." Cf. also Fretheim's theological reflection on the shift in divine abode from mountain to tabernacle (*Exodus*, 272-73).

130. N. Lohfink, *The Theology of the Pentateuch: Themes of the Priestly Narrative and Deuteronomy*. L. M. Maloney, trans. (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1994) 130.

131. Cf. A. M. Rodriguez, "Sanctuary Theology in the Book of Exodus," 131-37. J. I. Durham (*Exodus*, 500-01), in agreement with U. Cassuto (*Exodus*, 484), is likely right in pointing out "no real discrepancy" here in Moses' inability to enter since even in Exodus 24.15-18 (as well as in 19.20) it is clear that he had to wait until Yhwh's invitation (24.17) which, in the tabernacle context, probably occurs in Leviticus (either 1.1 or 9.23). However, and given the lack of objective discrepancy, Exodus 40.35 still makes Moses' inability to enter the Presence a matter of literary emphasis not found in the narrative of chapter 24, and thus crucial for interpretation. B. S. Childs (*Exodus*, 638) suggests that here Moses' role gives way to the priestly role of Aaron (Leviticus 9.23). To be sure, Aaron's "future" role has been in

preparation throughout the narrative, as suggested by his singular privilege of accompanying Moses up the Mount in Exodus 19.24 (P. Enns, *Exodus*, 395). However, Enns's suggestion that Moses' inability to enter represents "a heightening of God's presence" is appealing (*Exodus*, 599), functioning perhaps to confirm the validity of the tabernacle cultus (even as the fearful theophany had previously functioned to validate Moses' mediatorial role, Exodus 19.9). Cf. D. K. Stuart, *Exodus* (NAC. Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 2006) 792-93; T. B. Dozeman, *Exodus*, 765-66. So, the point is not simply that Moses' role gives way to the priesthood, but includes the essential shift from approaching the divine Presence upon the cosmic mountain to approach via the ordained cultus — that is, the tabernacle, the text is emphasizing, is part of a "regulated" cultic complex. Cf. M. R. Hauge, who traces the narrative development of the four *visio Dei* episodes (20.18-21; 24.17; 33.8-10; 40.34-38) and sees a role reversal between Moses and the people in this final and climactic scene (*The Descent from the Mountain*, 41, 58).

132. M. R. Hauge, *The Descent from the Mountain*, 101.

133. C. Meyers, *Exodus*, 283.

134. L. Brisman, "On the Divine Presence in Exodus," 108.

135. For a similar reading, see C. Nihan, *From Priestly Torah to Pentateuch*, 231ff.

136. F. Polak, "Theophany and Mediator," 147. T. B. Dozeman also notes the "absence of God" in the beginning of Exodus (*Exodus*, 44).

137. A. C. Leder, "Reading Exodus to Learn," 20; D. Gowan, *Theology in Exodus*, 1-24.

138. The enthronement emphasis may also be seen in the instructions for building the tabernacle (chapter 25), as B. A. Levine is likely correct in seeing the order of items in relation to relative importance with the ark, as "the central object of the cult" as well as YHWH's throne, coming first ("The Descriptive Tabernacle Texts of the Pentateuch," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 85.3 [1965] 307). This priority, to be sure, is organized by degree of holiness — see M. Haran, *Temples and Temple Service in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Claredon, 1978; reprinted, Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1985); P. P. Jenson, *Graded Holiness: A Key to the Priestly Conception of the World* (JSOTSup 106; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1992); C. Meyers, *Exodus*, 224-25. The ark is "the supreme post-Sinai symbol of the Presence of Yahweh" (J. I. Durham, *Exodus*, 350). Cf. P. Enns, *Exodus*, 511.

139. Cf. F. Gorman, *Ideology of Ritual*, 42; T. E. Fretheim, "Reclamation of Creation," 364-65 footnote 26; N. M. Sarna, *Exodus*, 237.

140. T. B. Dozeman, *Exodus*, 439.

141. Commonly recognized by scholars. See A. C. Leder, "Reading Exodus to Learn," 26.

142. I. Knohl, "Two Aspects of the 'Tent of Meeting,'" 73. Cf. M. Fishbane, *Biblical Text and Texture: A Literary Reading of Selected Texts* (New York: Schocken, 1979) 13.

143. Cf. J. Plastaras, *The God of Exodus*, 258.

144. R. P. Gordon, *Hebrew Bible and Ancient Versions: Selected Essays in Honor of Robert P. Gordon* (SOTS. Burlington: Ashgate, 1988) 29.

145. C. Nihan, *From Priestly Torah to Pentateuch*, 65 (emphasis in original).

146. See J. D. Currid, *A Study Commentary on Exodus*. Vol. 2. (Darlington, England; Auburn, MA: Evangelical Press, 2000) 143; F. Gorman, *Ideology of Ritual*, 48.

147. M. Greenberg, *Understanding Exodus*, 16-17.

148. For literary and thematic parallels between the creation account and the completion of the tabernacle, cf. M. Fishbane, *Biblical Text and Texture*, 12-13; R. S. Hendel, "The Poetics of Myth in Genesis," pp. 157-70 in *The Seductiveness of Jewish Myth*, S. D. Breslauer, ed. (New York: State University of New York Press, 1997) 163-64.

149. A. C. Leder states: "Remarkably, Exodus ends where Genesis begins. Or, to put it another way: The end of Exodus picks up where Adam's and Eve's sin created a disjunction between the presence of God and human history" ("Reading Exodus to Learn," 30). Cf. P. Enns, *Exodus*, 285. Similarly, J. H. Walton: "As Exodus 40 describes the glory of the Lord filling the temple, the Israelites experience what is, in effect, a return to Eden — not in the sense of full restoration, but in the sense that God's presence again takes up its residence among people, and access to God's presence, however limited, is restored" ("Equilibrium and the Sacred Compass: The Structure of the Book of Leviticus," *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 11.2 [2001] 296).

150. T. E. Fretheim, *Exodus*, 240-41, 315 (emphasis original). Cf. C. Meyers, *Exodus*, 222-23; J. K. Bruckner, *Exodus*, 327; J. D. Currid, *Exodus*, vol. 2, 369.

151. See M. Greenberg's assessment for the book of Exodus as a literary unit within the Torah, having its own prologue and epilogue, etc., *Understanding Exodus*, 2-3.

152. M. Noth, *Exodus: A Commentary*. J. S. Bowden, trans. (OTL. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1962) 200.

153. B. S. Childs, *Exodus*, 239. Similarly, P. Enns, *Exodus*, 301, 506; D. C. Timmer, Creation, Tabernacle, and Sabbath, 145. See also the Eden–temple parallels in M. Barker, *The Great High Priest: The Temple Roots of Christian Liturgy* (London: T & T Clark, 2003) 47.

154. Cosmic mountain ideology may serve to unfold the meaning of other cultic rituals as well. E.g., the Day of Atonement liturgy may be of a piece with the later Tamid ritual whereby the lamb was slain at the sound of the opening of the temple gates at dawn (see m.Tamid 3.1-5, 7) — entrance into Yʜᴡʜ's abode via sacrifice. Interestingly, some have posited that the Day of Atonement morning *Tamid*, in particular, serves as the context for the temple themes in John's Apocalypse. Cf., e.g., J. Paulien, "The Role of the Hebrew Cultus, Sanctuary and Temple in the Plot and Structure of the Book of Revelation," *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 33.2 (1995) 245-64. See also D. Hamm, "The *Tamid* Service in Luke-Acts: The Cultic Background behind Luke's Theology of Worship," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 65 (2003) 215-31.

This chapter has been adapted from L. Michael Morales, *The Tabernacle Pre-Figured: Cosmic Mountain Ideology in Genesis and Exodus* (*Biblical Tools and Studies* 15, Leuven, The Netherlands: Peeters, 2012) 245-277.

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Lehi's Dream and the Plan of Salvation

Ryan Atwood

Abstract: Lehi's dream symbolically teaches us about many aspects of Heavenly Father's plan of salvation. The central message of Lehi's dream is that all must come unto Jesus Christ in order to be saved. Each of us has the choice to pursue the path that leads to eternal joy and salvation or to choose a different way and experience undesirable outcomes. In this paper, elements of Lehi's dream and supporting scriptures are analyzed to see how they relate to key aspects of the plan of salvation and our journey through life.

Lehi's dream of the tree of life recorded in the Book of Mormon offers a symbolic portrayal of Heavenly Father's plan of salvation. Lehi recognized his dream as a vision from God, and after awaking he felt confident in the eternal destiny of his sons Nephi and Sam but was deeply concerned for the eternal welfare of his two oldest sons, Laman and Lemuel.[1]

In his vision, Lehi was led to a large and spacious field in which he saw a tree that produced brilliant white fruit.[2] After partaking of the fruit, which he said "was desirable to make one happy," Lehi noted that its taste was "most sweet," and his soul became filled "with exceedingly great joy" (1 Nephi 8:10–12). Lehi quickly became eager to have his family partake of the fruit also. He noted that his wife Sariah and his sons Sam and Nephi partook, but Laman and Lemuel refused to come to the tree.[3]

Lehi also saw a large and spacious field with a countless number of people in it, many of whom made their way toward a strait and narrow path with an iron rod to its side. The path and the rod extended along the bank of a river and led directly to the tree. After the travelers began their journey on the path toward the tree, they were soon overshadowed by a mist of darkness that caused many to veer off of the path and become

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1. See 1 Nephi 8:2–4, 36.
2. See 1 Nephi 8:9–11.
3. See 1 Nephi 8:12–18.

lost. Others, however, pushed through the mist of darkness and made their way to the tree by holding onto the iron rod.[4]

On the other side of the river from the path and the tree was a great and spacious building that "stood as it were in the air high above the earth" (1 Nephi 8:26). Lehi observed that the building was filled with men and women of all ages who wore elaborate, fine clothing and mocked and pointed their fingers at those who had come to the tree to partake of its fruit. The scoffing from those in the great and spacious building caused all who heeded them to feel ashamed, "and they fell away into forbidden paths and were lost" (1 Nephi 8:27–28).

Lehi saw others who "fell down and partook of the fruit of the tree" after having pressed forward along the path while "continually holding fast to the rod of iron" (1 Nephi 8:30). Lehi seems to have included himself and the other righteous members of his family among this group, noting that they also experienced the ridicule of those in the great and spacious building — but, he said, "we heeded them not" (1 Nephi 8:33).

In addition to those making their way to the path toward the tree, many others neglected the path altogether and instead sought after the great and spacious building. Although a large multitude entered into it, not all who journeyed toward the building were able to get there. Many of those pursuing the great and spacious building became lost from Lehi's view as they wandered down "strange roads," and others ended up drowning in the river.[5]

Lehi's dream is fascinating not only for its symbolism and imagery but because, as President Boyd K. Packer taught, "all of us are in it."[6] The central message of Lehi's dream is that all must come unto Jesus Christ in order to receive salvation, which is also the overarching theme of the Book of Mormon.[7] The purpose of this paper is to examine how elements of Lehi's dream relate to key aspects of our Heavenly Father's plan of salvation and our journey through life.

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4. See 1 Nephi 8:19–24.

5. See 1 Nephi 8:31–33.

6. Boyd K. Packer, "Lehi's Dream and You" (devotional, Brigham Young University, January 16, 2007). https://speeches.byu.edu/talks/boyd-k-packer/lehis-dream/.

7. David A. Bednar, "Lehi's Dream: Holding Fast to the Rod," *Ensign* (October 2011): 34, https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/ensign/2011/10/lehis-dream-holding-fast-to-the-rod.

The Tree of Life

Much of what Lehi saw in his vision would be left to personal interpretation if not for the faithful actions of his son Nephi. After learning of his father's dream, Nephi desired to "see, and hear, and know of these things" for himself through the power of the Holy Ghost (1 Nephi 10:17). While pondering his father's vision, Nephi was caught away by the Spirit of the Lord and taken to an exceedingly high mountain where he was shown the things which his father saw.[8]

The first thing Nephi saw in his vision was the tree, which he later identified as the tree of life.[9] He described the tree as being more beautiful, whiter, and more precious than any earthly thing.[10] After desiring to know what the tree represented, Nephi was shown a vision of the virgin Mary holding the Son of God in her arms.[11] Nephi was then asked, "Knowest thou the meaning of the tree which thy father saw?" Nephi responded that the tree of life represented "the love of God, which sheddeth itself abroad in the hearts of the children of men; wherefore, it is the most desirable above all things" (1 Nephi 11:21–22).

There is no greater manifestation of the love of God than in His willingness to send His Son, Jesus Christ, to the world to perform the Atonement that would enable all of Heavenly Father's children to return unto Him: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son" (John 3:16). Thus, in the ultimate sense, the tree of life is a representation of Jesus Christ.[12]

It is fitting that a tree with outstretched branches and enough fruit for all to eat is a symbol of the Savior. The scriptures contain many portrayals of a loving Savior standing with outstretched arms, inviting all who will to come unto Him and partake of His salvation.[13] As Alma put it, "Behold, he sendeth an invitation unto all men, for the arms of mercy are extended towards them, and he saith: Repent, and I will receive you" (Alma 5:33).

Just as the tree of life is central to Lehi's dream, Jesus Christ is central to our Heavenly Father's plan of salvation. The Prophet Joseph Smith taught, "The fundamental principles of our religion are the testimony of

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8. See 1 Nephi 11:1–6.
9. See 1 Nephi 11:8, 25. See also 1 Nephi 15:22.
10. See 1 Nephi 11:8–9.
11. See 1 Nephi 11:10–20.
12. Bednar, "Lehi's Dream," 33–34; see also Kevin W. Pearson, "Stay by the Tree," *Ensign* (May 2015): 114, https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/ensign/2015/05/sunday-afternoon-session/stay-by-the-tree.
13. See, e.g., Jacob 6:4–5; Alma 5:34; Mosiah 16:12; Alma 19:36; 3 Nephi 9:13–14.

the Apostles and Prophets, concerning Jesus Christ, that He died, was buried, and rose again the third day, and ascended into heaven; and all other things which pertain to our religion are only appendages to it."[14]

The Fruit of the Tree

The scriptures use magnificent terms to describe the fruit of the tree of life. Lehi called the fruit "sweet," "white," "desirable to make one happy," and "desirable above all other fruit" (1 Nephi 8:10–12). Nephi added that the fruit is "most precious and most desirable above all other fruits; yea, and it is the greatest of all the gifts of God" (1 Nephi 15:36). Alma described it as that "which is most precious, which is sweet above all that is sweet, and which is white above all that is white, yea, and pure above all that is pure" (Alma 32:42).

If the tree of life is a symbol of Jesus Christ, then the fruit of the tree represents that which comes from Him, including the blessings of His Atonement.[15] Just as fruit from a tree provides our physical bodies with vital nutrients, the Savior's atoning sacrifice provides significant spiritual blessings to our souls, including the following.

Eternal Life

The ultimate blessing available through Jesus Christ is eternal life, which, like the fruit of the tree of life, is described as being "the greatest of all the gifts of God."[16] Some scriptures employ language similar to that in Lehi's dream when they admonish us to *partake* of the salvation offered through Jesus Christ.[17] For example, the Nephite record keeper Amaleki exhorted us to "come unto Christ, who is the Holy One of Israel, and partake of his salvation, and the power of his redemption" (Omni 1:26).

Cleansing from Sin

The symbolism of pure and white fruit coming from the tree of life helps us to remember that sanctification is one of the blessings made available through Jesus Christ.[18] Recognizing this truth, Moroni exhorted us to "cry mightily unto the Father in the name of Jesus, that perhaps ye may

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14. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2007), 49, https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/manual/teachings-joseph-smith/chapter-3?lang=eng.

15. Bednar, "Lehi's Dream," 34.

16. 1 Nephi 15:36; Doctrine and Covenants 14:7.

17. See, e.g., 2 Nephi 26:24; Ether 12:8–9.

18. See Moses 6:59–60.

be found spotless, pure, fair, and white, having been cleansed by the blood of the Lamb, at that great and last day" (Mormon 9:6).

The sanctification that comes as we exercise faith in Jesus Christ, repent of our sins, and receive the Holy Ghost also allows us to become perfected in Him. Moroni concluded the Book of Mormon with this exhortation: "Come unto Christ, and be perfected in him, and deny yourselves of all ungodliness. ... And again, if ye by the grace of God are perfect in Christ, and deny not his power, then are ye sanctified in Christ by the grace of God, through the shedding of the blood of Christ, ... that ye become holy, without spot" (Moroni 10:32–33).

Joy
Lehi recalled that partaking of the fruit of the tree of life caused his soul to be filled with "exceedingly great joy" (1 Nephi 8:12). The gospel of Jesus Christ is designed to help us be happy both in this life and eternally, for "men are, that they might have joy" (2 Nephi 2:25). King Benjamin exhorted his people to "consider on the blessed and happy state of those that keep the commandments of God" (Mosiah 2:41). Exalted individuals in the celestial kingdom will feel joy that "shall be full forever," and will live "in a state of never-ending happiness," singing "ceaseless praises with the choirs above, unto the Father, and unto the Son, and unto the Holy Ghost."[19]

Nourishment and Satisfaction
Nephi taught that the iron rod "led to the fountain of living waters, *or* to the tree of life" (1 Nephi 11:25). The Savior made a similar comparison when he referred to Himself as "the fountain of all righteousness."[20] To the Jews in the New Testament, He taught that He was both the bread of life *and* the source of living water.[21] Thinking of the Savior in terms of both food and drink helps us better understand what He can provide for our souls. Physical foods such as fruit and bread satisfy our appetites and provide us with the nutrients needed for our bodies to remain healthy and strong. Water is also essential for life, cleanses us, and provides satisfaction to those who drink it.

As the bread of life, the fountain of living waters, and the tree of life, the Savior is the ultimate source of fulfillment, strength, nourishment, and satisfaction. What He provides to those who follow Him is unlike anything the world has to offer. Those who go about their lives seeking after the

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19.   2 Nephi 9:18; Mosiah 2:41; Mormon 7:7.
20.   Ether 12:28; see also Ether 8:26.
21.   See John 4:10; 6:35.

pleasures of the world come away feeling empty and unfulfilled. Compared to the treasures on the Earth, which are eventually corrupted by moth and rust,[22] the Savior offers "treasure in heaven, yea, which is eternal, and which fadeth not way; yea, that ... precious gift of eternal life" (Helaman 5:8).

Spiritual Rebirth

Those who come unto Jesus Christ can be filled with the Holy Ghost, who is the catalyst for spiritual rebirth and a mighty change of heart. After King Benjamin's people repented of their sins, they said the Spirit of the Lord had "wrought a mighty change" in their hearts, which caused them to "have no more disposition to do evil, but to do good continually" (Mosiah 5:2). Those who experience a change of heart "become new creatures" who are willing to leave their sinful lives behind and walk "in a newness of life" along the strait and narrow path.[23]

The Essential Nature of the Tree of Life

The tree of life is glorious, purifying, abundant, satisfying, and essential, and so is Jesus Christ. To describe the tree is to describe the Redeemer. "He is the light and the life of the world; yea, a light that is endless, that can never be darkened; yea, and also a life which is endless, that there can be no more death" (Mosiah 16:9). He is "the law, and the light," the "fountain of living waters," in Him "there should come every good thing."[24]

Those in Lehi's dream who did not come to and stay by the tree eventually perished.[25] The same is true for us. Only by looking unto and connecting ourselves with Jesus Christ can we can gain eternal life.[26] We must rely completely upon Him because there is no other way to receive salvation.[27] He taught, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6). King Benjamin echoed this truth when he taught his people that "there shall be no other name given nor any other way nor means whereby salvation can come unto the children of men, only in and through the name of Christ, the Lord Omnipotent" (Mosiah 3:17).

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22. See Matthew 6:19.
23. Mosiah 27:26; Romans 6:4.
24. 3 Nephi 15:9; 1 Nephi 11:25; Moroni 7:22.
25. See 1 Nephi 8:28, 32; 11:36; 12:17.
26. See 3 Nephi 15:9.
27. See, e.g., 2 Nephi 2:6–8; 6:15; 9:41; 25:20; Mosiah 3:11–12; 4:6–8; 5:7–11; 15:19; Alma 11:39–40; 34:9; 37:46–47; 38:9; Helaman 5:9.

The Great and Spacious Building

In Heavenly Father's plan of salvation, it is essential for His children to be presented with choices between good and evil. Having these choices helps us to "know to refuse the evil, and choose the good" (Isaiah 7:15). Lehi taught that if there were not an opposition in all things, "righteousness could not be brought to pass, neither wickedness, neither holiness nor misery, neither good nor bad" (2 Nephi 2:11). After being cast out of the garden of Eden, Adam and Eve recognized that they could experience joy and eternal life — or the fruits of the tree of life — even after they had partaken of the forbidden fruit. Eve declared, "Were it not for our transgression we never should have had seed, and never should have known good and evil, and the joy of our redemption, and the eternal life which God giveth unto all the obedient" (Moses 5:11). It would be difficult to appreciate the sweetness of the fruit of the tree of life without understanding anything about its opposite.

In Lehi's dream, the great and spacious building situated beyond the forbidden paths represents the enticement to do evil. It is akin to "the forbidden fruit in opposition to the tree of life; the one being sweet and the other bitter" (2 Nephi 2:15). If the tree of life symbolizes the Savior and everything good, sweet, and eternal, then the great and spacious building represents that which is evil, bitter, and temporary.

Those in the great and spacious building may temporarily experience what they consider to be happiness, but their way of life will ultimately lead to misery and destruction. Nephi prophesied of the fall of the great and spacious building, "and the fall thereof was exceedingly great" (1 Nephi 11:36).

Descriptions of the Great and Spacious Building

The great and spacious building is characterized by its popularity among people of all ages and walks of life.[28] Nephi said the building was "the pride of the world," and the angel taught that it is "the world and the wisdom thereof" and "the vain imaginations and the pride of the children of men."[29] A number of teachings and accounts from the Book of Mormon can help us better understand the pride, wisdom, and vain imaginations that are characteristic of the great and spacious building.

The Pride of the World

One of the lessons the Lord would like us to learn from the Book of Mormon is to "beware of pride, lest ye become as the Nephites of old"

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28. See 1 Nephi 8:27, 33.
29. 1 Nephi 11:35–36; 12:18.

(Doctrine & Covenants 38:39). Unrepented pride will eventually destroy our souls.[30] President Ezra Taft Benson taught that self-centeredness, conceit, boastfulness, arrogance, haughtiness, and competitiveness are all elements of pride, but "the central feature of pride is enmity — enmity toward God and enmity toward our fellowmen."[31]

Those in the great and spacious building demonstrated their enmity toward God through their unwillingness either to partake of the fruit of the tree of life or to remain at the tree after having done so. They demonstrated their enmity toward their fellowmen by mocking, scorning, and pointing their fingers at those who were partaking of the fruit. Similar to mockers who occupied a building "high above the earth" (1 Nephi 8:26), many scriptures in the Book of Mormon speak of people *lifted up* in pride.[32] Knowing their eventual fate should cause us to avoid such haughtiness and instead humble ourselves "in the depths of humility" (Mosiah 4:11).

Worldly Wisdom

Speaking of the prideful who are learned, the Nephite prophet Jacob taught that they "think they are wise, and they hearken not unto the counsel of God, for they set it aside, supposing they know of themselves." He warned of the consequences of such an attitude: "Wherefore, their wisdom is foolishness and it profiteth them not. And they shall perish." Therefore, worldly wisdom can be eternally beneficial only to those who "hearken unto the counsels of God" (2 Nephi 9:28–29).

Those who rely exclusively on worldly wisdom while ignoring the counsels of God are similar to those of whom Paul prophesied: "ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth" (2 Timothy 3:7). Such sophistication smothers faith. Like Nephites of old, some of these people convince themselves that the doctrine of Christ is "a foolish and a vain thing," or that it is "not reasonable that such a being as a Christ shall come."[33] They accuse Church leaders, as Korihor did, of cunningly "leading away the people after the silly traditions of their fathers" and arguing that "no man can know of anything which is to

30. See Jacob 2:16.

31. Ezra Taft Benson, "Beware of Pride," *Ensign* (May 1989): 4. https://www. churchofjesuschrist.org/study/ensign/1989/05/beware-of-pride.

32. See, e.g., 2 Nephi 26:20; 28:12; Jacob 1:16; 2:13; Mosiah 11:5, 19; Alma 1:6, 32; 4:6, 8; 6:3; 31:25; 45:24; 3 Nephi 6:10, 13; 16:10; 4 Nephi 1:24; Helaman 3:34; 6:17; 12:5; Mormon 8:28.

33. 3 Nephi 2:2; Helaman 16:18.

come," and "ye cannot know of things which ye do not see; therefore ye cannot know that there shall be a Christ."[34]

Vain Imaginations

The description of the great and spacious building standing "as it were in the air, high above the earth" (1 Nephi 8:26) can be interpreted to mean that the building had no foundation and was floating in the air.[35] Considering how difficult it would be to enter a floating building, it seems one lesson we can learn from this symbol is that those moving toward the great and spacious building were seeking after something ultimately impossible to obtain. This idea is well-represented in the scriptures. When speaking to the wicked Nephites of his day, Samuel the Lamanite lamented, "Ye have sought all the days of your lives for *that which ye could not obtain*; and ye have sought for happiness in doing iniquity, which thing is contrary to the nature of that righteousness which is in our great Eternal Head" (Helaman 13:38). Mormon made a similar observation about the wicked people of his day, who in their misery murmured that "the Lord would not always suffer them to take happiness in sin" (Mormon 2:13).

Lehi noted many in his vision who did enter into the great and spacious building,[36] but they could not have fully experienced the happiness they were seeking, for "wickedness never was happiness" (Alma 41:10). Jacob taught that the happiness prepared for the saints will be hidden forever from "the wise, and the learned, and they that are rich, who are puffed up because of their learning, and their wisdom, and their riches" unless they humble themselves before God.[37] The Savior acknowledged that those who do the works of the devil "have joy in their works for a season," but this is not true happiness and will be short-lived, for "by and by the end cometh, and they are hewn down and cast into the fire, from whence there is no return" (3 Nephi 27:11).

Nephi pointed out a great and terrible gulf dividing those in the great and spacious building from those gathered to the tree of life.[38] Lehi later described this as an "eternal gulf" (2 Nephi 1:13), suggesting that in their current state, it

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34. Alma 30:31; Alma 30:13; Alma 30:15.
35. See "Lesson 3: The Vision of the Tree of Life," *Book of Mormon: Gospel Doctrine Teacher's Manual* (1999): 13. https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/manual/book-of-mormon-gospel-doctrine-teachers-manual/lesson-3.
36. See 1 Nephi 8:33.
37. 2 Nephi 9:42–43.
38. See 1 Nephi 12:18.

would be impossible for those in the building to be where those gathered to the tree were — in a state of eternal happiness, peace, and rest.

The Strait and Narrow Path

Lehi beheld in his dream a strait and narrow path with an iron rod that led travelers from the large and spacious field to the tree of life.[39] Just as there was only one way to the tree of life for the multitudes in Lehi's vision, in our Heavenly Father's plan of salvation, there is only one path that leads to eternal life.[40] Because the Savior lived a perfect life, He can credibly say, "follow me, and do the things which ye have seen me do" (2 Nephi 31:12), for living as He did and relying upon Him *is* the pathway to eternal life. The strait and narrow path goes by many other names, including "the way," "paths of righteousness," "the doctrine of Christ," "wisdom's paths," and "the covenant path."[41]

It is instructive that the travelers in Lehi's dream did not begin their journey on the strait and narrow path but instead started from the large and spacious field which represented the world.[42] These individuals had to "come forth, and commence in the path which led to the tree" (1 Nephi 8:22). In our Heavenly Father's plan of salvation, the way we enter this strait and narrow path is by entering through the gate of baptism. Jacob taught that "there is none other way" onto this path "save it be by the gate" (2 Nephi 9:41). Nephi said, "The gate by which ye should enter is repentance and baptism by water; and then cometh a remission of your sins by fire, and by the Holy Ghost. And then are ye in this strait and narrow path which leads to eternal life; yea, ye have entered in by the gate" (2 Nephi 31:17–18).

The symbolism of entering a path through a gate suggests that baptism is not a final destination but the beginning of a life-long journey along the strait and narrow path that will culminate in eternal life. Nephi taught that after repenting and being baptized, "ye must press forward with a steadfastness in Christ, having a perfect brightness of hope, and a love of God and of all men" and that, "if ye shall press forward, feasting upon the words of Christ, and endure to the end, behold, thus saith the Father: ye shall have eternal life" (2 Nephi 31:20).

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39. See 1 Nephi 8:19–20.

40. See Matthew 7:13–14.

41. 1 Nephi 10:18; Alma 7:19; 2 Nephi 13:21; Helaman 12:5; Russell M. Nelson, "As We Go Forward Together," *Ensign* (April 2018): 7, https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/liahona/2018/04/as-we-go-forward-together.

42. See 1 Nephi 8:20.

It is essential for each of us to experience this process in order to obtain eternal life. Nephi said, "This is the way; and there is none other way nor name given under heaven whereby man can be saved in the kingdom of God. And now, behold, this is the doctrine of Christ" (2 Nephi 31:21). Or, as Enoch put it when summarizing this process to the people of his day, "This is the plan of salvation" (Moses 6:62).

The strait and narrow path can be accessed by all God's children who will repent and be baptized.[43] Mormon emphasized this when he taught, "Yea, thus we see that the gate of heaven is open unto all, even to those who will believe on the name of Jesus Christ, who is the Son of God. Yea, we see that whosoever will may lay hold upon the word of God" (Helaman 3:28–29). Nephi taught, "And he inviteth them all to come unto him and partake of his goodness; and he denieth none that come unto him, black and white, bond and free, male and female; and he remembereth the heathen; and all are alike unto God, both Jew and Gentile" (2 Nephi 26:33).

Mists of Darkness

As the travelers in Lehi's dream progressed along the strait and narrow path, they encountered a mist of darkness, and many left the path and became lost.[44] Nephi taught that "the mists of darkness are the temptations of the devil, which blindeth the eyes, and hardeneth the hearts of the children of men, and leadeth them away into broad roads, that they perish and are lost" (1 Nephi 12:17). It is important to understand that all on the strait and narrow path experienced the mists of darkness. Dealing with the temptations of the devil is something each of Heavenly Father's children must do. The temptations themselves are not what cause us to leave the path, but it is rather the heed we give to them. Nephi taught that those who fall to temptation experience three related consequences: spiritual blindness, hardened hearts, and leaving the strait and narrow path.

Spiritual Blindness

Those who "choose darkness rather than light" (Helaman 13:29) experience spiritual blindness because they have access to less of God's light.[45] The resultant darkness makes it more difficult to discern between good and evil and to resist subsequent temptations from Satan.

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43. See Alma 19:36.
44. See 1 Nephi 8:23.
45. The Lord taught the Prophet Joseph Smith that everything which is of God is light, and when a person walks in, or is obedient to the light he or she has received

When we experience spiritual blindness, we lose our ability to clearly see what we had once been able to see. Speaking about individuals who have become spiritually blinded and hardened by yielding to the temptations of the devil, Alma taught, "To them is given the lesser portion of the word until they know nothing concerning his mysteries" (Alma 12:11). The blindness of eyes and hardness of hearts that results from yielding to temptation can cause a person who once had a testimony of the precious truths of the gospel to eventually forget what he or she once knew.

Hardened Hearts

The scriptures speak of the heart as our spiritual core and "the figurative source of all emotions and feelings."[46] The Lord desires our hearts to be pure, soft, and yielded to him.[47] But our hearts become hardened as we yield to Satan's temptations.[48] Many behaviors and consequences are associated with a hardened heart, including unbelief,[49] an inability to understand the words of the Lord,[50] murmuring,[51] contention

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from God, that person will receive more of His light. "And that light groweth brighter and brighter until the perfect day" (Doctrine & Covenants 50:24). The increased light one receives through obedience to God makes it easier to discern between good and evil and increases one's capacity to continue walking in God's light.

46. "Heart," Guide to the Scriptures, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/scriptures/gs/heart.

47. See, e.g., 3 Nephi 12:8; Alma 24:8; Helaman 3:35.

48. See 1 Nephi 12:17.

49. See, e.g., 2 Nephi 33:2; Alma 8:9–11; 15:15; 21:12; 33:19–22; 35:3; 45:23; Helaman 16:22–23; 3 Nephi 1:19–22; 2:1–2; Mormon 3:2–3; Ether 11:13.

50. See, e.g., Mosiah 13:32; 26:3; Alma 12:9–11.

51. See, e.g., 1 Nephi 2:11–12; 3:5–6; 3:31; 7:6–12; 15:1–11; 16:1–5, 18–22, 34–38; 17:17–22. Laman and Lemuel provide a distressing example of the behaviors and consequences associated with a hardened heart. One of the most obvious manifestations of their hard hearts was their continual murmuring. Nephi recorded that his older brothers murmured when Lehi was commanded to flee the city of Jerusalem, when they were commanded to return to Jerusalem to get the brass plates from Laban, when they were traveling through the wilderness after enlisting the family of Ishmael on their journey, when they could not understand the meaning of Lehi's dream, when Nephi explained the meaning of Lehi's dream to them, when Nephi's bow was broken, when Ishmael died, and when Nephi was commanded to build a ship.

Because of the hardness of their hearts, Laman and Lemuel also refused to believe and obey the words of the Lord and were physically and verbally abusive to members of their family. Not long after Lehi's death, Nephi recorded that the anger of Laman and Lemuel "did increase against me, insomuch that they did seek to take away my life." Due to these dangerous circumstances, Nephi was commanded by the Lord to take his family and all who would go with him into the wilderness. As

and hatred,[52] withdrawal from Church participation,[53] loss of the companionship of the Holy Ghost,[54] and, in a final sense, destruction.[55]

Forbidden Paths

The mist of darkness in Lehi's dream caused many to "lose their way, that they wandered off and were lost" (1 Nephi 8:23). Lehi later referred to the roads veering from the strait and narrow path as "forbidden paths" or "strange roads."[56] Forbidden paths represent the many ways we can live our lives that are not in harmony with God's will. The Savior taught that the way to destruction is broad, and there would be many who would follow it.[57] King Benjamin reminded his followers, "I cannot tell you all the things whereby ye may commit sin; for there are divers ways and means, even so many that I cannot number them" (Mosiah 4:29).

Although they are popular, forbidden paths are not smooth or easy to follow. They cause people to forfeit blessings and become lost and unhappy and will ultimately lead to destruction if they do not choose to return to the strait and narrow path.[58] When people veer off the paths of righteousness, "they are driven about as chaff before the wind" (Mormon 5:16), for "they are as a wild flock which fleeth from the shepherd, and scattereth, and are driven, and are devoured by the beasts of the forest" (Mosiah 8:21).

The Filthy River and Awful Gulf

The river Lehi saw running alongside the strait and narrow path was described by Nephi as containing filthy water.[59] Lehi saw many of those who left the strait and narrow path to wander down strange roads were "drowned in the depths of the fountain" (1 Nephi 8:32). The river of

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a result of their hardened hearts, Laman and Lemuel were cursed by being cut off from the Lord's prophet and access to the blessings of the gospel. See 1 Nephi 2:12, 18; 3:3–5, 3:28–29, 31; 4:13; 15:3, 11; 16:37–38; 17:17–18, 48; 18:9–19; 2 Nephi 2:1; 5:2, 3–7; 5:20–21.

52. See, e.g., Mosiah 10:12–17; Alma 9:30–32; 20:30; 35:15; 48:3; Helaman 3:33–36; 10:13–15; Mormon 4:11.

53. See, e.g., Alma 1:24; 5:57; 6:3; 43:23–24; Helaman 3:1; Mormon 1:17.

54. See, e.g., 2 Nephi 33:2; Jacob 6:8; Helaman 6:35.

55. See, e.g., 2 Nephi 6:10; Jacob 6:8–10; Alma 14:11.

56. 1 Nephi 8:28, 31.

57. See Matthew 7:13.

58. See, e.g., 1 Nephi 8:32; 2 Nephi 5:20; Mosiah 2:36; Helaman 12:21; 13:8; Ether 14:25.

59. See 1 Nephi 12:16.

filthy water symbolizes spiritual filthiness and the depths of hell.[60] Nephi called this river "an awful gulf, which separated the wicked from the tree of life, and also from the Saints of God" (1 Nephi 15:28). The awful gulf was also referred to by the angel as "the word of the justice of the Eternal God" (1 Nephi 12:18).

Because we are imperfect people living in a fallen world, each of us will experience time off the strait and narrow path. But unless we choose to repent of our sins, the awful gulf spoken of by Lehi and Nephi will forever separate us from God and His righteous followers.[61] Alma put it this way: "And thus we see that all mankind were fallen, and they were in the grasp of justice; yea, the justice of God, which consigned them forever to be cut off from his presence" (Alma 42:14).

Thankfully, through His atoning sacrifice, the Savior has prepared "a way for our escape from the grasp of this awful monster; yea, that monster, death and hell" (2 Nephi 9:10). Abinadi emphasized Jesus Christ's role in delivering us from the demands of justice when he taught, "And thus God breaketh the bands of death, having gained the victory over death; giving the Son power to make intercession for the children of men — Having ascended into heaven, having the bowels of mercy; being filled with compassion towards the children of men; *standing betwixt them and justice*; having broken the bands of death, taken upon himself their iniquity and their transgressions, *having redeemed them, and satisfied the demands of justice*" (Mosiah 15:8–9).

Because of the Savior's victory over sin and death, the way has been prepared for the demands of justice to be satisfied, enabling followers of Jesus Christ to be led "in a strait and narrow course across that everlasting gulf of misery which is prepared to engulf the wicked" (Helaman 3:29). The demands of justice can be escaped only if we humbly repent of our sins, which involves turning away from destructive paths and returning to the strait and narrow one. As we do so, we begin to press forward toward God, coming closer to Him with every faithful step.

The Iron Rod

Also running alongside the strait and narrow path was an iron rod, which Nephi taught was a representation of the word of God.[62] God delivers His word to us through means such as the scriptures,[63] the words of prophets

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60. See 1 Nephi 12:16; 15:26–27.
61. See 1 Nephi 15:30–36.
62. See 1 Nephi 15:24.
63. See, e.g., 1 Nephi 1:11–12; 13:20–23, 35–40; 2 Nephi 32:3; Jacob 7:10–12.

and apostles,[64] the Holy Ghost,[65] heavenly messengers,[66] His church,[67] the temple,[68] and, most importantly, Jesus Christ Himself.[69]

It is interesting that in Lehi's dream, the Savior is represented by the tree of life, the strait and narrow path, and the iron rod. As He taught Thomas in the New Testament, He is the way (the path), the truth (the rod), and the life (the tree).[70] The word of God has many important functions. Below are some heavily emphasized in the scriptures.

Leads Us to Jesus Christ and Eternal Life

Lehi taught that the purpose of the iron rod is to lead travelers to the tree of life.[71] When we study and follow the words of Christ, they will connect us to Him. The Nephites in Alma's time were prepared to receive the word of God so they would "as a branch be *grafted into the true vine*, that they might enter into the rest of the Lord their God" (Alma 16:17).

Nephi prophesied that the word of God would help his future seed "come to the knowledge of their Redeemer and the very points of his doctrine, that they may know how to come unto him and be saved."[72] Later, he said he recorded his words for his people to read because "it persuadeth them to do good; it maketh known unto them of their fathers; and it speaketh of Jesus, and persuadeth them to believe in him, and to endure to the end, which is life eternal" (2 Nephi 33:4). The strait and narrow path is the way to the Savior. The iron rod helps us stay on that path so we can come unto Him.

Guides Us Through Mists of Darkness

Only by holding to the iron rod could those on the strait and narrow path in Lehi's dream safely make it through the mists of darkness without getting lost.[73] Similarly, the way for us to withstand the temptations of the devil is to diligently study and adhere to the words of God. Doing so will fill us with the Spirit of the Lord, which will guide us through

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64. See, e.g., 2 Nephi 3:7; 2 Nephi 33:4–5; Jacob 4:6; 7:11–12; Words of Mormon 1:17–18; Mosiah 3:13; 11:20–23; 18:19–24; Alma 4:19; 5:13.
65. See, e.g., 2 Nephi 32:3–5; Jacob 4:6; 7:10–12; Alma 13:28; Moroni 10:3–5.
66. See, e.g., 2 Nephi 32:3; Mosiah 3; Helaman 5:11; Moroni 7:22, 25.
67. See, e.g., Alma 16:15–17; 45:20–22.
68. See, e.g., 2 Nephi 12:2–3; Isaiah 2:2–3.
69. See, e.g., 1 Nephi 16:39; 18:1–3; Alma 34:6; 38:9.
70. See John 14:6.
71. See 1 Nephi 8:19, 30; see also 1 Nephi 11:25.
72. 1 Nephi 15:14; see also 2 Nephi 25:26.
73. See 1 Nephi 8:24, 30.

Satan's mists of darkness.[74] Nephi promised that "whoso would hearken unto the word of God, and would hold fast unto it, they would never perish; neither could the temptations and the fiery darts of the adversary overpower them unto blindness, to lead them away to destruction."[75]

Provides Spiritual Nourishment

Studying and obeying the word of God provides us with spiritual nourishment that strengthens us against adversity and temptation. This is one of the ways we can create "a foundation whereon if men build they cannot fall" (Helaman 5:12). The strength and nourishment that comes from Jesus Christ, the "true vine" (1 Nephi 15:15), is not only available to those gathered to the tree of life to partake of the fruit, but also to all those pressing forward along the strait and narrow path. It is not surprising that we are encouraged to "feast upon the words of Christ" (2 Nephi 32:3) and to gather together often to be "be nourished by the good word of God" (Moroni 6:4).

At the Tree

Lehi recorded that some of those who partook of the fruit in his dream became ashamed and fell away after being mocked by those in the great and spacious building, wheras others partook of the fruit and gave no heed to the mocking.[76] The multitudes who partook of the fruit in Lehi's dream had made it to the tree after pressing forward along the strait and narrow path, so why did some remain faithful while others fell away? The actions taken both before each group arrived at the tree and while they were at the tree help us to understand their differing outcomes.

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74. See, e.g., 1 Nephi 1:11–12; Jacob 4:6; Alma 15:15–17. The word of God provides light that is bright enough to dispel Satan's mists of darkness: "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" (Psalm 119:105). Recounting the conversion of Alma's people after they had escaped the wickedness that was so prevalent during King Noah's reign, Alma the Younger taught that "they were in the midst of darkness; nevertheless, their souls were illuminated by the light of the everlasting word" (Alma 5:7). Nephi recognized that although he was "encompassed about, because of the temptations and the sins which do so easily beset me," he was able to make it through the darkness because of his willingness to place his trust in the Lord and hearken unto His words (see 2 Nephi 4:18–20).

75. 1 Nephi 15:24; see also Helaman 3:28–30.

76. See 1 Nephi 8:24–33.

Clinging Versus Continually Holding Fast

Lehi noted that those who eventually fell away had been "clinging to the rod of iron" as they journeyed toward the tree, while those who remained faithful had been "continually holding fast" to it (1 Nephi 8:24, 30). The word *continually* used with the latter group suggests that those who eventually fell away may have been holding to the iron rod only part of the time. Elder David A. Bednar taught, "Clinging to the rod of iron suggests to me only occasional 'bursts' of study or irregular dipping rather than consistent, ongoing immersion in the word of God."[77]

It seems that the consistency demonstrated by the travelers who continually held fast to the iron rod strengthened them against adversity and helped them to more fully appreciate their reward at the end. Continually holding fast to the iron rod throughout our lives helps us to build a spiritual foundation that strengthens us against the fiery darts of the adversary.

Two scriptural accounts from the Book of Mormon — Alma's discourse on the Word and the conversion of King Benjamin's people — illustrate the importance of continually holding fast to the iron rod and consistently pressing forward along the strait and narrow path throughout our lives.

Alma's Discourse on the Word

Alma compared the word of God to a seed in his famous discourse to the Zoramites. While Lehi's dream motivates us to hold fast to the word of God with our hands, Alma encouraged us to plant it in our hearts, symbolizing the Lord's desire for us to internalize His words, qualities, and character into our lives.[78]

Alma taught that the results of planting the Word in our hearts are incremental and largely dependent upon what we do with the seed after it is planted. He promised those who would not cast the seed out because of unbelief, that in its early stages of growth, the young seed would begin to "swell within your breasts," "enlighten your understanding," and "be delicious" (Alma 32:28). These are important feelings for each of us to experience with the word of God in our journey toward eternal life, for

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77. See David A. Bednar, "A Reservoir of Living Water," (devotional, Church Education System, February 4, 2007). speeches.byu.edu, https://speeches.byu.edu/talks/david-a-bednar/reservoir-living-water/.

78. Alma and Amulek emphasized that the "word" represented by the seed in Alma's analogy is a symbol of Jesus Christ. Amulek taught that "the word is in Christ unto salvation" (Alma 34:6). After teaching the Zoramites about the atoning sacrifice and resurrection of Jesus Christ, Alma said, "And now, my brethren, I desire that ye shall plant *this word* in your hearts" (Alma 33:23; emphasis added).

they provide an assurance that "the word is good" (Alma 32:28) and that the path we are on is worth further pursuit. But this is not our intended spiritual destination. Stopping here would be like getting a taste of the fruit of the tree of life and then never coming back to get more.

Alma exhorted us to nourish our developing seed "with great care, that it may get root, that it may grow up, and bring forth fruit unto us."[79] He warned that if we do not properly nourish the young plant growing in our hearts, it "will not get any root," and will wither away and die after being scorched by the sun (Alma 32:38).

Perhaps this is what happened to those occasionally clinging to the iron rod in Lehi's dream. They had done enough to experience a small taste of the goodness of the Savior and His gospel as they followed the process of coming to the tree, but they did not have the spiritual foundation necessary to withstand the mocking of those in the great and spacious building. Because they had weak spiritual roots, their testimony was scorched when it met opposition.

Alma promised that those who consistently nourish the word of God in their hearts "with great diligence, and with patience, looking forward to the fruit thereof" would eventually be able to "reap the rewards of [their] faith" (Alma 32:43). Their seed will "take root; and behold it shall be a tree springing up unto everlasting life" (Alma 32:41). These people can be compared to those in Lehi's dream "continually holding fast to the rod of iron, until they came forth and fell down and partook of the fruit of the tree" (1 Nephi 8:30). Because of their efforts to continually nourish the seed from beginning to end, they were able to enjoy a spiritual feast at the tree rather than a small taste of the fruit.[80]

King Benjamin's People

Prior to his death, King Benjamin gathered the Nephites together to confer the kingdom upon his son Mosiah and preach a final sermon to his people.[81] As part of his sermon, Benjamin shared a message he had received from an angel who prophesied of the Savior's life and warned of the consequences associated with disobeying God's commandments.[82]

After the king had finished conveying the angel's message to his people, he looked upon the multitude and saw they had fallen to the earth

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79. Alma 32:37; see also Alma 32:29, 34–36.
80. See Alma 32:42.
81. See Mosiah 1:10.
82. See Mosiah 3.

in fear.[83] These Nephites humbly prayed for mercy, crying in one voice, "O have mercy, and apply the atoning blood of Christ that we may receive forgiveness of our sins, and our hearts may be purified; for we believe in Jesus Christ" (Mosiah 4:2). After crying these words, "the Spirit of the Lord came upon them, and they were filled with joy, having received a remission of their sins, and having peace of conscience, because of the exceeding faith which they had in Jesus Christ" (Mosiah 4:3).

These people had partaken of the fruit of the tree of life. King Benjamin even used words and expressions similar to those used in Lehi's dream to describe his people's experience, saying, "Ye have come to the knowledge of the glory of God ... and have "*tasted of his love*, and have received a remission of your sins, which causeth such *exceedingly great joy* in your souls" (Mosiah 4:11). But the remainder of King Benjamin's message focused on what his people still needed to do to receive the blessings of eternal life.

The king taught that those filled with the love of God would be motivated to engage in behaviors characteristic of pressing forward along the strait and narrow path, such as calling on the name of the Lord daily, observing His commandments, living peaceably with one another, raising up righteous children, caring for the poor and needy, and watching their thoughts, words, and deeds.[84] He promised, "If ye do this ye shall always rejoice, and be filled with the love of God, and *always* retain a remission of your sins; and ye shall grow in the knowledge of the glory of him who created you" (Mosiah 4:12). He emphasized that it was not enough for his people to *obtain* a remission of sins, but that they should strive to *retain* "a remission of [their] sins from day to day" (Mosiah 4:26).

Moved by King Benjamin's words, the people later testified that "the Spirit of the Lord Omnipotent ... has wrought a mighty change in us, or in our hearts, that we have no more disposition to do evil, but to do good continually" (Mosiah 5:2). They entered into a covenant with God to "do his will, and to be obedient unto his commandments" for the rest of their lives (Mosiah 5:5). The spiritual rebirth of the Nephites put them on the strait and narrow path leading to eternal life. King Benjamin exhorted them to "be steadfast and immovable, always abounding in good works, that Christ, the Lord God Omnipotent, may seal you his, that you may be brought to heaven, that ye may have everlasting salvation and eternal life" (Mosiah 5:15).

King Benjamin's teachings illustrate the essential nature of continually pressing forward along the strait and narrow path *after* tasting the fruit. If his people had experienced what they did only to fall away later on, they

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83. See Mosiah 4:1.
84. See Mosiah 4:11–30.

would have been no different than the people in Lehi's dream who fell away after arriving at the tree. Therefore, the king emphasized the need for them to "continue in the faith even unto the end of this life," declaring that "this is the man who receiveth salvation" (Mosiah 4:6–7).

Falling Away versus Falling Down

While those who had been clinging to the iron rod eventually "*fell away* into forbidden paths and were lost," those who continually held fast "came forth and *fell down* and partook of the fruit of the tree" (1 Nephi 8:28, 30). These people were not going to fall away, for there was nowhere else they would rather be than by the tree. The conversion they had experienced while pressing forward along the strait and narrow path strengthened them against opposition, and the appreciation they felt for the tree and its fruit clearly overshadowed any shame that could have been inflicted by those who were "point[ing] the finger of scorn" (1 Nephi 8:33) at them from the great and spacious building.

In an eternal sense, the people in Lehi's dream who fell down after arriving at the tree symbolize those who will receive eternal life. Not only will their joy be eternal,[85] but their salvation is permanent. Alma taught that those who inherit eternal life will "be brought to *sit down* with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the holy prophets who have been ever since the world began, having your garments spotless even as their garments are spotless, in the kingdom of heaven *to go no more out.*"[86]

Conclusion

Lehi's dream provides an excellent framework for understanding important components of our Heavenly Father's plan of salvation. The central message of both Lehi's dream and the Book of Mormon is that we must come to Jesus Christ or we cannot be saved. While each of us will experience temptation and adversity, Heavenly Father has mercifully provided us with resources such as the word of God, essential ordinances and covenants, and the companionship of the Holy Ghost to help us return to His presence.

While all are free to come unto the Savior, the choice is ultimately up to each of us. Alma taught, "Whosoever will come may come and partake of the waters of life freely; and whosoever will not come the same is not compelled to come; but in the last day it shall be restored unto him according to his deeds" (Alma 42:27). The way to partake of

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85. See 2 Nephi 9:18.
86. Alma 7:25. See also Alma 34:36; Helaman 3:28–30.

eternal life, joy, peace, and fulfillment is by following Jesus Christ. There is no other way to do so.

Elder Lawrence E. Corbridge put it this way:

> Jesus Christ is the Way. He is Light and Life, Bread and Water, the Beginning and the End, the Resurrection and the Life, the Savior of the world, the Truth, and the Way.
>
> There is only one way to happiness and fulfillment. He is the Way. Every other way, any other way, whatever other way, is foolishness.
>
> He offers a well of living water. Either we drink and never thirst more, or we don't and foolishly remain thirsty still.
>
> He is the Bread of Life. Either we eat and hunger no more, or we don't and foolishly remain weak and hungry still.
>
> He is the Light of the World. Either we follow Him and see clearly, or we don't and foolishly remain blind and in darkness still.
>
> He is the Resurrection and the Life. He said, 'The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.' Either we learn of Him and have life more abundantly, or we don't and foolishly remain dead still.
>
> He is the Savior of the world. Either we accept the blessings of His Atonement and are made clean and pure, worthy to have His Spirit, or we don't and foolishly remain alone and filthy still.
>
> He is the Way.[87]

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87. Lawrence E. Corbridge, "The Way," *Ensign* (November 2008): 34–35, https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/ensign/2008/11/the-way.

Standing in the Holy Place: Ancient and Modern Reverberations of an Enigmatic New Testament Prophecy

Jeffrey M. Bradshaw

Abstract: *On the Mount of Olives, just prior to the culminating events of the Passion week, Jesus gave one of the most controversial prophecies of the New Testament, saying, among other things, that the "abomination of desolation" will "stand in the holy place." In Joseph Smith—Matthew the Prophet renders this passage in a way that radically changes its meaning. Rather than describing how the "abomination of desolation" will "stand in the holy place," the JST version enjoins the apostles to "stand in the holy place" when the "abomination of desolation" appears. Though several Latter-day Saint scholars have offered interpretations and personal applications of these words as given in modern scripture, it appears that no one has heretofore seriously explored how this change in meaning might be explained and defended. This article will show that other passages in the Bible, in connection with the light shed by Jewish midrash and contemporary scholarship, demonstrate that the idea behind Joseph Smith's revision of the passage, far from being a modern invention, reverberates throughout the religious thought of earlier times. The article concludes with an appendix that tries to draw out a possibility for a specific interpretation of the prophecy about the "abomination of desolation" at the time of Christ and in the latter days.*

Immediately after His prophecy about the destruction of the temple, and just prior to the culminating events of the Passion week, Jesus
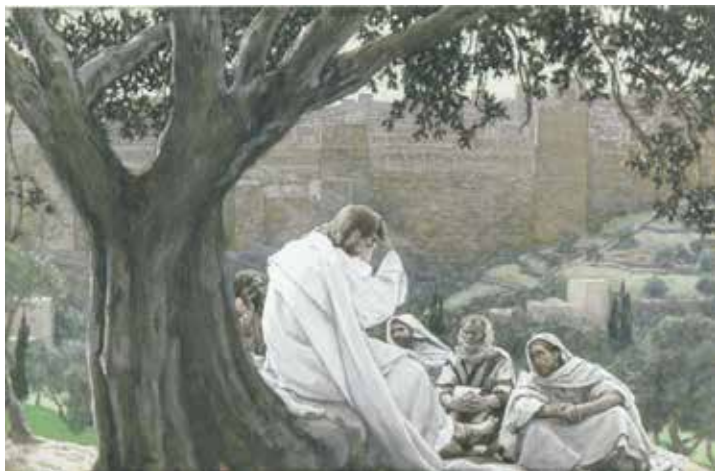
Figure 1: J. James Tissot, 1836-1902: *The Prophecy of the Destruction of the Temple*, **1886-1894**

"went upon the Mount of Olives."[2] Here, in a setting associated with some of His most sacred teachings,[3] His apostles "came unto him privately" to question him about the "destruction of the temple, and the Jews," and the "sign of [His] coming, and of the end of the world, or the destruction of the wicked." Within this discourse, Jesus gave one of the most controversial prophecies of the New Testament:

> When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation …
> stand in the holy place …
> Then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains:[4]

The gospel of Mark is at variance with the wording of the gospel of Matthew, though the two accounts agree in general meaning. Instead of saying that the "abomination of desolation" will "stand in the holy place,"[5] Mark asserts that it will be "standing where it ought not."[6] Luke, writing to a Gentile audience that was not as familiar with the temple and its

customs as were the Jews addressed by Matthew, describes the sign in a more general way, referring to how Jerusalem would be "compassed by armies."[7] Though the interpretation of these verses has been contested, the sense of the Greek text underlying them is clear.

Comparing the verse in Matthew to its equivalent in the Joseph Smith Translation (JST), we see that the Prophet has rendered this passage in a way that radically changes its meaning. Rather than describing how the "*abomination of desolation*" will "stand in the holy place,"[8] the JST version enjoins the *apostles* to "stand in the holy place"[9] when the "abomination of desolation" appears. In these and related verses in the Doctrine and Covenants, the sense of this phrase in the synoptic gospels is turned upside down. Rather than describing how an *evil thing* would stand the holy place, thereby *profaning* it, modern scripture applies the phrase to the apostles and the saints, admonishing *them* to stand in holy places and thereby be *saved*.

Though several LDS scholars have offered interpretations and personal applications of the sense of these words as given in modern scripture, no one has yet, to my knowledge, seriously explored how this change in meaning could be explained and defended.[10] It is easy to see how, on the face of it, some might be (erroneously) led to conclude that Joseph Smith's rendering of the verse in question was an obvious and embarrassing mistake, based on his admittedly rudimentary acquaintance with the Greek text of the New Testament. In this article, however, my purpose is to advance an alternative claim: namely, that in the scriptural word picture of the righteous standing in holy places, Joseph Smith's interpretation of the prophecy — whether or not a consonant Greek reading is ever found — resonates with a potent metaphor from the heart of Judaism and early Christianity. Speaking more generally, I find this to be a powerful example of how, as expressed in the words of Yale professor Harold Bloom, elements of Mormon scripture "recapture … crucial elements in the archaic Jewish religion. … that had ceased to be available either to normative Judaism or to Christianity, and that survived only in esoteric traditions unlikely to have touched [Joseph] Smith directly."[11]

Throughout this article, I will consciously, though not exclusively, use forms of argument that are encountered much more rarely today than they were in biblical times: specifically, midrash, allegory, and typology. About the unfortunate near abandonment of these ancient modes of biblical interpretation, Old Testament scholar James Kugel observes:[12]

> What [modern exegetes] generally share (although there are, of course, exceptions) is a profound discomfort with the actual

interpretations that the ancients came up with — these have little or no place in the way Scripture is to be expounded today. Midrash, allegory, typology — what [on earth] for? But the style of interpretation thus being rejected is precisely the one that characterizes the numerous interpretations of Old Testament texts by Jesus, Paul, and others in the New Testament, as well as by the succeeding generations of the founders of Christianity.…

Ancient interpretive methods may sometimes appear artificial, but this hardly means that abandoning them guarantees unbiased interpretation … At times, [modern] interpretations are scarcely less forced than those of ancient midrashists (and usually far less clever).

Apart from trying to make sense of obvious references to the book of Daniel, modern interpretations of the Olivet prophecy tend to focus more on pinpointing historical events that might have been seen as fulfilling Jesus's words than on understanding the significance of these words and their meaning in a temple context.[13] Lacking an understanding of the temple context of these words, scholarly commentary typically rewards our efforts to understand the passage with unsatisfying surveys the journalistic dimensions of who, what, when, and where the "abomination of desolation" may have occurred while leaving us in ignorance about what seemed to be most important to those ancient readers. To premoderns, a "literal" interpretation was not one that laid out the bare facts of the matter in documentary fashion, but rather one that emphasized what the letters, i.e., the words, actually say. These are two very different modes of interpretation. As James Faulconer observed: "'What x *says*' [i.e., the premodern idea of "literal"] and 'what x *describes accurately*' [i.e., the modernist idea of "literal"] do not mean the same, even if the first is a description."[14] What is missing from most modern commentaries, as excellent as they are in so many respects, is a consideration of how an interpretation of Matthew 24:15-16 might be informed by ancient perspectives on biblical passages that relate to the concept of something "standing in the holy place" — whether the reference is to an evil thing (i.e., the abomination of desolation as in the KJV) or to a righteous individual (i.e., a faithful disciple of Jesus, as in the JST).

I believe that careful examination of such passages in the Bible, in connection with the light shed by Jewish midrash and contemporary scholarship, will show that the idea behind Joseph Smith's application of the concept of standing in the holy place in the JST and the additional

concept of not being "moved" in the Doctrine and Covenants,[15] far from being a modern invention, reverberates throughout the religious thought of earlier times. Indeed, as Jewish scholar Avivah Zornberg has argued, the Hebrew Bible teaches that standing in the holy place — "hold[ing one's] ground," as it were, in sacred circumstances — is a powerful symbol of the central purpose of existence. This purpose can be expressed as follows: "being — *kiyyum*: to rise up (*la-koom*), to be tall (*koma zokufa*) in the presence of God."[16]

In the remainder of the article, I will explore how one's fitness to stand in holy places might be understood in a way that is consistent with Joseph Smith's reading of the prophecy of Matthew 24:15-16. I will show the importance of this idea in the Old and New Testament — and its particular relevance for our own time. I will begin by a selective survey of Old Testament references to patriarchs, priests, and prophets who stood in holy places.[17] I will also give some examples of the use of the biblical concept of "not being moved." Because the ideas of "standing in the holy place" and "not being moved" do not co-occur explicitly in the Bible, I will pursue the discussion by exploring three biblical accounts that are of particular significance because they contain both positive and negative instances of the fitness of individuals to stand in holy places coupled with the motif of significant "movement" of transgressors. In examining these three accounts, I will freely mix insights from ancient, medieval, and modern commentaries and expansions. In the realization that we live on the near side of a great divide that separates us from the religious, cultural, and philosophical perspectives of those who recorded ancient scripture,[18] the value of premodern interpretations of scripture should not be underestimated.[19]

Happily, the Prophet Joseph Smith was far closer to this lost world than we are — not only because of his personal involvement with the recovery and revelatory expansion of primeval religion, but also because in his time many archaic traditions were still embedded in the language and daily experience of the surrounding culture.[20] For this reason, there will be great value in exploring as a next step his revelatory insights from the Doctrine and Covenants are of great value.

To understand the significance of these admonitions from Joseph Smith's revelations on standing in holy places and not being moved in the last days, the theme of measurement will be introduced. The modern day implications of New Testament passages relating to the measurement of Jesus's disciples individually and collectively, with reference to the dimensions and layout of the temple, will be outlined and discussed.

Finally, I will share some personal and practical observations on the subject of standing and falling. A separate appendix examines the topic of the "abomination of desolation."

Old Testament Patriarchs, Priests, and Prophets "Standing in Holy Places" and "Not Being Moved"

Standing in Holy Places. An implicit reference to standing in a holy place goes back to premortal scenes, when God "*stood in the midst*" of choice spirits, including Abraham and another "one among them that was like unto God,"[21] "and he saw that they were good."[22] In such contexts, the "midst" (center) is typically depicted as the *most* holy place, and the degree of holiness decreases in proportion to the distance from that point.[23] Later, the patriarch Enoch "stood upon *the place*" as he "cried unto the Lord."[24] Draper, Brown, and Rhodes point out that the term "the place" often "points to a special, even sacred locale."[25] Enoch recounts: "as I stood upon the mount, I beheld the heavens open, and I was clothed upon with glory; And I saw the Lord; and he stood before my face, and he talked with me, even as a man talketh one with another, face to face."[26] Later, in vision, Enoch sees the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, "and the saints arose, and were crowned at the right hand of the Son of Man."[27] Many of the spirits in prison also "came forth, and *stood on the right hand of God*."[28]

Moses demonstrated his personal fitness to stand in the presence of the Lord at the beginning of his ministry when he received his commission on Mount Horeb, significantly called "the mountain of God."[29] His vision of the burning bush brings together three prominent symbols of sacred space — the bush (or tree), the mountain, and the Lord Himself.[30] Indeed, in Exodus 3 we explicitly encounter the concept of standing in sacred space for the first time in the Bible.[31] As he approached the Lord, Moses was told to remove his sandals, "for the place whereon thou *standest* is *holy ground*."[32] Moses's experience on Horeb was later paralleled by Joshua who, in meeting the "captain of the host of the Lord … fell on his face to the earth and did worship."[33] Though it is not said explicitly whether Joshua was subsequently told to stand,[34] we read this instruction in the next verse: "Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou *standest* is *holy*."[35] The practice of removing footwear in holy places is consistent with the practice of later generations of temple priests who officiated barefoot in the sanctuary.[36]

Sometime after the vision on Horeb[37] but prior to his return to Egypt to rescue the children of Israel,[38] "the glory of the Lord was upon

Moses, so that Moses *stood* in the *presence of God*, and talked with him face to face."[39] In Exodus 33:21-23, the Lord commands Moses to "*stand upon a rock*" where the Lord will allow His "back parts" to be seen, while protecting him from the danger of seeing His face.

Later, in describing the appointment of seventy men to serve as elders and officers of the people, Moses was told to "bring them unto the tabernacle of the congregation, that they may *stand there* with thee."[40] In reprimanding to Korah and other rebels who were seeking priestly offices, Moses described their service as being: "to bring you near to himself [i.e., the God of Israel] to do the service of the tabernacle of the Lord, and to stand before the congregation to minister unto them."[41] This is similar to the language of Deuteronomy 10:8,[42] where the duties of the Levites were described as being "to bear the ark of the covenant of the Lord, to stand before the Lord to minister unto him,[43] and to bless in his name."[44] According to Jacob Milgrom, the Hebrew term *'amad lifnei* (stand before) "is language of subordination."[45] In other words, their office was to stand and *serve* — and not to *be* served. An explicit reference to standing in the holy place is found in 2 Chronicles, in conjunction with Josiah's keeping of the Passover. The Levites were instructed to "*stand in the holy place* according to the divisions of the families of your brethren the people, and after the division of the families of the Levites."[46]

Among the prophets, Elijah and Elisha are notable for their self-description as part of their solemn declarations: "As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand."[47] In an echo of the experience of Enoch, Elijah was commanded to "*stand* upon the mount *before the Lord*"[48] as he awaited the Lord's manifestation in the form of a "still small voice."[49]

Each of these references helps establish the scriptural precedent for the idea of standing in a holy place, and implicitly we understand that it is only those who are qualified by their righteousness that are able to do so. Psalm 24:3-4 addresses these qualifications directly: "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall *stand* in his *holy place*? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully." Elsewhere in the Psalms, we encounter negative examples: "If thou, Lord, shouldest mark *iniquities*, O Lord, who shall *stand*?"[50] Similarly, Ezra lamented: "O Lord God of Israel … behold, we are before thee in our *trespasses*: for *we cannot stand before thee* because of this."[51]

Not Being Moved. The idea of settling on a single Hebrew equivalent to the compound concept of disciples who "stand in holy places" and are "not … moved"[52] as found in the Doctrine and Covenants is problematic because there are several Hebrew and Greek terms that are translated "moved" in the KJV. However, one particularly fitting Hebrew term is *mot*[53] (totter, shake, slip[54]). It is used frequently and consistently in the Psalms — considerably more frequently than any other book of the Bible — to convey the unshakability of the righteous, sometimes in contrast to the wicked and sometimes specifically mentioning the feet. For example:

- Psalm 15:5: He that putteth not out his money to usury, nor taketh reward against the innocent. He that doeth these things shall *never be moved*.

- Psalm 16:8: I have set the Lord always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall *not be moved*.

- Psalm 21:7: For the king trusteth in the Lord, and through the mercy of the most High he shall *not be moved*.

- Psalm 30:6: And in my prosperity I said, I shall *never be moved*.

- Psalm 46:4-6: There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High. God is in the midst of her; she shall *not be moved*: God shall help her, and that right early. The heathen raged, the kingdoms were *moved*: he uttered his voice, the earth melted.

- Psalm 55:22: Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be *moved*.

- Psalm 62:2: He only is my rock and my salvation; he is my defence; I shall *not be greatly moved*.

- Psalm 62:6: He only is my rock and my salvation: he is my defence; I shall *not be moved*.

- Psalm 66:9: Which holdeth our soul in life, and suffereth *not our feet to be moved*.

- Psalm 93:1: The Lord reigneth, he is clothed with majesty; the Lord is clothed with strength, wherewith he hath girded himself: the world also is stablished, that it *cannot be moved*.

- Psalm 96:10: Say among the heathen that the Lord reigneth: the world also shall be established that it shall *not be moved*: he shall judge the people righteously.

- Psalm 99:1: The Lord reigneth; let the people tremble: he sitteth between the cherubims; let the earth be *moved*.

- Psalm 112:5-6: A good man sheweth favour, and lendeth: he will guide his affairs with discretion. Surely he shall *not be moved for ever*: the righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance.

- Psalm 121:2-3: My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth. He will *not suffer thy foot to be moved*: he that keepeth thee will not slumber.

Being "moved" in the sense of shaking or trembling (or causing to shake or tremble) is a concept associated in scripture with the figure of Satan. Moses 1:21, for example, contains both elements: "Satan began to tremble, and the earth shook." In this instance thunderous shaking of the ground echoes the emotional intensity of Satan's rage in terrifying reverberations. Writes Nibley: "[Satan is] the *gaieokhon*, the earthshaker. It means … both the earthshaker and the earthholder. If he holds it, he shakes it."[55]

Other scriptural references linking Satan and trembling include James 2:19 ("the devils also believe, and tremble"[56]) and Isaiah 14:4, 7, 6 ("How hath the oppressor ceased! … The whole earth is at rest, and is quiet … Is this the man that made the earth to tremble,[57] that did shake[58] kingdoms").[59] This latter verse is an interesting parallel to rabbinic commentary that also pictures Cain as someone who made the earth tremble.[60]

Like the concept of standing in holy places, the concept of the righteous not being moved is not uncommon in scripture. However, the conjunction of these two concepts, as found in the Doctrine and Covenants, is not found in the Bible explicitly.

To further enrich the picture of the scriptural idea of standing in holy places and not being moved, I will now look at three biblical accounts that are of particular significance because they contain both positive and negative instances of the fitness of individuals to stand in holy places connected to the idea that transgressors, unlike the righteous, are "moved":

1. Adam and Eve's standing in Eden, including a comparison with Daniel's account of Nebuchadnezzar's abasement;
2. Israel's failure to stand at Sinai; and
3. The fall of the temple guards at Jesus's arrest

1. Adam and Eve's Standing in Eden

After the Fall, Adam and Eve were driven from the lush garden to live in the relative wilderness of the mortal world. The fall of the king of Tyre, in the lamentation of Ezekiel 28, is frequently interpreted as having been typed on Adam.[61] The king is described as a "seal of perfection,"[62] in essence Yahweh's signet ring, faithfully bearing in every detail "the likeness of Yahweh" and the righteous exercise of "divine authority in the world."[63] The use of this term may also witness his perfection in the keeping of the covenant to which he is bound to his sovereign Lord.[64] Previously, the king had dwelled "upon the holy mountain of God,"[65] walking "up and down in the midst of stones of fire."[66] Verse 13 explicitly identifies this mountain as Eden.[67] "Eden, as a luxuriant cosmic mountain becomes an archetype or symbol for the earthly temple,"[68] a place from which the protagonist is to be "cast … out"[69] because of the "multitude of [his] iniquities."[70] Significantly, God says that he is not only to be cast out, but also that he is to be "cast … to the ground."[71] The Hebrew term *eres* (ground) has a double sense: "[o]n the one hand, it evokes an iconoclastic picture of an idol being hurled down and lying in ruins on the ground (*eres*)"[72] rather than standing in the holy place of the sanctuary. On the other hand, it evokes the imagery of Adam being thrown out of Eden to live on the earth (*eres*).[73]

Adam and Eve's expulsion is described twice in Genesis, with different terms used in each case.[74] The Hebrew word *shillah* ("send him forth") in 3:23 is followed by the harsher term *geresh* ("drove out"), used in 3:24. Significantly, the same two terms are used in the same order in the book of Exodus to describe how Pharaoh would drive Israel away from their familiar comforts in Egypt — their erstwhile "Eden" — into the wilderness.[75] This deliberate parallel suggests that we are not meant to read Adam and Eve's exit from Eden as depicting a unique event but rather as demonstrating a repeated type of mankind's difficulty, in its fallen state, to "stand in holy places" and not be "moved."[76] The importance of this recurring theme to the entire story of Adam and Eve will become clearer as we now begin to examine it in more detail.

The motif of standing in the holy place goes back to the moment of Adam's creation. Of significance to our subject is the commentary on Genesis 2:7 by the revered Jewish exegete Rashi that connects the themes of creation and atonement to the idea of standing in God's presence:

God took [Adam's] dust from the place of [the temple altar, signifying His] wish that [Adam might] gain atonement, and that *he may be able to stand*.[78]

In contrast to cattle, which Rashi said "do not stand to be judged"[79] (in other words, are not held accountable for their actions[80]), Jewish accounts of Adam's creation specifically highlight his first experience after being filled with the breath of life:[81] namely, the moment when God "stood him on his legs"[82] (Figure 2). According to Zornberg,[83] it is in the ability to stand in the presence of God that one specifically demonstrates the attainment of full "majesty and strength."

Medieval artistic convention makes it clear that Christ was imagined as raising the dead to eternal life by the same gesture that was used to create Adam and stand him on his feet[84] (Figure 3). Likewise, we note the Old Testament literary formula that nearly always follows descriptions of miraculous revivals of the dead with the observation that they "stood up upon their feet."[85]

More generally, in Christian iconography this gesture is used in scenes representing a transition from one state or place to another. For example, a depiction at the Church of San Marco in Venice shows God taking Adam by the wrist to bring him through the door of Paradise and to introduce him into the Garden of Eden.[86] Another Christian scene shows God taking Adam by the wrist as he and Eve receive the

Figure 2: Lorenzo Ghiberti (1378-1455): *Creation of Adam,* **from** *Gates of Paradise,* **1425-1452**

Figure 3: *The Harrowing of Hell* from the Exultet Roll: *Codex Barberini Latinus* 592. (f. 4) , ca. 1087

commandment not to partake of the Tree of Knowledge.[87] Likewise, scripture and pseudepigrapha describe how prophets such as Enoch,[88] Abraham,[89] Daniel,[90] and John[91] are grasped by the hand of an angel and raised to a standing position in key moments of their heavenly visions.[92]

It is by being raised by the hand to the upright position that we are made ready to hear the word of the Lord. It is no mere coincidence that before heavenly messengers can perform their errands to Ezekiel,[93] Daniel,[94] Paul,[95] Alma the Younger,[96] and Nephi[97] they must first command these seers to stand on their feet.[98] As biblical scholar Robert Hayward has said: "You stand in the temple,[99] you stand before the Lord,[100] you pray standing up[101] — you can't approach God on all fours like an animal. If you can stand, you can serve God in His temple."[102] If you are stained with sin, you cannot stand in His presence.[103]

Jewish writings tell of how Adam lost the divine ability to stand through his taking of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge. For example, in an account that plays on the nuances of Hebrew terms for standing, we read:

> Before the sin, Adam could "hear God speaking and *stand on his legs* … he could *withstand* it."[104] … In another midrash, God says, "Woe Adam! Could you not *stand in your commandment* for even one hour?

After the Fall, Adam and Eve sorrowed over the loss of the fruit trees of Eden as the source of mankind's food (whether meant literally or

Figure 4: William Blake, 1757-1827: *Nebuchadnezzar*, 1795

figuratively) — leaving them nothing besides "the herb of the field" to eat. In connecting the king of Tyre to Adam, Ezekiel also alludes to the book of Daniel, explicitly calling him "wiser than Daniel"[105] and implicitly evoking "the theme of estrangement from one's own essential human identity" in that book's depiction of the arrogance and subsequent abasement of Nebuchadnezzar.[106] Building on these scriptural associations, Rabbinical and early Christian writings saw Adam and Eve's loss of their paradisiacal food as part of a humiliating penance, to a degree in the likeness of Nebuchadnezzar's transformation to a beastlike state.[107]

Regarding Nebuchadnezzar, we read in Daniel 4:31-33:

> O king Nebuchadnezzar, … The kingdom is departed from thee. And they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field: … until thou know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will. The same hour was the thing fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar: and he was driven from men, and did eat grass as oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till his hairs were grown like eagles' feathers, and his nails like birds' claws.

Nebuchadnezzar's madness and self-exclusion from society ended only when he satisfactorily completed the process of penance.[108]

In presenting Adam and Eve as being temporarily reduced to eating the herb of the field like the animals,[109] the Jewish scholar Rashi played

on the double meaning of the Hebrew term *veirdu* in Genesis 1:28. He commented that instead of man's "having dominion" over the beasts as God originally intended, he now would "fall down" below and be with them.[110] The *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* says that after hearing the consequences of his transgression, Adam pled that he might be spared:

> I beseech by the mercy before you, O Lord, let me not be reckoned before you as cattle, that I should eat the grass of the surface of the field. I will arise [literally, "*I will stand up*"] and labor … and I will eat the food of the earth; and thus let there be a distinction before you between the children of men and the offspring of cattle.[111]

Tradition records that God eventually answered Adam's prayer by showing him how to grow wheat for bread, making it clear that this curse was not meant as an arbitrary "punishment" but rather as a temporary ascetic "discipline for spiritual renewal."[112] Although to be banished from the Garden of Eden "is to lose a particular standing ground,"[113] it was always God's intention to restore Adam and Eve and their posterity to their former glory,[114] enabling their "confidence" to again "wax strong"[115] in His presence.[116]

The humiliation of the serpent is an important part of this story as well. Significantly, it is not only banished from holy places but also is reminded that it will never be able to stand at all: "upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life."[117] Note that the Mosaic law will declare that what goes along on its belly is an abomination to Israel.[118] The metaphor of eating dust occurs several times in scripture in connection with the fate of conquered foes.[119]

In contrast to the temporary nature of Adam and Eve's estrangement from God, the book of *Jubilees* reports that the serpent "was not and never will be afforded any chance at repentance"[120] because of its role in the Fall. As a symbol of this consequence, we are told that the serpent permanently lost its legs[121] and, with that loss, the ability to stand.[122] "The loss of limbs and organs guarantees that the rebel will never rise anew in his full powers, which he will never possess again,"[123] being consigned to crawl on its belly and eat of the dust forever.[124]

2. Israel's Failure to Stand at Sinai

I have already mentioned the deliberate parallel between Adam and Eve's expulsion from Eden and Israel's exodus from Egypt to their wilderness probation. As the path of exaltation was revealed through five covenants

given to Adam and Eve after the Fall,[125] so Israel's salvation was also understood in rabbinical teaching to have been made contingent on its acceptance of the five parts of God's Law.[126]

In contrast to Moses, Israel proved themselves unready to accept the fulness of God's law at Sinai.[127] They preferred that Moses go alone to ascend the holy mountain, while they stayed at its foot[128] (Figure 5). Painting a vivid word picture of how the Israelites were unable to stand in the divine presence, Rashi explains that when they heard the sound of the voice of God emanate from Sinai "they moved backwards and stood at a distance: they were repelled to the rear a distance of twelve miles — that is the whole length of the camp. Then the angels came and helped them forward again." Zornberg reasons: "If this happened at each of the Ten Commandments, the people are imagined as traveling 240 miles in order to stand in place!"[129] Though this imagery is, of course, figurative, it is highly instructive.

We see this same movement away from God and toward the regions of death at the incident of the Golden Calf.[131] Before their sin, the Israelites looked without fear upon the divine flames of God's presence at the top of the mountain, but as soon as they had sinned, they could not bear to see even the face of Moses, God's intermediary.[132] By way of contrast to the Israelites, Moses, like Jesus at the Transfiguration,[133] was covered by a glorious cloud[134] as he communed face-to-face with the Lord, having been made like God Himself.[135] Moses then stood to Israel
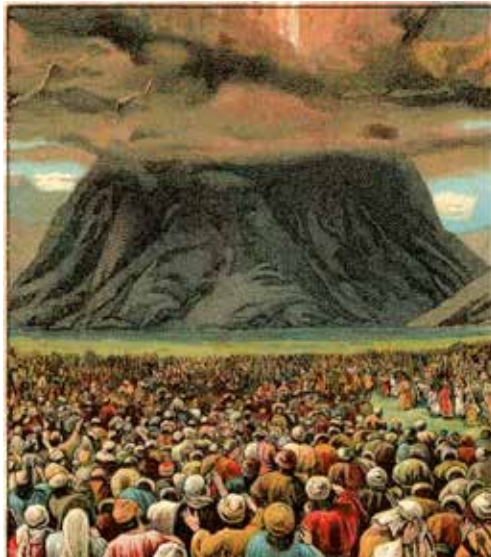
Figure 5: *The Children of Israel at Mount Sinai*

as God stood to him and, having received the power of an eternal life, he became known in the Samaritan literature as "the Standing One."[136]

Comparing the sin of the Israelites to the transgression of Adam, midrash has God reproaching them:

> Like Adam, the people were destined to live forever, but "when they [made the golden calf and] said, 'These are your gods, O Israel!,' death came upon them. God said, 'You have followed the system of Adam, who *did not stand*[137] the pressure of his testing for three hours. … " 'I said, "You are gods. … " But you went in the ways of Adam,' so 'indeed like Adam you shall die. And like one of the princes you shall fall'[138] — you have brought yourself low."[139]

> The midrash uses the imagery of the Fall with a perfect consistency. The sin [of taking the forbidden fruit], as such, is not mentioned. Instead, what Adam, and again the Israelites, represents is a kind of spinelessness, a vapidity. The word that is used in *Sanhedrin* 38b to describe the sin is *sarah*, which implies exactly this aesthetic offensiveness: it holds nuances of evaporation, loss of substance, and the offensive odor of mortification. "O my offense is rank, it smells to heaven."[140] It signifies a failure to stand in the presence of God, to maintain the posture of eternal life. "You have brought yourselves low": man, the midrash boldly implies, does not really want full and eternal being. He chooses death, lessened being. What looks like defiance is an abandonment of a difficult posture.

3. The Fall of the Temple Guards at Jesus's Arrest

Matthew, Mark, and Luke's accounts highlight the perfidy of Judas as the one who identified his Master to the temple guards; the gospel of John emphasizes Christ's mastery of the situation. The kiss of Judas does not appear in John's narrative — in the words of Ridderbos, "Judas' task of identifying Jesus had been taken out of his hands."[142] Instead, at that moment, Jesus is shown in full control of the arresting party by His startling *self*-identification:[143]

> Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye?

> They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am *he* …

Figure 6: J. James Tissot, 1836-1902: *The Guards Falling Backwards,* **1886-1894**

As soon then as he had said unto them, I am *he, they went backward, and fell to the ground.*

The King James translation of the Greek phrase *ego eimi* as "I am *he*" obscures an essential detail. In reality, Jesus has not said, "I am *he*," but rather "I AM," using a divine name that directly identifies Him as being Jehovah.[145] Thus, asserts Raymond E. Brown, it is clear that the fall of the temple guards is no mere slapstick scene that might be "explained away or trivialized. To know or use the divine name, as Jesus does [in replying with 'I AM'], is an exercise of awesome power."[146]

This event is nothing more nor less than a replay of the scene of the children of Israel at Sinai discussed earlier.[147] In effect, in the gospel of John, the narrative takes the form of an eyewitness report[148] of a solemn revelation to the band of arresting Jewish temple guards[149] that they were standing, as it were, in a "Holy of Holies" made sacred by the presence of the embodied Jehovah, and that they, with full comprehension of the irony of their pernicious intent, were about to do harm to the very Master of the Lord's House, whose precincts they had been sworn to protect. As with the Israelites at Sinai who were unworthy and thus unable to stand in the holy place, "those of the dark world fell back, repelled by the presence of the Light of the world."[150]

To delve further into the symbolism of the scene, note that the Jews were generally prohibited from pronouncing the divine name, Jehovah.[151] As an exception, that Name was solemnly pronounced by the High Priest standing in the most holy place of the temple once a year, on the Day of Atonement. Upon the hearing of that Name, according to the *Mishnah*, all the people were to fall on their faces.[152] Was it any coincidence, then, that Jesus Christ, the great High Priest after the order of Melchizedek,[153] boldly proclaimed His identity as the great "I AM" at the very place and on the very night He atoned for the sins of the world? Ironically, the temple guards who failed to fall on their faces at the sound of the divine Name were instead thrown on their backs in awestruck impotence.

Standing in Holy Places in the Last Days

Figure 7 depicts the landscape of hell. Sadly, it is also the landscape of much of the world we live in today, foreseen nearly a century ago by the poet William Butler Yeats:[154]

> Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;
>   Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,
> The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere
>   The ceremony of innocence is drowned;
> The best lack all conviction, while the worst

Figure 7: Pieter Bruegel the Elder, ca. 1525-1569:
The Triumph of Death, 1562

Are full of passionate intensity …
And what rough beast, its hour come round at last,
　　Slouches towards Bethlehem to be born?

Though there are many references in modern scripture to the general idea of standing in righteousness, each of the three instances of specific instructions for the faithful to stand in holy places appear in apocalyptic descriptions of the latter-day gathering and the destruction that will precede the Savior's Second Coming.[155]

First, in Doctrine and Covenants 45, an overt expansion on the instructions and prophecies given to the apostles on the Mount of Olives, we are told:[156]

> And there shall be men standing in that generation [i.e., in the last days], that shall not pass until they shall see an overflowing scourge; for a desolating sickness shall cover the land.

> But my disciples shall *stand in holy places and shall not be moved*; but among the wicked, men shall lift up their voices and curse God and die. …

> And it shall be said among the wicked: Let us not go up to battle against Zion, for the inhabitants of Zion are terrible; wherefore *we cannot stand.* …

> For when the Lord shall appear he shall be terrible unto them, that fear may seize upon them, and they shall *stand afar off and tremble.*

Note that modern scripture is perfectly consistent with the subtle imagery of the biblical examples cited earlier. A contrast is drawn between the disciples, who "stand in holy places" and are "not moved," and the wicked, who "stand afar off and tremble."[157] Another Doctrine and Covenants reference tells us that the earth itself will also tremble, and "men shall fall upon the ground and shall not be able to stand."[158]

The second Doctrine and Covenants reference to standing in holy places is found in section 87, as part of the revelation and prophecy on the wars and disasters that will eventually "make a full end of all nations."[159] Here, the Saints are told:[160]

> Wherefore, *stand ye in holy places, and be not moved*, until the day of the Lord come; for behold, it cometh quickly, saith the Lord. Amen.

The final specific mention of this phrase is in section 101, in a revelation responding to the Saints being driven from their homes in Jackson County, Missouri. The following verses assure the Saints that, despite their forcible ejection from the place where they had begun to build the city of New Jerusalem, it will not be moved, but rather will continue as the central gathering place from which Zion will eventually extend herself to fill the earth:[161]

> Zion shall *not be moved* out of her place, notwithstanding her children are scattered …
>
> And behold, there is none other place appointed … for the work of the gathering of my saints —
>
> Until … there is found no more room for them; and then I have other places which I will appoint unto them, and they shall be called stakes, for the curtains or the strength of Zion.
>
> Behold it is my will, that all they who call on my name … should gather together, and *stand in holy places*;
>
> And prepare for the revelation … when … all flesh shall see me together.

The Saints in Joseph Smith's time would have understood the term "holy places" in section 101 as the current and future stakes to which they were being gathered both spiritually and physically. Each one of these stakes was originally intended to feature its own temple as a focal point for the community. Borrowing vivid word pictures from the book of Isaiah,[162] the Doctrine and Covenants describes the kingdom of God as a tent whose expanse increases continually outward from its "center place"[163] through the establishment of "stakes, for the curtains or strength of Zion."[164]

At the time section 101 was received, the "center place" of the tent would have been understood as Jackson County, Missouri, the intended location of the New Jerusalem, and the ever expanding curtains of the tent would have represented the growing number of outlying stakes[165] that were eventually destined to span the whole earth — and, ultimately, to unite in perfect reflection with their counterparts in heaven. The revelations make it clear that it is "in Zion, and in her stakes, and in Jerusalem" that are to be found "those places which [God has] appointed for refuge."[166] God's whole purpose is to draw the people of the world to
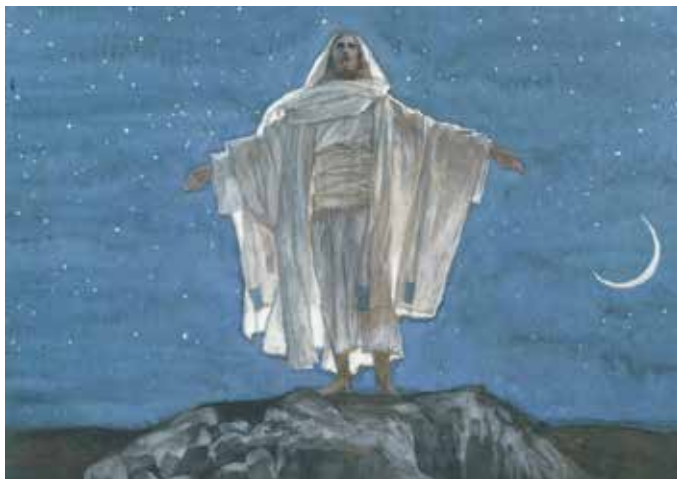
Figure 8: J. James Tissot, 1836-1902: *Jesus Goes Up Alone unto a Mountain to Pray* **(detail), 1886-1894**

such places of safety, the express purpose of the Church being "for the gathering of his saints to *stand* upon Mount Zion."[167]

Having considered what it means to "stand in holy places" in the last days with respect to the *New* Jerusalem, we return to Jesus's prophecies about *old* Jerusalem. In addition to the first "abomination of desolation" that was to occur within the lifetime of the apostles, the Joseph Smith Translation of Matthew 24 predicts a *second* "abomination of desolation":[168]

> And *again, in the last days*, the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, will be fulfilled.

To understand the events associated with this verse, we must examine the theme of measurement — in this case the measurement of the disciple individually and collectively with reference to the dimensions and layout of the temple.

"The Measure of the Stature of the Fulness of Christ"

Connecting the idea of an individual disciple standing in the holy place to the size of the temple are scriptural references to the requirement of exact conformance of the disciple to the moral dimensions defined by divinity. Only those who are of a perfect spiritual stature are qualified to stand in the presence of God. In describing the essential qualities the youthful Jesus acquired as he grew to manhood, Luke states that He "increased

in wisdom and *stature*."[170] In their strivings to become like their Lord, Paul instructed his readers to attain such "a knowledge of the Son of God" that would enable them also to become as the "perfect man,"[171] thus attaining "the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."[172] This supreme objective, of course, could not be accomplished without divine help, for "[w]hich of you by taking thought," Jesus rhetorically asked in the Sermon the Mount, "can add one cubit unto his stature?"[173]

The idea of the disciples adding cubit to cubit until they measured up to the perfection of Christ in stature would have been recognized by early Christians as an analogy to the process of temple building.[175] The temple, like the disciple, was required to conform to the exact measures revealed by God.[176] Recall, for example, how the dimensions of each aspect of the Israelite Tabernacle were described in minute detail to Moses;[177] and how Ezekiel[179] witnessed the careful measurement of his visionary temple. A similar motif of measurement of the temple precincts occurs in the book of Revelation,[178] as we will see below.

Ronan James Head and I have made a study of the Investiture Panel at Mari,[181] where one is also struck by the significant role played by measurement in the planning and construction of temples and palaces. As emblems that symbolically conjoin the acts of measurement in laying the foundations of sacred buildings and the processes of cosmic creation, one sees the Mesopotamian rod and ring, shown here in the right hand of Ur-Nammu. These two instruments of the rod and ring functioned

**Figure 9: Investiture scene from the
Ur-Nammu Stela, ca. 2100 bce**

essentially as a "yardstick" and a "tape measure,"[182] and can be profitably compared to the "measuring reed" and "line of flax" of Ezekiel,[183] as well as to the analogous cosmic surveying instruments of the square and the compass.[184] Consistent with the general biblical symbolism, the Mesopotamian measuring devices also served as visual metaphors for the personal righteousness of those who were made kings.[185] These kings, like the early Christians addressed by Jesus and Paul, were expected to "measure up" to their high and holy callings.

We return to Jesus's question: "[w]hich of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?"[186] "No one," writes John W. Welch, "would be presumptuous enough to add a single cubit to any part of the temple."[187] Neither, I would add, would individuals aspiring to conform to "the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ"[188] presume to improve upon the dimensions of His perfection.

Let us turn now to the idea of temple measurement as it relates to the community of disciples collectively.

The 11th chapter of Revelation opens with the angel's instruction to John to "measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein."[189] By way of contrast, John is told *not* to measure the areas lying outside the temple complex proper — in other words, the outer courtyard. In the context of the rest of the chapter, the meaning of the angel's instructions is clear: only those who are standing *within* the scope of John's measure — in other words, within the temple — will receive God's protection[190] (Figure 10).

Of course, we are not speaking here of the measurement of a literal physical structure, but rather of measuring or judging the community of disciples who have been called to form the living temple of God,[191] each individual in his or her differing degree of righteousness.[192] Spiritually speaking, the worshippers standing in the holy place are those who have kept their covenants.[193] These are they who, according to Revelation 14:1, will stand with the Lamb "on … mount Sion."

By way of contrast, all individuals standing in the outer courtyard, being unmeasured and unprotected, will be, in the words of the book of Revelation, "given unto the Gentiles" to be "tread under foot"[194] with the rest of the wicked in Jerusalem.

Ultimately, we read in section 101, "every corruptible thing … that dwells upon all the face of the earth … shall be consumed."[195] By "every corruptible thing" the verse means every being that is of a *telestial* nature. Only those who can withstand dwelling in at least a *terrestrial* glory will remain on the earth during the millennial reign of Christ. In that day,
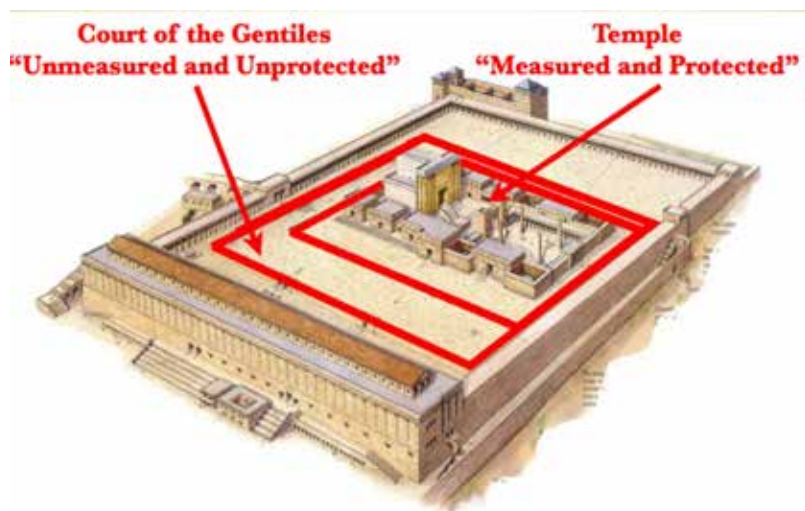
**Figure 10: According to the 11th chapter of Revelation, those
standing within the temple complex are measured and protected**

only those who remain unmoved in the holy place will be able to "*stand
still*, with the utmost assurance to see the salvation of God."[196]

In summary, where are the "holy places" in which we are to stand?
In light of everything discussed in this chapter, the frequently heard
suggestion that such "holy places" include temples, stakes, chapels, and
homes seems wholly appropriate.[197] However, it should be remembered
that what makes these places holy — and secure — are the covenants kept
by those standing within. According to midrash, Sodom itself could have
been a place of safety had there been a circle of as few as ten righteous
individuals in the city to "pray on behalf of all of them."[198]

We have completed our selective survey of passages in biblical books
from Genesis to Revelation, showing how the idea of "standing in holy
places" in modern scripture reverberates throughout ancient religious
thought. Now, in conclusion, a few personal observations.

Personal and Practical Observations on Standing and Falling

Many years ago, when I learned how to ski, I was taught that the first
thing I needed to know was how to fall. In skiing, as in life, falling is
an unavoidable if unpleasant prologue to eventual mastery of the slopes.
Zornberg insightfully summarizes this lesson from Jewish tradition:

Figure 11: *Yahoel Lifts the Fallen Abraham,*
Codex Sylvester, **14th century**

The *Talmud* makes an extraordinary observation about the paradoxes of "standing": "No man stands on [i.e., can rightly under-stand] the words of *Torah*, unless he has stumbled over them."[200] To discover firm standing ground, it is necessary to explore, to stumble, even to fall … [199]

In our repeated falls, we should be reassured in the knowledge that, like the Israelites at Sinai, we can receive help from "angels" appointed to assist our journey from the foothills of the sacred mountain and back into God's presence at the summit.[200] Such a scene is depicted above, where the fallen Abraham gratefully testified that the Angel Yahoel "took [him] by [his] right hand and stood [him] on [his] feet."[202] Through the ordinances of the priesthood, each of us may be given the knowledge and power to rise from our falls and stand in safety in the holy place.

The continual challenges endemic in the life of a disciple should teach us something about the nature of "standing" itself: namely, that what might appear to the naïve as a "static position" will, with experience, eventually be better understood as "a point of equilibrium in the eye of a storm."[204] Lest anyone think that living a life of continual standing in the presence of God is a "heavy, humdrum, and safe" affair, I close

with the words of G. K. Chesterton, who understood that the essence of discipleship is to maintain:

> … the equilibrium of a man behind madly rushing horses, seeming to stoop this way and to sway that, yet in every attitude having the grace of statuary and the accuracy of arithmetic … It is always simple to fall; there are an infinity of angles at which one falls, only one at which one stands.[205]

Appendix: The Abomination of Desolation

Though the Joseph Smith Translation and the Authorized Version differ about who or what will or should stand in the holy place, all scriptural accounts cite Daniel as the source for the prophecy about the "abomination of desolation."[207] This term is sometimes rendered more precisely in modern translations as the "desolating sacrilege" or the "abomination that brings desolation."[208]

While differing on the timeframe involved, most commentators agree that the "abomination of desolation" prophesied by Jesus, following the pattern of a presumed earlier fulfillment of the same prophecy by Daniel at the time of the Maccabees,[209] has something to do with the desecration of the Jerusalem temple.[210] For example, the key event is seen by some as when the Roman general Titus entered the most holy place in AD 70. The setting up of the Roman standards in the temple, or a comparable occurrence at a different time, has frequently been cited as the historical event corresponding to Matthew's prediction that the "abomination of desolation" would "stand in the holy place."[211]

In the body of the chapter, I have already discussed the fact that the Joseph Smith Translation of Matthew 24 replaces the plain sense of the Greek New Testament text predicting that an *evil thing* would desecrate the holy place, thereby *profaning* it, with the idea that the *righteous* would stand in the holy place and would thereby be *saved*. Throughout the chapter, I give examples of how the idea of the righteous standing in holy places in modern scripture finds a home in ancient religious thought. The previous analysis, however, leaves an important question unanswered: If the "abomination of desolation" is not some evil thing standing in the temple, what is it? In this appendix, I summarize and expand upon the view of New Testament scholar Peter G. Bolt whose interpretation provides one possible answer to this question.

By way of preface, it should be observed that scholars have found problems with the generally received view that the "abomination of

desolation" referred to by Jesus involved the desecration of the Jerusalem temple. Note that the difficulty in interpretation is not about the desolation that was to come upon the Holy City — everyone agrees that this desolation refers to the Roman siege that ended in AD 70 — but rather about the nature of the "abomination" that was to be the proximal cause of this destruction. New Testament scholar R. T. France summarizes and critiques "the three main proposals of historical events which might have been recognized ... by those who had heard of Jesus's prediction"[212] of this "abomination":

1. In AD 40 the emperor Gaius gave orders for a statue of himself to be set up in the temple at Jerusalem; fortunately the order had still not been carried out when Gaius was assassinated in AD 41, thus averting what would have been a bloody uprising.
2. Probably during the winter of AD 67-68 the Zealots took over the temple as their headquarters, and Josephus speaks with horror of the way they "invaded the sanctuary with polluted feet" and mocked the temple ritual, while the sanctuary was defiled with blood as factional fighting broke out.[213]
3. When the Roman troops eventually broke into the temple, the presence of their (idolatrous) standards in the sacred precincts would inevitably remind Jews of Antiochus; Josephus even mentions Roman soldiers offering sacrifices to their standards in the temple courts.[214] Luke's parallel to this verse[215] apparently understands the ["abomination of desolation"] in this sense.

However, France concludes that:

> None of these three events quite fits what this verse says: the Gaius event was too early (and in fact never happened) and the Roman presence in the sanctuary too late to provide a signal for escape before the end came, while the Zealot occupation, which took place at the right time, was perhaps not quite the type of pagan defilement envisaged by Daniel.

In light of such difficulties in trying to make prophecy fit history, Peter Bolt has argued that Jesus's words about the "abomination of desolation" did not concern the desecration of the temple in Jerusalem, but rather referred to the violent and ultimately fatal profanation of the temple of Jesus's body — which the Savior Himself previously had said could be destroyed and raised up in three days.[217] Bolt asserts that in

quoting the prophet Daniel, the Savior was using "apocalyptic language preparing the disciples for [His own] coming death. This fits with the rest of [the] story, for [there could be no] greater act of sacrilege than the destruction of God's Son in such a horrendous way."[218] Had not Jesus once referred to Himself as "one *greater than* the temple"?[219] Also of significance to the meaning of the prophecy is the fact that Daniel 9:26, in the words of New Testament scholar Craig Keener, "associates the ["abomination of desolation"] with the cutting off of an anointed ruler, close to the time of Jesus."[220]

With respect to the scriptural association of the "abomination of desolation" with the theme of Gentile domination, Bolt explains:[222]

> Israel's leadership will welcome their long-awaited Messiah by handing Him over to the Gentiles; that is, by handing him over to the wrath of God. And if that were not sacrilegious enough, Pilate, the representative of the Gentiles, will receive the Messiah from Israel, and condemn Him to death by crucifixion … If the destruction of the temple of God by Nebuchadnezzar in 587 BC, or the desecration of the temple by Antiochus Epiphanes in 169 BC, was an abomination committed by the Gentiles, how much more is the "temple of his body" desecrated when the Gentiles destroy the Son of God on their cross?

Figure 12: J. James Tissot, 1836-1902:
The Apostles' Hiding Place, 1886-1894

What of Jesus's instructions to His disciples: "let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains"?[224] According to the early church historian Eusebius, Jewish Christians knew of and heeded this warning by Jesus and, when the armies began to surround Jerusalem in AD 68-70, they fled beyond Jordan, congregating mostly at Pella. Thus, asserted Eusebius, "not one Christian perished in the awful siege."[225]

However, Keener[226] points out at least one unsolved problem, namely that "Pella is not in the Judean mountains but in foothills and reached from the Jordan valley."[227]

Alternatively, in Bolt's view,[229] the flight of the apostles shortly after Christ's death rather than the flight of Jewish Christians following the siege of Jerusalem is the primary reference of Jesus's instructions in Matthew 24:16-20. Once Jesus is arrested by the Romans, the disciples are being told to flee urgently, which they later do in the Garden of Gethsemane.[230]

Figure 13: J. James Tissot, 1836-1902:
The First Nail, 1886-1894

Concerning the period of great tribulation that is also associated with the prophecy, Bolt explains:[231]

The great distress [mentioned in the Olivet discourse] is also a phrase drawn from Daniel. In the final chapter, Daniel learns that, just before the future day of resurrection,[232] there will be [a] time of terrible suffering.[233] Daniel promises that in that time of distress God's people will be delivered.

Jesus informs his disciples that this suffering will be "such as has not been from the beginning of the creation that God created until now, no, and never will be … "[234] By pushing it back to creation itself, Jesus encompasses the entire period of human existence in order to indicate that this coming distress will exceed any suffering that has ever been experienced … Jesus adds a statement that broadens the scope of His comparison into the future. There "never will be" … such suffering again. The suffering He has in view will be worse than any that has been experienced before, and will be worse than anything else to follow.

There is nothing trivial about the suffering of Christ [during His Atonement. It] was the greatest suffering this world has ever known — or will ever know.

"Which suffering," the Lord Himself says in D&C 19:18, "caused myself, even God, the greatest of all, to tremble because of pain, and to bleed at every pore, and to suffer both body and spirit — and would that I might not drink the bitter cup, and shrink — "

The Latter-day Saint view, based on an unambiguous statement in the JST, is that a second "abomination of desolation" will occur "in the last days."[235] If one were to accept Bolt's arguments that the first "abomination of desolation" had to do with the arrest and crucifixion of Jesus Christ, could an analogous event corresponding to a latter-day fulfillment of this prophecy be found?

Further probing the expected nature of the abomination, it should first be observed that, according to Keener,[237] the "Jewish people recognized that shedding innocent blood in the sanctuary would profane it,[238] and some even saw this defilement as a desolation.[239] Josephus indicated

Figure 14: J. James Tissot, 1836-1902:
Zacharias Killed Between the Temple and the Altar, 1886-1894

that the shedding of priestly blood in the sanctuary[240] was the desecration or 'abomination,' that invited the ultimate desolation of AD 70."[241] Note also that, in the chapter of Matthew just prior to the discourse on the Mount of Olives,[242] Jesus Himself had alluded to the "blood of the righteous Abel" whose death, in some ancient traditions, was erroneously believed to have atoned for the sins of others.[243] In the same verse, Jesus also mentioned the "blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar," as shown in Figure 14.

In the scriptures, there is a latter-day analogue to the shedding of the innocent blood of Jesus Christ. It is, of course, found in the ministry and martyrdom of the two witnesses described in chapter 11 of the book of Revelation.[244] Using temple language, they are described as "the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth.[245] Though no explicit location is given for their death,[246] their ministry, like that of the Savior, is described as corresponding to the prophet Daniel's apocalyptic period of 1,260 days. Having carefully scrutinized the evidence, New Testament scholar Gregory Beale, concludes that these "two witnesses are identified with *the* Witness":[247]

> The pattern of the narrative of the witnesses' career in 11:2-12 is intended as a replica of Christ's career: proclamation and signs result in satanic opposition, persecution,[248] and violent death in the city where Christ was crucified, the world looks on its victim[249] and rejoices;[250] then the witnesses are raised and vindicated by ascension in a cloud.

In summary, these two events — the crucifixion of the Savior and the martyrdom of the two latter-day witnesses — provide a model for the "abomination of desolation" that is not dependent on the desecration of the Jerusalem temple as the cause of the ensuing desolation of the Holy City. Though Bolt's hypothesis does not, of course, exhaust the possibilities for alternative explanations, it may provide a starting point for an interpretation of the past and future occurrences of the "abomination of desolation" that is consistent with the Joseph Smith Translation of Matthew 24:15.

Acknowledgements

Figure Credits

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Notes

1. From J. F. Dolkart, *James Tissot*, p. 195.
2. Joseph Smith — Matthew 1:4.
3. See J. M. Bradshaw, *God's Image 1*, Excursus 53, p. 675.
4. Matthew 24:15.
5. Matthew 24:15.
6. Mark 13:14.
7. Luke 21:20.
8. Matthew 24:15.
9. Joseph Smith — Matthew 1:12-13.
10. The only significant mention of this change that I have found is by Richard Lloyd Anderson (Joseph Smith's Insights, p. 61 n. 37):

    The first word of the King James phrase, "stand in the holy place," translates a Greek participle dependent on "abomination," which is thus "standing in the holy place." With historical meaning as a concept, the sentence was recast with "stand" as an imperative verb: at the coming of the abomination of desolation, "then you shall stand in the holy place" (Joseph Smith — Matthew 1:12). Incidentally, this adaptation also gave new meaning to "holy place."

11. H. Bloom, *American Religion*, pp. 98, 99, 101.

12. J. L. Kugel, *How to Read*, pp. 674, 676; cf. M. Barker, *Christmas*, pp. 29-30.

13. See, e.g., J. Nolland, *Matthew*, pp. 968-972; S. T. Lachs, *Rabbinic Commentary*, pp. 382-383; R. T. France, *Gospel of Matthew*, pp. 911-913. C. S. Keener, *Gospel of Matthew*, pp. 573-578 provides the most thorough discussion of the meaning of this prophecy in a temple context.

14. J. E. Faulconer, Incarnation, p. 44, emphasis added. See also J. M. Bradshaw et al., *God's Image 2*, pp. 8-12. My views on this topic draw heavily on the insightful perspectives of Faulconer.

15. See D&C 45:32.

16. A. G. Zornberg, *Genesis*, p. 21.

17. I will not survey the many instances in scripture where standing is associated with ordinary prayer and praise, e.g., 1 Chronicles 23:30. For a classic source on the posture of prayer, see D. R. Ap-Thomas, Notes, especially pp. 225-230.

18. C. S. Lewis, Descriptione; G. d. Santillana et al., *Hamlet's Mill*, p. 10. Specifically regarding the ancient view of the temple, Mark Smith writes: "The idea of divine presence barely resonates in our culture. We stand at such a massive distance from the ancient traditions of the Jerusalem temple … As the decades pass, our culture seems increasingly removed from the Christian and Jewish religious traditions that drew upon the experience of temple" (M. S. Smith, *Priestly Vision*, p. 36).

19. Benjamin McGuire offers a useful compendium of the pitfalls of the comparative approach, along with helpful guidelines (B. A. McGuire, Finding Parallels 1; B. A. McGuire, Finding Parallels 2). While I have not attempted to apply McGuire's methodology rigorously to the comparisons made across the wide variety of scriptural passages and commentaries used in this article, I have tried to be sensitive to the relevant issues. In particular we have tried to avoid placing stress on mere language similarities in translations of texts and have tried to focus more on themes, especially where these themes are recognized by relevant scholarship. Though some revelatory passages in the Joseph Smith's translations and revelations seem to have remarkable congruencies with ancient texts, we think it is fruitless to rely on them as a means for uncovering biblical *Urtexts*. Likewise, when we present similarities between ancient sources and the modern scripture, the intent is not to show that they share identity in some way, but rather to engage the older sources to help us interpret modern revelation.

20. A. H. King, *Joseph*, pp. 287-288.
21. Abraham 3:24.
22. Abraham 3:23.
23. See J. M. Bradshaw, Tree of Knowledge, pp. 50-52.
24. Moses 7:2.
25. R. D. Draper et al., *Commentary*, p. 112, citing G. J. Botterweck et al., TDOT, 8:532-544 and G. Kittel et al., *Dictionary*, 8:195-199, 204-207. As an example, they cite the use of this term for Gethsemane in Luke 22:40 and John 18:2.
26. Moses 7:3-4.
27. Moses 7:56.
28. Moses 7:57.
29. Exodus 3:1.
30. Directly tying this symbolism to the Jerusalem Temple, Nicolas Wyatt concludes, "The Menorah is probably what Moses is understood to have seen as the burning bush in Exodus 3" (N. Wyatt, *Space*, 169). Thus we might see Jehovah as being represented to Moses as one who dwells on the holy mountain of the Lord in the midst of the burning glory of the Tree of Life.

    Some might question this symbolism because the Menorah did not stand in the sacred center of the second temple. However, Margaret Barker argues that "there is reason to believe that the Menorah … originally stood [in the Holy of Holies], and not in the great hall of the temple" (Barker, Margaret. *The Hidden Tradition of the Kingdom of God.* London, England: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (SPCK), 2007, 6). For more on the topic of the sacred center of the temple and its relationship to the placement of the two special trees in the Garden of Eden, see J. M. Bradshaw, Tree of Knowledge.
31. N. M. Sarna, *Genesis*, p. 15.
32. Exodus 3:5.
33. Joshua 5:14.
34. See below for scriptural instances where prophets were explicitly told to stand on their feet prior to receiving a divine message, or were raised to their feet by the handclasp of a messenger.
35. Joshua 5:15.
36. "No footwear is mentioned in the prescriptions for priestly attire in Exodus 28, 39, and Leviticus 8; cf. H. Freedman et al., *Midrash*, Exodus, 2:13, p. 57" (N. M. Sarna, *Genesis*, p. 240 n. 16).
37. Moses 1:17.

38. Moses 1:25-26.

39. Moses 1:31. For a discussion of the meaning and significance of this face-to-face encounter between God and Moses after his passing through the heavenly veil, see J. M. Bradshaw, *Moses Temple Themes*, pp. 29-48.

40. Numbers 11:16.

41. Numbers 16:9.

42. Cf. Deuteronomy 18:5: "For the Lord thy God hath chosen him out of all thy tribes, to stand to minister in the name of the Lord, him and his sons for ever." Rashi concluded from this verse "that there is no ministering but while standing" (Rashi, *Deuteronomy Commentary*, Deuteronomy 18:5, p. 196).

43. Tigay translates this phrase as "to stand in attendance upon the Lord," i.e., "[t]o offer sacrifices" (J. H. Tigay, *Deuteronomy*, p. 106). See Deuteronomy 21:5; 2 Chronicles 29:11; Ezekiel 44:15.

44. Rashi took this as referring to the Priestly Blessing (Leviticus 9:22; Numbers 6:22-27; Deuteronomy 21:5): "It is a reference to 'raising of palms'" (Rashi, *Deuteronomy Commentary*, 10:8, p. 101).

45. J. Milgrom, *Numbers*, Numbers 16:9, p. 132. Cf. Numbers 3:6; 1 Samuel 16:22; 1 Kings 1:2.

46. 2 Chronicles 35:5.

47. 1 Kings 17:1. See also 1 Kings 18:15; 2 Kings 3:14, 5:16. Cf. Jeremiah 15:1, 19.

48. 1 Kings 19:11.

49. 1 Kings 19:12.

50. Psalm 130:3-4.

51. Ezra 9:15.

52. D&C 45:32. See also D&C 87:8, 124:45. Cf. references to Zion not being moved in D&C 97:19, 101:17.

53. The term as used in Psalm 16:8 is translated with the Greek verb *saleuō* in the *Septuagint* and in Acts 2:25. The Greek verb *kineō* is used in Revelation 6:14 ("And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were *moved out of their places*").

54. F. Brown et al., *Lexicon*, p. 556.

55. H. W. Nibley, *Teachings of the PGP*, 17, pp. 212-213.

56. Greek *phrisso* = shudder or shiver. Cf. Matthew 8:29 where the trembling can be viewed as "indicating a cognizance of their appointed doom" (W. E. Vine et al., *Dictionary (1996)*, s.v. shudder,

p. 573). See also Genesis 27:33 (Isaac) and Alma 11:46 (Zeezrom). Cf. Jacob 4:18, 7:5.

57. Hebrew *ragaz* = to be agitated, angry, to quiver or quake (F. Brown et al., *Lexicon*, p. 919b).

58. Hebrew *rash* = quake, shake (ibid., p. 950b).

59. Cf. Moses 7:13, S. C. Malan, *Adam and Eve*, 1:48, p. 53; G. W. E. Nickelsburg et al., *1 Enoch*, 88:2, p. 364.

60. See J. M. Bradshaw, *God's Image 1*, Commentary 5:41-b, p. 388.

61. See, e.g., M. Odell, *Ezekiel*, pp. 357-360.

62. M. Odell, *Ezekiel*, pp. 361-363.

63. M. Odell, *Ezekiel*, p. 363.

64. Calabro convincingly describes the imagery of a sealed contract or covenant associated with both cylinder seals and signet rings in northwest Semitic languages (D. Calabro, Rolling Out, especially pp. 68-72).

65. Note that the king sits "in the seat of God, in the midst of the seas," the latter reference recalling the imagery of Eden as the source of the waters of the earth (Genesis 2:10).

66. Ezekiel 28:14. The "stones of fire" may be an allusion to the coals on the altar of the temple (P. M. Joyce, *Ezekiel*, p. 180).

67. Some readers object to the idea of Eden being located on a cosmic mountain, since this aspect is not mentioned explicitly in Genesis 2–3. See G. A. Anderson, Cosmic Mountain, 192-199 for careful readings that argue for just such a setting.

68. Ibid., 199.

69. Ezekiel 28:16, Hebrew *wa'abbedka*. The longer phrase containing this verb can be read one of two ways: 1. "The guardian cherub drove you out" (P. M. Joyce, Ezekiel, p. 180; cf. W. Zimmerli, *Ezekiel 2*, p. 86, highlighting the parallel with Adam; cf. Genesis 3:24); or 2. "I drove you out, the guardian cherub" (P. M. Joyce, *Ezekiel*, p. 180; cf. W. Zimmerli, *Ezekiel 2*, p. 94, identifying the king as the cherub). The use of the verb *ḥillēl* (to profane) in the description of banishment in the first verb of the verse (*wā'eḥallelĕkā*, "I banished you") alludes to the desecration of the holy place through the actions of the king (D. I. Block, *Ezekiel 25-48*, p. 116).

70. Ezekiel 28:18.

71. Ezekiel 28:17.

72. D. I. Block, *Ezekiel 25-48*, p. 117. Cf. Lamentationss 2:1; Ezekiel 19:12.

73. Ezekiel 26:19-20 also uses *eres* in reference to the netherworld, perhaps in this context as a variant of *šaḥat*, "pit," in verse 8 (D. I. Block, *Ezekiel 25-48*, p. 117).

74. Scholars have long puzzled over the significance of the double reference to Adam and Eve's expulsion in vv. 23-24. Some ancient traditions see the couple's exit from the Garden of Eden as having occurred in two stages. For example, the Qur'an explicitly records that Adam and Eve were twice told to go down (Qur'an, 2:36, 38), explaining that they "were removed first from the Garden to its courtyard and then from the courtyard to the earth" (A. a.-S. M. H. at-Tabataba'i, *Al-Mizan*, 1:209). An idea consistent with Ephrem the Syrian's idea of the Fall as an attempted intrusion in the holiest regions of the Garden is that Adam and Eve were first removed from the border of the celestial region to the terrestrial paradise, and then, in the second stage, were expelled from the terrestrial paradise to the telestial earth (Ephrem the Syrian, Paradise, 3:5, p. 92, 3:13-15, pp. 95-96).

75. Exodus 6:1. See N. M. Sarna, *Genesis*, p. 30.

76. See D&C 45:32.

77. Thanks to Matthew B. Brown for pointing me to this image.

78. Zornberg's translation of Rashi, Genesis 2:7, in A. G. Zornberg, *Genesis*, p. 16. Compare Rashi, *Genesis Commentary*, 2:7, p. 23; J. Neusner, *Genesis Rabbah 1*, 14:8:1, p. 156.

79. Zornberg's translation of Rashi, Genesis 2:7, in A. G. Zornberg, *Genesis*, p. 16. Compare Rashi, *Genesis Commentary*, 2:7, p. 23.

80. A. G. Zornberg, *Genesis*, p. 16.

81. A. G. Zornberg, *Genesis*, p. 22.

82. E.g., M.-A. Ouaknin et al., *Rabbi Éliézer*, 11, p. 78; J. Goldin, *Fathers*, 1, p. 11.

83. A. G. Zornberg, *Genesis*, p. 23.

84. See also J. M. Bradshaw, *God's Image 1*, pp. 471-473, 681-686; J. M. Bradshaw, *Moses Temple Themes*, pp. 38-39.

85. Ezekiel 37:10. Cf. 2 Kings 13:21. Alma the Younger experienced a fall and a figurative death when he and his companions were visited by an angel, and a rebirth three days later when his mouth was opened and he was again able to stand on his feet: "I fell to the earth; and it was for the space of three days and three nights that I could not open my mouth, neither had I the use of my limbs … But behold my limbs did receive their strength again, and I stood upon my feet, and did manifest unto the people that I had been born of God" (Alma 36:10,

23; cf. King Lamoni and his people in Alma 18:42-43, 19:1-34). Falling in weakness after a vision of God is a common motif in scripture. Daniel reported that he "fainted, and was sick certain days," and of a second occasion he wrote: "I was left alone … and there remained no strength in me … and when I heard the voice of his words, then was I in a deep sleep on my face, and my face toward the ground" (Daniel 8:26; 10:8-9). Saul "fell to the earth" during his vision and remained blind until healed by Ananias (Acts 9:4, 17-18). Lehi "cast himself on his bed, being overcome with the Spirit" (1 Nephi 1:7). Of his weakness following the First Vision, Joseph Smith wrote: "When I came to myself again, I found myself lying on my back, looking up into heaven. When the light had departed, I had no strength … " (JS-H 1:20). See also discussion of A. Kulik, *Retroverting Apocalypse of Abraham* 10:1-4, p. 17 below.

86. See J. M. Bradshaw, *God's Image 1*, p. 683 figure 53-11.

87. J. M. Bradshaw, *God's Image 1*, p. 228 figure 4-10.

88. G. W. E. Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 1*, 1 Enoch 14:24, p. 267: "And one of the holy ones came to me and raised me up and stood me [on my feet]"; G. W. E. Nickelsburg et al., *1 Enoch*, 71:3, p. 93: "And the angel Michael … took me by my right hand and raised me up"; P. Alexander, 3 Enoch, 1:5, p. 256: "He grasped me with his hand before their eyes and said to me, 'Come in peace into the presence of the high and exalted King"; P. Alexander, 3 Enoch, 48A:2, p. 300: "I went with him, and, taking me by his hand, he bore me up on his wings."

89. J. M. Bradshaw, *God's Image 1*, p. 684 figure 53-13.

90. Daniel 8:18: "he touched me, and set me upright"; Daniel 10:9-10: "then was I in a deep sleep on my face, and my face toward the ground. And, behold, an hand touched me, which set me upon my knees."

91. Revelation 1:17: "I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me."

92. In Alma 19:29-30, the raising of two individuals who have fallen in rapturous vision is performed by mortal women.

93. Ezekiel 2:1-2: "And he said unto me, Son of man, stand upon thy feet, and I will speak unto thee. And the spirit entered into me when he spake unto me, and set me upon my feet, that I heard him that spake unto me."

94. Daniel 10:11: "O Daniel, … understand the words that I speak unto thee, and stand upright: for unto thee am I now sent."

95. Acts 26:16: "But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness."

96. Alma 36:7-8. 22: "7 And behold, he spake unto us, as it were the voice of thunder, and the whole earth did tremble beneath our feet; and we all fell to the earth, for the fear of the Lord came upon us. 8 But behold, the voice said unto me: Arise. And I arose and stood up, and beheld the angel."

97. 3 Nephi 11:19-20: "And Nephi arose and went forth, and bowed himself before the Lord and did kiss his feet. And the Lord commanded him that he should arise. And he arose and stood before him."

98. Nickelsburg explains (G. W. E. Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 1*, 14:24-15:1, p. 270): "The seer must be rehabilitated and accepted into the divine presence before he can receive his commission. Restoration by an angel becomes a typical feature in visions, where, however, it is the angel whose appearance causes the collapse."

> See also Joshua 7:6, 10-13:
>
> 6 ¶ And Joshua rent his clothes, and fell to the earth upon his face before the ark of the Lord until the eventide, he and the elders of Israel, and put dust upon their heads . …
>
> 10 ¶ And the Lord said unto Joshua, Get thee up; wherefore liest thou thus upon thy face?
>
> 11 Israel hath sinned, and they have also transgressed my covenant which I commanded them: for they have even taken of the accursed thing, and have also stolen, and dissembled also, and they have put it even among their own stuff.
>
> 12 Therefore the children of Israel could not stand before their enemies, but turned their backs before their enemies, because they were accursed: neither will I be with you any more, except ye destroy the accursed from among you.
>
> 13 Up, sanctify the people, and say, Sanctify yourselves against to morrow: for thus saith the Lord God of Israel, There is an accursed thing in the midst of thee, O Israel: thou canst not stand before thine enemies, until ye take away the accursed thing from among you.

99. E.g., Deuteronomy 10:8, 18:7; 2 Chronicles 29:11.
100. E.g., Luke 1:19.
101. See, e.g., Luke 18:13.

102. Notes taken by David J. Larsen on an unpublished talk by Robert Hayward (R. Hayward, *Aramaic Paradise*).

103. E.g., 1 Esdras 8:89-90.

104. Zornberg's translation. Compare H. Freedman et al., *Midrash*, Numbers 1, 11:3, 5:419.

105. Ezekiel 28:3.

106. For a more complete discussion, see M. Odell, *Ezekiel*, pp. 361-362.

107. See Daniel 4. The *Gospel of Philip* says: "There are two trees growing in Paradise. The one bears [animals], the other bears men. Adam [ate] from the tree which bore animals. [He] became an animal" (W. W. Isenberg, *Philip*, 71:21-72:4, p. 152). *Philip* uses, as Barker points out, "the usual apocalyptists' code of mortal = animal and angel = man. The text is broken, but the sense is clear enough" (M. Barker, June 11 2007. See M. Barker, *Hidden*, pp. 45-47; C. H. T. Fletcher-Louis, *Glory*, p. 33).

    Ephrem the Syrian reasoned that since Adam "went astray through [an animal] he became like the [animals]: He ate, together with them as a result of the curse, grass and roots" (Ephrem the Syrian, *Paradise*, 13:5, p. 170). Nibley connects the story of Nebuchadnezzar's "fall" to the Egyptian story of Osiris who, like Adam, was said to have been freed from a split tree (H. W. Nibley, *Message 2005*, p. 289): "In the book of Daniel, the tree that was split was the king himself (Daniel 4:13-15, 22); however the stump was not destroyed but preserved for a seven-year period (Daniel 4:23), during which time the king was ritually humiliated … (Daniel 4:33; cf. *Apis-bull* and *Horus-hawk*), only to resume his throne with all his glory greatly enhanced at the end of the seven-year period (Daniel 4:25, 31-34). This is the Egyptian seven-year throne period of the king … The splitting of the tree is plainly the substitute sacrifice, while its preservation against the time when the king shall be restored recalls the important role of the *ished-tree* in the coronation."

    Although nothing like this episode can be associated directly with the historic King Nebuchadnezzar (605-562 BCE), both Neo-Babylonian inscriptions and the *Prayer of Nabonidus>(4Q242)* fragment of the *Dead Sea Scrolls* provide evidence of a pre-Danielic tradition associating a similar story with Nabonidus, the last ruler of the Neo-Babylonian Empire (556-539 BCE) and father of Belsharusur (biblical "King Belshazzar" — see Daniel 5:22, 7:1, 8:1; F. G. Martinez, *DSS Translated*, p. 289; L. T. Stuckenbruck, *Daniel*,

pp. 104-106; J. A. Tvedtnes, Nebuchadnezzar; G. Vermes, *Complete*, p. 614; M. Wise et al., *DSS*, pp. 340-342). In his prayer, the king tells of his suffering with an "evil skin disease" for a period of seven years by the decree of God, and at least one scholar has proposed that a lacuna in the text "originally described Nabunay's state as comparable to that of a beast (see Daniel 4:25b), or that he was 'set apart from human beings'" (L. T. Stuckenbruck, Daniel, p. 105. See Daniel 4:25a). After appealing to gods of silver, gold, bronze, iron, wood, stone, and clay, his sins were forgiven by a Jewish healer after he finally prayed to the Most High God. A similar healing blessing performed by Abraham with the laying of hands upon the head is described in F. G. Martinez, Genesis Apocryphon, 20:28-29, p. 234.

108. To the scriptural example of Nebuchadnezzar, Doob (P. B. R. Doob, *Nebuchadnezzar's Children*) compares the Arthurian knights Yvain, Lancelot, and Tristan, who were driven mad by disappointments in love. See, e.g., C. de Troyes, *Yvain*, p. 189, where Yvain "dwelt in the forest like a madman or a savage." Thanks to BYU Professor Jesse Hurlbut for this reference.

109. G. A. Anderson et al., *Synopsis*, 4:2, p. 5E; G. A. Anderson, Penitence, pp. 13-19; G. A. Anderson, *Perfection*, pp. 141-147.

110. S. L. Della Torre, Anxiety, p. 7.

111. M. Maher, *Pseudo-Jonathan*, 3:18, p. 28. According to the *Targum*, God answers Adam's prayer as follows (ibid., 3:19, pp. 28-29): "By the *labor of your hand* you shall eat *food* until you return to the *dust* from which you were *created*, because dust you are, and to dust you will return; *but from the dust you are destined to arise* [literally "*stand up*"] *to render an account and a reckoning of all you hae done, on the day of great judgment."*

112. G. A. Anderson, Original Form, p. 229. As part of this reading of Moses 4:24-25, the phrase "By the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread" was seen by some early interpreters as God's promise to provide a less humiliating form of sustenance once Adam's penance was complete. At its conclusion, "God rescinds [His] initial decree and offers [him] seed-bearing grain from which he can make bread … [thus fulfilling] a prophecy made at the end of the sixth day of creation" (G. A. Anderson, Penitence, p. 19; see Moses 2:29).

A Coptic Christian tradition specifically mentions wheat (along with instructions for sowing and reaping) as having been divinely provided in answer to Adam's cries of hunger: "'If Thou art moved with compassion for the man whom We have created,

and who has rejected My commandment, go Thou and give him Thine own flesh and let him eat thereof, for it is Thou Who has made Thyself his advocate.' Then our Lord took a little piece of the flesh of His divine side, and rubbed it down into small pieces, and showed them to His Father. When God saw them He said to His Son, 'Wait and I will give Thee some of My own flesh, which is invisible.' Then God took a portion of His own body, and made it into a grain of wheat, and He sealed the grain in the middle with the seal wherewith He sealed the worlds of light, and then gave it to our Lord and told Him to give it to Michael, the archangel, who was to give it to Adam and teach him how to sow and reap it. Michael found Adam by the Jordan, who as he had eaten nothing for eight days was crying to God for food, and as soon as Adam received the grain of wheat, he ceased to cry out, and became strong, and his descendants have lived on wheat ever since. Water, wheat and the throne of God are the equals of the Son of God." (E. A. W. Budge, *Coptic Apocrypha*, cited in E. A. W. Budge, Cave, pp. 18-19 n. 1. See also M. i. A. A. al-Kisa'i, *Tales*, pp. 68-70; al-Tabari, *Creation*, 1:127-130, pp. 298-300; S. C. Malan, *Adam and Eve*, 1:66-68, pp. 78-83; D&C 89:17). An Ethiopian source asserts that the Tree of Life "is the Body of Christ which none of the Seraphim touch without reverent awe" (B. Mika'el, Mysteries, p. 26). Note that the Egyptian Osiris was thought to have introduced wheat and the vine to mankind, and also saw wheat grains as having been formed from his body. The notion of wheat being divinely provided for Adam is also found in Islamic sources (G. Weil, *Legends*, pp. 31, 45. See also M. Ibn Ishaq ibn Yasar, *Making*, pp. 34, 37; cf. A. I. A. I. M. I. I. al-Tha'labi, *Lives*, pp. 63-65; B. M. Wheeler, *Prophets*, pp. 27-28). In addition, the Sumerian text *Ewe and Wheat* recounts how wool and wheat were divinely provided in primeval times: "The people in those distant days, They knew not bread to eat; They knew not cloth to wear; They went about with naked limbs in the Land, And like sheep they ate grass with their mouth … Then Enki spoke to Enlil: 'Father Enlil, Ewe and Wheat … Let us now send them down from the Holy Hill" (R. J. Clifford, Ewe, 20-24, 37-38, 40, pp. 45-46). Linking the situations of Adam and Nebuchadnezzar to that of each penitent Christian, Ephrem the Syrian wrote that "only when [Nebuchadnezzar] repented did he return to his former abode and kingship. Blessed is He who has thus taught us to repent so that we too may return to Paradise" (Ephrem the Syrian, Paradise, 13:6, p.

171). The bread promised to Adam on conditions of repentance and baptism by water can be seen as a type of Christ, the "bread of life" (John 6:35). Christ's advent was, of course, preceded by John, dressed in the rough clothes of a penitent, eating what he could find in the wild, and baptizing "unto repentance" (Matthew 3:11. See T. G. Madsen, Sacrament, p. 85).

113. A. G. Zornberg, *Genesis*, p. 21.

114. "For these are those selected by God for an everlasting covenant and to them shall belong the glory of Adam." (Rule of the Community 4:22-23 in F. G. Martinez, *DSS Translated*, p. 7; H. W. Nibley, *Message 2005*, p. 467).

115. D&C 121:45.

116. Succinctly expressing the hopelessness of Adam's predicament in the absence of God's "remedy" (M. Maher, *Pseudo-Jonathan*, 3:15, pp. 27-28. Cf. W. Shakespeare, Measure, 2:2:75, p. 560), midrash states: "If it were not for Your mercy, Adam would have had *no standing* (*amidah*)" (following Zornberg's literal translation — others read in terms of Adam's capacity to "exist" or "survive" [see, e.g., J. T. Townsend, *Tanhuma*, 10 (Mas'e):8, Numbers 35:9ff, Part 1, 3:264; A. Davis et al., *The Metsudah Midrash Tanchuma*, Bamidbar 2, Masei, 11, p. 354; cf. H. Freedman et al., *Midrash*, Numbers 23:13, 6:877]). Zornberg explains: "The simplest reading of 'standing' would be 'survival.' But, implicitly, both Adam and the world are in need of some Archimedian point of stability, in a situation in which disintegration threatens" (A. G. Zornberg, *Genesis*, p. 25).

117. Moses 4:20.

118. Leviticus 11:42.

119. See U. Cassuto, *Adam to Noah*, p. 160. Cf., e.g., Psalm 72:9; Isaiah 49:23, 65:25; Micah 7:17.

120. G. A. Anderson, *Perfection*, p. 138. Cf. *Jubilees*: "the Lord cursed the serpent and he was angry with it forever" (O. S. Wintermute, Jubilees, 3:23, p. 60).

121. In the art of the ancient Near East, the serpent is often shown as originally walking erect, sometimes with legs (N. M. Sarna, *Genesis*, p. 27). Moreover, Islamic, Jewish, and early Christian texts often speak of the serpent's magnificent "camel-like" appearance before its cursing (e.g., al-Tabari, *Creation*, 1:104-110, pp. 275-281; S. C. Malan, *Adam and Eve*, p. 214 n. 20, p. 217, nn. 27-29).

    In the *Tschemmin Book of the Dead* (also known as *Joseph Smith Papyrus V*) from third- or second-century BCE Egypt, a

legged serpent appears in illustrated form, facing the staff-wielding initiate (M. D. Rhodes, *Books of the Dead*, Tschemmin Book of the Dead 74, Column X+3, p. 84; H. L. Andrus, *God*, p. 371; H. W. Nibley, *Message 2005*, p. 318 figure 98; J. M. Todd, Fragment, p. 40E. Cf. the vignette of spell 87 in the *Papyrus of Ani*, which contains instructions for being transformed into a serpent who is capable of endless cycles of rebirth (R. O. Faulkner et al., *Book of the Dead 1994*, plate 27. See J. H. Taylor, *Spells*, p. 65)). Rhodes cites Mosher's conjecture that this vignette, not directly mentioned in the text of the chapter itself but perhaps related to its mention of "hurrying the feet and going forth [on the earth]," is a representation of the "desire of the deceased to come forth from the earth (tomb) and walk the earth" (M. D. Rhodes, *Books of the Dead*, Tschemmin Book of the Dead 74, p. 43). Nibley, on the other hand, interprets the legged serpent in light of its punishment "for attempting to frustrate the progress of the god on his journey or the initiate on his way" (H. W. Nibley, *Message 2005*, p. 315). Apparently, the opposing serpent is here identified with the funerary god Sokar ("It is against me that you do the things you do, O Sokar, Sokar who is in his cave, my opponent in the god's domain … upon the shores of him who would seize their utterance in the god's domain" [M. D. Rhodes, *Books of the Dead*, Tschemmin Book of the Dead 74, p. 43]). According to the *Amduat*, within the cavern "filled with flames of fire from the mouth of Isis" and surrounded by sandy shores of the lake of fire-water ("fiery pain for the enemies of Re but cool water for the blessed souls"), Sokar (the name given to the dead corpse of Osiris, from at least the time of the Old Kingdom, after he was murdered by his brother Seth [G. Pinch, *Egyptian Mythology*, p. 203] and based on a play on the words of his cry of mortal distress [J. P. Allen, Pyramid Texts of Pepi I, 480, p. 165, p. 205 n. 129]) and Re (the Sungod, who appears in the cavern in the form of a multi-headed serpent shaped like a barque) unite the opposites of death and life (T. Abt et al., *Knowledge*, pp. 71-72; cf. A. Schweizer, *Sungod's Journey*, pp. 91-99), enabling, after the ultimate defeat of the evil serpent Apophis by the gods (E. Hornung, Triumph of Magic), the eventual regeneration and rebirth of the initiate.

In the next chapter, *Tschemmin Book of the Dead* 75, the staff-wielding candidate must face yet another test before entering the Holy Place. The opposing entity in the accompanying vignette is accurately but benignly described by Rhodes as "the hieroglyphic

sign for Heliopolis" (M. D. Rhodes, *Books of the Dead*, p. 44). Nibley, however, explains that the sign originally represented the "sword and flame" that were instrumental in the defeat of the serpent (H. W. Nibley, *Message 2005*, p. 318 caption to figure 98, see also pp. 319-320). According to Nibley, the symbol was known as:

> … the spear of Horus of Heliopolis with which he overcame the Adversary, the Serpent, when he took the rule … As to the two columns flanking the spear, the Jews, according to W. Kornfeld, were quite aware that the two famous pillars, Boaz and Jachin and strength and capital righteousness, that stood at the entrance to the Temple of Solomon (2 Chronicles 3:17), "belonged to the solar cult of On" — referring to the biblical name for Heliopolis.

While the "keepers of the pylons, standing with swords in their hands before a gate from which flames shoot forth" admit the Sun God Re, they prevent any possibility of the evil serpent entering the realm of the blessed (H. W. Nibley, *Message 2005*, p. 320). Within the temple at Heliopolis, Egyptian priests reenacted the defeat of Apophis by ritually trampling images of the evil serpent underfoot (cf. Genesis 3:15; J. M. Bradshaw, *God's Image 1*, Moses 4:21d, pp. 266-267). Only after Adam and Eve "have been *first* purified by the hand of the cherubim" may they also enter within (H. W. Nibley, *Message 2005*, p. 320; cf. J. M. Bradshaw, *God's Image 1*, Moses 4:31e, p. 282).

122. "Having arrogantly aggrandized itself in a challenge to God, it is now permanently doomed to a posture of abject humiliation" (N. M. Sarna, *Genesis*, p. 27).

123. H. W. Nibley, *Abraham 1981*, p. 180; H. W. Nibley, *Message 2005*, pp. 317. Taylor asserts that the serpent's human legs "indicated the power of swift movement" (J. H. Taylor, *Spells*, p. 65), while Nibley sees the loss of its limbs as representing the fact that it "may never more progress, being 'bound by Aker, deprived of arms and legs, bound in one place' — as Re 'inflicts the blows decreed for him'" (H. W. Nibley, *Message 2005*, p. 317).

124. Genesis 3:14. In the story of the contest between Moses with Pharaoh's magicians (cf. Genesis 41:1-7), the upright staff of authoritative rulership is in deliberate contrast to the prostrate posture of a serpent. After the magicians succeeded in transforming their rods into serpents as Aaron had done, the author of Exodus

pointedly tells us that it was "Aaron's *rod* [that] swallowed up their *rods*" (Exodus 7:12), not Aaron's *serpent* that swallowed up their *serpents*. "The rod in ancient Egpyt was a symbol of royal authority and power, while the snake, the uraeus, represented the patron cobra-goddess of Lower Egypt. Worn over the forehead on the headdress of the pharaohs, it was emblematic of divinely-protected sovereignty, and it served as a menacing symbol of death dealt to enemies of the crown" (N. M. Sarna, *Exodus*, 4:3, p. 20, see also 7:12-13, p. 37).

Also highlighting the fact that question of authority to rule rather than magical prowess was the issue at hand is the deliberate choice of the Hebrew term *tannin* ("large reptile," e.g., crocodile, sea monster, leviathan) rather than *nachash* ("snake," as in Exodus 4:3-4, 7:15) for the transformed staff (Exodus 7:9-10). *Tannin* was often "used metaphorically as a symbol of national empires and power" (W. C. Kaiser, Jr., *Exodus*, p. 347 n. 9. See Deuteronomy 32:33, Psalm 74:13, Ezekiel 29:3).

Incidentally, "[t]he use of magic in Egypt is well-documented in [Talc 2 of the] Westcar Papyrus (M.-J. Nederhof, Papyrus Westcar) where magicians are credited with changing wax crocodiles into real ones only to be turned back to wax again after seizing their tails. Montet … also refers to several Egyptian scarabs that depict a snake charmer holding a serpent made stiff as a staff up in the air before some observing deities (cf. J. B. Pritchard, Charms Against Snakes; J. P. Allen, Pyramid Texts of Unis, 3, p. 17, with a spell on a 'spotted' knife [representing a snake?] that 'goes forth against its like' and devours it)" (W. C. Kaiser, Jr., *Exodus*, 7:10-13, p. 347). See also L. Shalit, How Moses.

125. J. M. Bradshaw, *God's Image 1*, pp. 338-350.

126. In the case of the rabbis, this was understood to be the five books of Moses, the *Torah*. Concerning the sixth day of Creation, Rashi commented: "*The* sixth day": the definite article [*heh*] is added here to teach that God had made a condition with all the works of the beginning, depending on Israel's acceptance of the Five [the numerical value of *heh*] Books of the *Torah*. (Zornberg's translation in A. G. Zornberg, *Genesis*, p. 27). Compare Rashi, *Genesis Commentary*, 1:31, p. 19.

The idea of five sacred things is encountered in other forms of Jewish tradition. For example, Jewish authorities held that five things were lost when Solomon's temple was destroyed. Both

Margaret Barker and Hugh Nibley specifically connect these "five things" to lost ordinances of the High Priesthood (see J. M. Bradshaw, *God's Image 1*, pp. 658-660).

127. D&C 84:23-27; JST Exodus 34:1-2.

128. Exodus 20:18.

129. A. G. Zornberg, *Genesis*, pp. 32-33. Zornberg's comment is based on a midrash of Rashi on Exodus 20:15-16 (= KJV Exodus 20:18): "And all the people could see the sounds and the flames, the sound of the shofar and the smoking mountain; the people saw and they moved and they stood from afar. They said to Moses, 'You speak to us and we shall hear; let God not speak to us lest we die'" (Rashi, *Exodus Commentary*, pp. 240-241). The "sounds" are read as coming from the "mouth of the Almighty." The movement is one of trembling, not to be understood as the same one that led them to be standing "from afar." Rashi says that the people "drew back twelve miles, the length of their camp, and the ministering angels would come and assist them to return, as it says 'The kings of legions move about' (Psalm 68:13)" (ibid., p. 241). "The *Talmud* reads the word 'kings' as 'angels,' and the intransitive verb 'move about' as the transitive verb 'move others' (see *Mechilta; Shabbos* 88a)" (Editor's note in Rashi, *Exodus Commentary*, p. 241).

130. http://dwellingintheword.wordpress.com/category/bible/uncategorized/page/6/

131. A. G. Zornberg, *Genesis*, pp. 23-24.

132. "R. Simeon b. Yohai observed: As long as a man refrains from sin he is an object of awe and fear. The moment he sins he is himself subject to awe and fear. Before Adam sinned he used to hear the voice of the divine communication while standing on his feet and without flinching. As soon as he sinned, he heard the voice of the divine communication and hid … (Genesis 3:8). R. Abin said: Before Adam sinned, the Voice sounded to him gentle; after he had sinned it sounded to him harsh. Before Israel had sinned, *The appearance of the glory of the Lord was like devouring fire on the top of the mount* (Exodus 24:17). R. Abba b. Kahana observed: Seven partitions of fire were consuming one another and Israel looked on undaunted and undismayed. As soon as they had sinned, however, they could not even look at the face of the intermediary [i.e., Moses] (Exodus 34:30)" (H. Freedman et al., *Midrash*, Numbers (Naso), 11:3, p. 419).

133. Mark 9:2-13.

134. Exodus 24:18, 33:7-11.
135. C. H. T. Fletcher-Louis, Reflections, pp. 299-301. I am indebted to David Larsen for pointing me to this article.
136. Ibid., p. 303. Fletcher-Louis cites the following from Philo:

"Here I *stand* there before you, on the rock in Horeb" (Exodus 17:6), which means, "this I, the manifest, Who am here, am there also, am everywhere, for I have filled all things. I *stand* ever the same immutable, before you or anything that exists came into being, established on the topmost and most ancient source of power, whence showers forth the birth of all that is. …" And Moses too gives his testimony to the unchangeableness of the deity when he says "they saw the place where the God of Israel stood" (Exodus 24:10), for by the *standing* or establishment he indicates his immutability. But indeed so vast in its excess is the stability of the Deity that He imparts to chosen natures a share of His steadfastness to be their richest possession. For instance, He says of His covenant filled with His bounties, the highest law and principle, that is, which rules existent things, that this god-like image shall be firmly planted with the righteous soul as its pedestal … And it is the earnest desire of all the God-beloved to fly from the stormy waters of engrossing business with its perpetual turmoil of surge and billow, and anchor in the calm safe shelter of virtue's roadsteads. See what is said of wise Abraham, how he was "*standing* in front of God" (Genesis 18:22), for when should we expect a mind to *stand* and no longer sway as on the balance save when it is opposite God, seeing and being seen? … To Moses, too, this divine command was given: "Stand here with me" (Deuteronomy 5:31), and this brings out both the points suggested above, namely the unswerving quality of the man of worth, and the absolute stability of Him that IS. (modified by Fletcher-Louis from Philo, Dreams, 2:32, 221-2:33, 227, pp. 543, 545).

Fletcher-Louis comments on parallels between Philo, 4Q377 from Qumran, and the Pentateuch:

Like Philo, 4Q377 is working with Deuteronomy 5:5, the giving of the Torah, and perhaps Exodus 17:6. Both texts think standing is a posture indicative of a transcendent identity in which the righteous can participate and of which Moses is the pre-eminent example. With the stability of standing is contrasted the

corruptibility of motion, turmoil and storms, which is perhaps reflected in the tension between Israel's "standing" (lines 4 and 10) and her "trembling" (line 9) before the Glory of God in the Qumran text. Whether this and other similar passages in Philo (cf. esp. Sacr. 8-10; Post. 27-29) are genetically related to 4Q377 is not certain, but remains a possibility. (C. H. T. Fletcher-Louis, Reflections, p. 304)

137. Obviously a different sense of "stand" is used here.

138. Psalm 82:6-7.

139. Zornberg's translation. Freedman's translation is: "You have followed the course of Adam who did not withstand his trials for more than three hours, and at nine hours death was decreed upon him (H. Freedman et al., *Midrash*, Genesis, 18:6, p. 146). [Nine hours would be about three in the afternoon, the day being counted from 6 am to 6 pm]" (H. Freedman et al., *Midrash*, Exodus (Mishpatim), 32:1, p. 404).

140. W. Shakespeare, Hamlet, 3:3:36, p. 1166.

141. From J. F. Dolkart, *James Tissot*, p. 234.

142. H. N. Ridderbos, *John*, p. 576.

143. John 18:4-6.

144. From J. F. Dolkart, *James Tissot*, p. 215.

145. As Beale and Carson explain: Jesus's self-identification in 18:5, "I am," probably has connotations of deity … This is strongly suggested by the soldiers' falling to the ground in 18:6, a common reaction to divine revelation (see Ezekiel 1:28, 44:4; Daniel 2:46, 8:18, 10:9; Acts 9:4, 22:7, 26:14; Revelation 1:17, 19:10, 22:8). This falling of the soldiers is reminiscent of certain passages in Psalms (see Psalms 27:2, 35:4; cf. 56:9; see also Elijah's experience in 2 Kings 1:9-14). Jewish literature recounts the similar story of the attempted arrest of Simeon (Genesis Rabbah 91:6). The reaction also highlights Jesus's messianic authority in keeping with texts such as Isaiah 11:4 (cf. 2 Esdras 13:3-4). (G. K. Beale *et al.*, *NT Use of the OT*, John 18-19, p. 499)

146. R. E. Brown, *Death*, 1:261. The entire passage from Raymond Brown is instructive (*Death*, 1:261-262):

OT antecedents for this reaction have been proposed, e.g., Psalm 56:10(9): "My enemies will be turned back … in the day when I shall call upon you"; Psalm 27:2: "When evildoers come at me … my foes and my enemies themselves stumble and fall … "; Psalm 35:4: "Let those be turned back … and

confounded who plot evil against me." Falling down (*piptein*) as a reaction to divine revelation is attested in Daniel 2:46, 8:18; Revelation 1:17; and that is how John would have the reader understand the reaction to Jesus's pronouncement. *Piptein chamai* is combined with the verb "to worship" in Job 1:20. No matter what one thinks of the historicity of this scene, it should not be explained away or trivialized. To know or use the divine name, as Jesus does, is an exercise of awesome power. In Acts 3:6 Peter heals a lame man "in the name of Jesus of Nazareth," i.e., by the power of the name that Jesus has been given by God; and "there is no other name under heaven among human beings by which we must be saved." Eusebius (*Praeparatio Evangelica* 9:27:24-26 in J. H. Charlesworth, *Pseudepigrapha*, 2:901; GCS 43.522) attributes to Artapanus, who lived before the 1st century BC, the legend that when Moses uttered before Pharaoh the secret name of God, Pharaoh fell speechless to the ground (R. D. Bury, ExpTim 24 (1912-13), 233). That legend may or may not have been known when John wrote, but it illustrates an outlook that makes John's account of the arrest intelligible. This same Jesus will say to Pilate, "You have no power over me at all except what was given to you from above" (John 19:11). Here he shows how powerless before him are the troops of the Roman cohort and the police attendants from the chief priests — the representatives of the two groups who will soon interrogate him and send him to the cross. Indeed, an even wider extension of Jesus's power may be intended. Why does John suddenly, in the midst of this dramatic interchange, mention the otiose presence of Judas, "now standing there with them was also Judas, the one who was giving him over" (John 18:5)? John 17:12 calls Judas "the son of perdition," a phrase used in 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4 to describe the antichrist who exalts himself to the level of God. Is the idea that the representative of the power of evil must also fall powerless before Jesus? I have already pointed out a close Johannine parallel to the Mark/Matthew saying about the coming near of the one who gives Jesus over, namely, John 14:30: "For the Prince of this world is coming." In John 12:31, in the context of proclaiming the coming of the hour (John 12:23) and of praying about that

hour (John 12:27), Jesus exclaims, "Now will the Prince of this world be driven out" (or "cast down," a textual variant; see also 16:11).

Keener (*John*, p. 1082; p. 1082 n. 124) offers additional precedents for the "involuntary prostration" of Jesus's enemies:

Other ancient texts report falling backward in terror — for instance, fearing that one has dishonored God (*Sipra Sh. M.D.* 99:5:12; cf. perhaps 1 Samuel 4:18) .…

Talbert, *John*, 233, adds later traditions in which priests fell on their faces when hearing the divine name (*b. Qidd.* 71a; *Eccl. Rab.* 3:11, S3).

Matthew Brown points out further parallels to Mount Sinai and the temple during the culminating scenes of the Atonement on the Mount of Olives (M. B. Brown, *Gate*, p. 176):

Shortly before his crucifixion, the Savior took the twelve apostles, and perhaps others, with Him to the Garden of Gethsemane, which is located on the western slope of the Mount of Olives. When they had entered into the garden area, the Lord instructed the majority of His disciples to wait for Him while He took Peter, James, and John further into the Garden. Then, at some unspecified location, Christ told Peter, James, and John to stay where they were while He "went a little further" into Gethsemane by Himself (see Matthew 26:30-39; Mark 14:26-36). It was in this third area of the Garden that the Savior was visited and strengthened by an angel and where He shed His sacrificial blood (see JST Luke 22:43-44). This pattern is intriguing because it seems to match the tripartite division of the people during the Mount Sinai episode (Ground Level — Israelites, Half-Way — Seventy Elders, Top — Moses) and the tripartite division in the temple complex (Courtyard — Israelites, Holy Place — Priests, Holy of Holies — High Priest). It was, of course, in the Holy of Holies on the Day of Atonement that the final rite was performed to purge the sins of the Israelites with sacrificial blood (see Leviticus 16:15).

147. See C. S. Keener, *John*, pp. 40-47 for an assessment of the evidence that John's tradition was rooted in pre-70 Jewish Palestine. Among

others, Keener cites James Charlesworth, who "suggests that today nearly all John scholars 'have concluded that John may contain some of the oldest traditions in … the Gospels" (C. S. Keener, *John*, p. 47).

148. In viewing this detachment as composed of the temple guards, rather than a Roman cohort, I am following Ridderbos: "As in the Septuagint and Josephus, this guard is, like its captain (the '*chiliarch*' in v. 12), given Roman military names. John calls these temple police '*the* [*speira*],' that is, the only qualified armed group, under the circumstances, at the Sanhedrin's disposal, along with the Sanhedrin's own court officers" (H. N. Ridderbos, *John*, p. 575). For a more extensive discussion that reaches the same conclusion, see C. S. Keener, *John*, pp. 1078-1080.

149. S. K. Brown, Arrest, p. 201. See, e.g., D&C 88:49.

150. W. J. Hamblin, John 17:6, Name, pp. 4-5.

151. "And the priests and people standing in the courtyard [on the Day of Atonement], when they would hear the Expressed Name [of the Lord] come out of the mouth of the high priest, would kneel and bow down and fall upon on their faces" (J. Neusner, *Mishnah*, Yoma 6:2d, p. 275; cf. Ibid., Yoma 3:8, p. 269, 4:2, pp. 270-271).

152. See Psalm 110:4, Hebrews 7.

153. W. B. Yeats, Second Coming, pp. 158-159.

154. D. A. Bednar, Stand. See also citations such as the following: "For I will reveal myself from heaven with power and great glory … and the wicked shall not *stand*" (D&C 29:11); Behold, the great day of the Lord is at hand; and who can abide the day of his coming, and who can *stand* when he appeareth?" (D&C 128:24; cf. Malachi 3:2, 3 Nephi 24:2).

155. D&C 45:31-32, 70, 74.

156. Cf. Genesis 27:33, Alma 11:46.

157. D&C 88:89; cf. Alma 36:7. See also J. M. Bradshaw, *God's Image 1*, pp. 57-58 n. 1:21a, p. 388 n. 5:41b.

158. D&C 87:6.

159. D&C 87:8.

160. D&C 101:17, 20-23.

161. Isaiah 33:20, 54:2.

162. D&C 57:3. For a broader discussion of this topic, see S. L. Olsen, Mormon Ideology, pp. 19-41.

163. D&C 101:21.

164. See D&C 133:9.

165. D&C 124:36; cf. D&C 45:66, 115:6. Explicitly mentioning these two places of safety in a close parallel to the text of Matthew 24:15, D&C 133:12-13 reads:

    Let them, therefore, who are among the Gentiles flee unto Zion.

    And let them who be of Judah flee unto Jerusalem, unto the mountains of the Lord's house.

166. D&C 84:2, emphasis added; cf. Revelation 14:1.
167. From J. F. Dolkart, *James Tissot,* p. 204.
168. Joseph Smith-Matthew 1:32. Commenting on this verse, Ogden and Skinner write: "That is, as in the first century after Christ (v. 12), so in the last century before his second coming: Jerusalem will be besieged and suffer much destruction" (D. K. Ogden et al., *Gospels*, p. 518).

    Without the benefit of the light shed by Joseph Smith — Matthew, non-LDS scholars have sometimes concurred with the idea that the event is fulfilled twice: once shortly after Jesus's death and again in the last days (e.g., J. B. Payne, Imminent Appearing, p. 152; L. T. Dennis et al., *ESV*, Matthew 24:15n., p. 1873). C. S. Keener, *Gospel of Matthew*, p. 577-578, while seeing "the whole interim between the Temple's demise [in AD 70] and [Christ's] return as an extended tribulation period," also realizes that the tribulation of AD 66-70 is blended, in Matthew 24, "with the final one, which it prefigures":

    Early Jewish texts also telescope the generations of history with the final generation (O. S. Wintermute, Jubilees, 23:11-32, pp. 100-102). As in Mark, the tribulation of 66-70 remains somehow connected with the future *parousia*, if only as a final prerequisite. Further, the context may suggest that Jesus employs his description eschatologically, as in some Jewish end-time texts; in this case, the disasters of 66-73 could not have exhausted the point of his words.

169. From J. F. Dolkart, *James Tissot,* p. 150.
170. Luke 2:52, emphasis mine. Cf. 1 Samuel 2:21, 26, where a similar description is given of the child Samuel. The Hebrew term *gadol* in v. 26 has to with becoming great in size, maturity, or ability, not just growing older (see, e.g., F. Brown et al., *Lexicon*, 152d).

171. A. E. Harvey sees the first part of this phrase, which he translates with a definite article as "*the* perfect man," as "perhaps referring to … the second Adam, who is Christ" (A. E. Harvey, *Companion 2004*, p. 620 n. 7).

172. Ephesians 4:13. The idea that the verse is referring to bodily stature seems fitting, since there is an explicit reference to the "body of Christ" in v. 12 and the metaphorical "body" of the Church in v. 16.

173. Matthew 6:27. I.e., "Who grows by worrying about one's height" (F. W. Danker et al., *Greek-English Lexicon*, p. 436). The use of the English word "stature" connects with the growth of the flowers in the next verse and "with the height of growth of the crops [in the previous one] … In the LXX and the Sym. of Ezekiel 13:18, *helikia* is the translation of the Hebrew *qomah*, and perhaps there is a confusion between *qomah*, 'stature' or 'height,' and *quamah*, meaning 'standing corn' and the meaning that no one could, without God, add to the height of his crops" (S. T. Lachs, *Rabbinic Commentary*, p. 132 n. 27). The Book of Mormon follows the KJV in rendering the key term as "stature" (3 Nephi 13:27).

    The operative word for measurement is the Greek *pēchus* (forearm), hence the translation of "cubit" in the KJV. Nevertheless, some well-respected scholars take *pēchus* figuratively as "span" and translate the contextually sensitive Greek term *hēlikia* in terms of adding to the length of one's life rather than to one's height (e.g., C. S. Keener, *Gospel of Matthew*, p. 237; R. T. France, *Gospel of Matthew*, pp. 268-269; H. D. Betz et al., *Sermon*, p. 476). See also F. W. Danker et al., *Greek-English Lexicon*, pp. 435-436 who describe "age" as a first meaning of the term, but then admit that some scholars hold Matthew 6:27 and Luke 12:25 as referring to bodily stature (as in some non-biblical sources), noting also that "many would prefer 'stature' [in this sense] for Luke 2:52; Ephesians 4:13."

    In any case, whether we take age or height as the metaphor, the theme in all these verses is "maturity, as opposed to remaining children (cf. 1 Corinthians 3:1-3; 13:11; 14:20; Philemon 3:15; Colossians 1:28)" (A.-J. Levine et al., *Jewish Annotated*, p. 350 n. 13-14). After examining the alternatives, J. Nolland, *Matthew*, p. 311 also highlights the "obvious links with the idea of maturity" in Matthew 6:27. "Standing alone it can refer to the requisite age(-range) for some activity or state of affairs (to be physically mature, be of age to take responsibility, etc.). The physical sense 'stature' is

also derived from the idea of growing up and thus becoming bigger over time."

174. From J. F. Dolkart, *James Tissot*, p. 202.
175. Cf. Ephesians 4:16.
176. On the role of revelation in providing the specifications for temple building, see J. M. Bradshaw, *God's Image 1*, pp. 561-563.
177. Exodus chapters 25-31.
178. Ezekiel chapters 40-48.
179. Revelation 11:1-2. See also Zechariah chapter 2.
180. Image from J. V. Canby, *Ur-Nammu*, Plate 33.
181. J. M. Bradshaw et al., Investiture Panel.
182. Thorkild Jacobsen, cited in K. E. Slanski, Rod and Ring, p. 45.
183. Ezekiel 40:3. See D. I. Block, *Ezekiel 25-48*, pp. 512, 515. Thanks to Matthew B. Brown for this reference.
184. H. W. Nibley, Circle. See also, e.g., J. M. Bradshaw, *God's Image 1*, passim.
185. K. E. Slanski, Rod and Ring, p. 51. Black agrees with Slanski's interpretation, stating that the "rod and ring" are "thought to depict a pair of measuring instruments, a rule and a tape, taken as symbolic of divine justice" (J. A. Black et al., *Gods*, p. 156).
186. Matthew 6:27.
187. J. W. Welch, *Light*, p. 160.
188. Ephesians 4:13.
189. Revelation 11:1; cf. Ezekiel 40-42, Zechariah 1:16. Jay and Donald Parry, citing Kenneth Strand, note that these three elements of the temple — temple, altar, and worshippers — are the same three entities that are to be purified on the Day of Atonement, as recorded in Leviticus 16 (J. A. Parry et al., *Book of Revelation*, p. 135. See vv. 6, 11, 16-18).
190. "In the Old Testament generally, 'measuring' was metaphorical for a decree of protection" (G. K. Beale, *Temple*, p. 314). See 2 Samuel 8:2; Isaiah 28:16-17; Jeremiah 31:38-40; Zechariah 1:16. For 'measuring' as judgment, see 2 Samuel 8:2; 2 Kings 21:13; Lamentations 2:8; Amos 7:7-9.
191. See 1 Corinthians 3:16-17; 2 Corinthians 6:16; Ephesians 2:19-22; 1 Peter 2:5. This is also, for example, the view of Metzger (B. M. Metzger, *Breaking*, pp. 68-69).
192. See D&C 88:28-31.
193. Psalm 24:3-4.
194. Revelation 11:2.

195. D&C 101:24.

196. D&C 123:17, emphasis added. Compare Exodus 14:13.

197. E. T. Benson, *Teachings 1988*, p. 106.

198. M. Zlotowitz et al., *Bereishis*, 18:32, 1:673. Note that a *minyan*, the Jewish prayer circle, requires a minimum of ten men. Tvedtnes also notes: "The angels of the presence 'stand' in God's presence (e.g., Luke 1:19 and numerous pseudepigrapha). In Judaism, the *amidah* (standing prayer) brings one into God's presence. In the *Conflict of Adam and Eve with Satan*, the first couple stand inside the cave of treasures to pray. After being cast out of the garden, this was their only way of approaching the presence of God" (J. A. Tvedtnes, 8 March 2010; see J. A. Tvedtnes, Temple Prayer, p. 80).

199. B. Gittin 43a, as cited in A. G. Zornberg, *Genesis*, p. 385 n. 83.

200. Ibid., p. 33.

201. Rashi, *Exodus Commentary*, p. 241.

202. A. Kulik, *Retroverting Apocalypse of Abraham* 10:1-4, p. 17. The translation of the caption to this image reads: "I heard a voice saying, Here Oilu, sanctify this man and strengthen (him) from his trembling and the angel took me by the right hand and stood me on my feet and said to me, stand up, o friend of God who has loved you." Kulik's translation of the corresponding text in the *Apocalypse* reads: "And when I was still face down on the earth, I heard the voice of the Holy One, saying, 'Go, Yahoel, the namesake of the mediation of my ineffable name, sanctify this man and strengthen him from his trembling!' And the angel whom he sent to me in the likeness of a man came, and he took me by my right hand and stood me on my feet. And he said to me, 'Stand up, <Abraham>, the friend of God who has loved you, let human trembling not enfold you. For behold I am sent to you to strengthen you and to bless you in the name of God.'" (ibid., 10:3-6, pp. 17-18). Compare Daniel 8:17-18; 10:9-11. For parallels between this ancient text and the book of Moses, see J. M. Bradshaw, *God's Image 1*, pp. 694-696.

203. From J. F. Dolkart, *James Tissot*, p. 342.

204. A. G. Zornberg, *Genesis*, p. 32.

205. G. K. Chesterton, Orthodoxy, pp. 102-103.

206. http://www.edmundcamacho.com/2009/07/shivah-asar-btammuz.html.

207. Hebrew (transliterated): *šiqqûṣ šômēm*; Greek: βδέλυγμα τῆς ἐρήμωσις.

208. Daniel 9:27, 11:31, 12:11.

209. R. T. France, *Gospel of Matthew*, p. 911 takes the primary reference of the prophecy of Daniel to be "the events of 167 BC, when Antiochus Epiphanes conquered Jerusalem and prohibited Jewish sacrificial worship, setting up an altar for pagan sacrifices (including the slaughter of pigs) on top of the altar of burnt offering (F. Josephus, The Antiquities (New), 12:5:253, p. 404); it stood in the temple for three years until Judas Maccabeus regained control of Jerusalem, purified the temple, and restored its true worship."

210. J. N. Sparks et al., *Orthodox Study Bible*, Matthew 24:15n., p. 1315. Beale elaborates:

> The "desolating sacrilege" in 24:15 clearly alludes to the horror prophesied in Daniel 9:27 and repeated in 11:31; and 12:11, with Jesus explicitly mentioning the prophet's name. In the OT it occurs first in the context of Daniel's famous but notoriously difficult prophecy about seventy "weeks of years" (i.e., 490 years [9:24-27]). Seven times seven times ten almost certainly represents a symbolic number for a perfect period of time, and the abomination of desolation is related to something "set up on a wing," presumably of the temple, since Jerusalem and its sanctuary are said to be destroyed (Daniel 9:26 …). First Maccabees 1:54 understood this prophecy to have been fulfilled in the desecration of the temple sanctuary by Antiochus Epiphanes, the Seleucid ruler who sacrificed swine on the Jewish altar and ransacked the capital city, leading to the Maccabean revolt of 167-164 BC [see also 2 Maccabees 8:17]. Jesus is envisioning a similarly horrifying event accompanying the destruction of the temple in the first century … The disciples comment on the temple that they can see from the Mount of Olives. Jesus then predicts *its* destruction. Luke explicitly takes it this way. Nothing in the context supports the notion that a temple rebuilt centuries later, only to be destroyed again, is in view … Foretelling the destruction of the temple, of course, places Jesus in a long line of prophets (cf. Micah 3:2; Jeremiah 7:8-15; 9:10-11; 26:6, 18 …) (G. K. Beale et al., *NT Use of the OT*, Matthew 24:1-31, p. 86).

211. Matthew 24:15.

212. R. T. France, *Gospel of Matthew*, p. 913; cf. P. G. Bolt, *Cross*, pp. 100-101 n. 36.

213. F. Josephus, Wars (New), 4:3:6-8 (150-157), pp. 812-813, 4:3:12 (196-207), p. 815.
214. Ibid., 6:6:1 (316), p. 900.
215. Luke 21:20: "Jerusalem surrounded by armies."
216. From J. F. Dolkart, *James Tissot*, p. 248.
217. See Matthew 26:61; Mark 14:58; John 2:19.
218. P. G. Bolt, *Cross*, p. 101.
219. Matthew 12:6.
220. C. S. Keener, *Gospel of Matthew*, p. 575, referring to Daniel 9:26. Writes Payne (J. B. Payne, Imminent Appearing, pp. 147-148):

> The subject of [Daniel 9:25-26] is stated to be the Messiah … ; and the purpose of the action described is six-fold: "to restrain transgression, and to seal up sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most holy" (v. 24). The applicability of the first four to Christ is clear (Hebrews 9:26). The "sealing of vision," then, seems to refer to the termination of that anticipatory mode of prophetic revelation which reached its climax in John the Baptist (Matthew 11:13), and not, as sometimes asserted, to the fulfilling of all prophecies. Finally, the anointing of the "most holy," in the light of the messianic prophecy that follows, can refer to none other than Christ's anointing by the Holy Spirit (John 3:34). He then accomplishes this mission by causing a covenant (the newer testament; Jeremiah 31:31-34, Hebrews 8:6-9, 22) to prevail with many (Daniel 9:27). That is, He makes the testament efficacious with His elect (cf. Isaiah 53:11). Such testamentary action brings to an end the anticipatory sacrificial system of the older testament (Daniel 9:27), a termination that was demonstrated historically when the veil of the temple was symbolically rent in twain at Christ's crucifixion (Matthew 27:51; cf. Hebrews 9:8). But it meant too that the ultimate death would have to take place: Messiah Himself would be cut off (Daniel 9:26). "For a testament is of force where there hath been death: for it doth never avail while he that made it liveth" (Hebrews 9:17)."

On the timing for the fulfillment of the prophecy, Payne writes (Imminent Appearing, pp. 148-149):

The most noteworthy feature of Daniel's prophecy is the inspired prophetic calendar that accompanies it. Daniel predicted a lapse of "seventy weeks [of years]," or 490 years, for the accomplishing of the redemptive work (Daniel 9:24). The beginning point would be indicated by the commandment to restore Jerusalem (v. 25), an event that was accomplished, a century after Daniel, in the reign of the Persian, Artaxerxes I (465-424 BC), under Nehemiah (444 BC). But there had been an earlier attempt, in the same reign, to restore the city's walls, which had been thwarted by the Samaritans (Ezra 4:11-12, 23). This attempt seems to have been made under Ezra (458 BC; cf. 9:9), on the basis of the extended powers granted him in Artaxerxes' decree (7:18, 25, even though nothing explicit is said about his restoring Jerusalem). Daniel then went on to predict that from this commandment, to the Messiah, would be "seven weeks, and three score and two weeks" (9:25), or 69 weeks of years, equaling 483 years. From 458 BC this brings one to AD 26, the very time which many would accept for the descent of the Holy Spirit upon Jesus Christ and the commencement of His incarnate ministry. Verses 26 and 27 then describe how, in the midst of the final week (that is, of the last seven year period, and therefore in the spring of AD 30), He would bring to an end the Old Testament economy by His death. There could hardly have been a more miraculously accurate prediction than was this! The 490 years then conclude with the three and a half years that remained, during which period the testament was to be confirmed to Israel (cf. Acts 2:38).

221. From J. F. Dolkart, *James Tissot,* p. 249.
222. P. G. Bolt, *Cross*, p. 101.
223. From J. F. Dolkart, *James Tissot,* p. 217.
224. Matthew 24:16.
225. J. E. Talmage, *Jesus the Christ*, p. 545 n. 1; cf. Eusebius, *History*, 3:5, p. 68. Josephus, on the other hand, reports that false prophets had told Jerusalemites that they would be delivered if they stood firm (F. Josephus, Wars (New), 6:5:2 (285-286), p. 898).
226. C. S. Keener, *Gospel of Matthew*, p. 579.
227. On the other hand, Keener observes (*Gospel of Matthew*, p. 579):

Palestine's central mountain range provided a natural place to flee (e.g., 1 Samuel 23:14; Ezekiel 7:15-16; F. Josephus, Wars (New), 2:18:9 (504), p. 764; cf. Pseudo-Philo, *Biblical Antiquities*, 6:11, 18, pp. 92-93, 94, 27:11, p. 161), as mountainous areas with caves often did (Diod. Sic. 34/35.2.22; Dion. Hal. 7:10:3; Appian C. W. 4:17:130; Arrian Ales. 4:24:2). Although the exhortation is too general to be sure, the language might even allude to the familiar 1 Maccabees 2:28.

228. From J. F. Dolkart, *James Tissot*, p. 226.
229. P. G. Bolt, *Cross*, pp. 101-102.
230. Mark 14:50.
231. P. G. Bolt, *Cross*, pp. 102-103.
232. Daniel 12:2.
233. Daniel 12:1.
234. Mark 13:19 nrsv. Here, as in Matthew, the context implies that this suffering will be experienced by those in Jerusalem. To apply this prophecy to the sufferings of Christ during His Atonement would require the conjecture that the evangelists — or later editors — had misunderstood the overall meaning of the statement of Jesus in this verse, as they apparently misunderstood His earlier statement about "stand[ing] in the holy place."
235. Joseph Smith — Matthew 1:32.
236. From J. F. Dolkart, *James Tissot*, p. 162.
237. C. S. Keener, *Gospel of Matthew*, p. 576.
238. 1 Maccabees 1:37; F. Josephus, The Antiquities (New), 9:7:3 (152), p. 321; cf. 2 Chronicles 23:14; cf. perhaps 1 Chronicles 22:8; 28:3.
239. 1 Maccabees 1:39, 2:12.
240. F. Josephus, Wars (New), 4:3:6-12 (147-201), pp. 812-815, 4:5:4 (343), p. 823, 5:1:3 (17-18), p. 844, cf. 2:17:5 (424), p. 759.
241. F. Josephus, Wars (New), 5:1:3 (17-19), p. 844.
242. Matthew 23:35.
243. jst Genesis 17:7. For more on this topic, see J. M. Bradshaw, *God's Image 1*, Excursus 37, pp. 617-621.
244. According to D&C 77:15, these witnesses "are two prophets that are to be raised up to the Jewish nation in the last days, at the time of the restoration, and to prophesy to the Jews after they are gathered and have built the city of Jerusalem in the land of their fathers."
245. Revelation 11:4. Cf. Zechariah 4:11-14.

246. It is written only that, after they are killed, "their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, Revelation 11:8 where also our Lord was crucified" — i.e., Jerusalem (Revelation 11:8). It is possible that the sanctuary imagery also should be read "spiritually" as encompassing all or some part of Jerusalem.

247. G. K. Beale, *Book of Revelation*, p. 567, emphasis added. With respect to the prior identification of Christ as a true and faithful witness, see Revelation 1:5, 3:14.

248. John 15:20.

249. Revelation 1:7.

250. Cf. John 16:20.

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ANSWERING THE CRITICS IN 44 REBUTTAL POINTS

Brian D. Stubbs

Abstract: *After publishing several articles in peer-reviewed journals, the author published* Uto-Aztecan: A Comparative Vocabulary *(2011), the new standard in comparative Uto-Aztecan, favorably reviewed[1] and heartily welcomed by specialists in the field. Four years later, another large reference work,* Exploring the Explanatory Power of Semitic and Egyptian in Uto-Aztecan *(2015), was also favorably reviewed[2] but not as joyfully welcomed among specialists as its predecessor. While some saw it as sound, more were silent. Some disliked the topic, but no one produced substantive refutations of it. In August 2019, Chris Rogers published a review,[3] but John S. Robertson's response to Rogers's review[4] and my response in the first 24 items rebutted below shed new light on his criticisms. Following on the heels of Rogers's review, Magnus Pharao Hansen, specializing in Nahuatl, blogged objections to 14 Nahuatl items among the 1,528 sets.[5] Rogers's and Hansen's articles gave rise to some critical commentary as well as to a few valid questions. What follows clarifies the misconceptions in Rogers's*

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1. Kenneth C. Hill, review of *Uto-Aztecan: A Comparative Vocabulary*, by Brian Stubbs, *International Journal of American Linguistics* 78, no. 4 (2012): 591–93.

2. Dirk Elzinga, review of *Exploring the Explanatory Power of Semitic and Egyptian in Uto-Aztecan*, by Brian D. Stubbs, *BYU Studies Quarterly* 55, no. 4 (2016): 172–76; and John S. Robertson, "Exploring Semitic and Egyptian in Uto-Aztecan Languages," *Interpreter: A Journal of Mormon Scripture* 25 (2017): 103–16.

3. Chris Rogers, "A Review of the Afro-Asiatic–Uto-Aztecan Proposal," *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 28 (2019): 258–67.

4. John S. Robertson, "An American Indian Language Family with Middle-Eastern Loanwords: Responding to a Recent Critique," *Interpreter: A Journal of Latter-Day Saint and Scholarship* 34 (2019): 1–16.

5. Magnus Pharao Hansen, "An Evaluation of the Nahuatl Data in Brian Stubbs' Work on Afro-Asiatic/Uto-Aztecan," *Nahuatl Studies* (blog), September 12, 2019, http://nahuatlstudies.blogspot.com/2019/09/an-evaluation-of-nahuatl-data-in-brian.html.

review, responds to Hansen's Nahuatl issues, and answers some reasonable questions raised by others.

Editor's Note

Critics of the Book of Mormon often argue that no evidence exists for contact between the ancient Near East and the Americas. Accordingly, proof of such contact would demolish a principal objection to Joseph Smith's prophetic claims. If the thesis of Brian Stubbs's works is correct, he has furnished precisely that proof.

As might be expected, Stubbs's efforts have drawn criticism from some, but not all, of his linguistic peers. This article represents a response by Stubbs to those criticisms. Stubbs's works are admittedly complex and highly technical. They are, therefore, difficult, and it can take quite a bit of work for a reader to assimilate and understand the implications of his arguments. That very complexity and difficulty, though, precludes dismissal of Stubbs's works out of hand.

Has Stubbs proved the Book of Mormon true? No, but his data suggest that speakers of both Egyptian and a Semitic language came into contact with Uto-Aztecan speakers at roughly the same time as Book of Mormon events purportedly occurred and that a distinct Semitic infusion occurred at a different point.

Stubbs's work is important and it deserves careful, reasoned consideration by scholars and lay readers alike.

—Editor

Uto-Aztecan (UA) is a family of some 30 related languages in the U.S. Southwest, western Mexico, and numerous Nahuatl dialects from Mexico to El Salvador (see the appendix for abbreviations). In 2011, I published a book identifying 2,703 cognate sets and substantial treatments of comparative UA phonology.[6] Four years later, in *Exploring the Explanatory Power of Semitic and Egyptian in Uto-Aztecan*, I linguistically established a Northwest Semitic and Egyptian infusion, language mix, or massive borrowing found in UA.[7] While skepticism has always been the initial reaction, the 40 Uto-Aztecan specialists,

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6. Brian D. Stubbs, *Uto-Aztecan: A Comparative Vocabulary* (Flower Mound, TX: Shumway Family History Services and Rocky Mountain Books, 2011).

7. Brian D. Stubbs, *Exploring the Explanatory Power of Semitic and Egyptian in Uto-Aztecan* (Provo, UT: Jerry D. Grover Publications, 2015), hereafter referred to

linguists, and Semitists who received preliminary editions to preview it offered favorable assessments, silence, skepticism, or contempt, but none refuted it with specifics.

Responses to Rogers's 2019 Review

Recently Chris Rogers reviewed both *Exploring the Explanatory Power* and *Changes in Languages from Nephi to Now*.[8] The latter is intended for Latter-day Saint lay readers and addresses the relevance of the research to the Book of Mormon.

1. Assumption of a long-distance relationship between Afro-Asiatic and Uto-Aztecan

Rogers's first incorrect assumption is evident in his review's title and in several pages throughout — he claims that I propose a long-distance relationship between Afro-Asiatic and Uto-Aztecan (UA). Such a relationship would involve a time-depth of more than 10,000 years. Rather, UA contains several hundreds of coherent sound correspondences from a hybrid Northwest Semitic language, with early forms specific to both Hebrew and Aramaic, along with Late Egyptian of the same era (not Middle Egyptian, Old Egyptian, or Proto-Afro-Asiatic). The data point to a shorter time-depth of perhaps 2,500–3,000 years. The mixing/borrowing/infusion aspect of the Near-East elements in UA is mentioned at least 21 times in the two books Rogers reviewed.[9]

I cannot understand what Rogers read or saw to make him assume the books deal with common genetic descent from something pre-Afro-Asiatic. In *Exploring the Explanatory Power* there are 4,502 mentions of Hebrew and Aramaic and 2,136 of Late Egyptian but only sporadic reference to Akkadian, Ethiopic, and Afro-Asiatic (only four) for discussions of phonological matters. My findings have always centered on two Semitic languages (out of many) and contemporaneous Egyptian, but I have never made comparisons with any other branches of Afro-Asiatic or with ancient Afro-Asiatic. Even Hansen recognizes

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as *Exploring the Explanatory Power*. The lexical data (vocabulary) in this article are from *Exploring the Explanatory Power* unless otherwise specified.

   8. Rogers, "Review of the Afro-Asiatic–Uto-Aztecan Proposal."

   9. Stubbs, *Exploring the Explanatory Power*, 26, 35, 80, 158, 237, 320, 354, 356, 360–62; and Brian D. Stubbs, *Changes in Languages from Nephi to Now* (Blanding, UT: Four Corners Digital Design, 2016), 64, 86, 89, 96, 104, 112, 114, 154, 161, 170. *Changes in Languages from Nephi to Now* is hereafter referred to as *Changes in Languages*.

the fallacy of Rogers's claim: "I wish Rogers had realized that Stubbs' claim was in fact a proposal of language contact."[10]

2. Misrepresentations

Rogers frequently misrepresents my work. An example is his claim that the Nahuan or Aztecan languages "are systematically ignored in the comparisons."[11] I'm not sure how systematic the ignorance could be when a search of *Exploring the Explanatory Power* reveals over 800 references to the Nahuan or Aztecan languages. He may well have missed such details as CN being an abbreviation for Classical Nahuatl, for which there are over 400 occurrences of that alone.

3. Misquotations

Rogers, by misquoting others, says the opposite of what the authors originally stated. For example, John Robertson, in reviewing *Exploring the Explanatory Power*, stated, "I cannot find an easy way to challenge the breadth and depth of the data."[12] Yet Rogers misrepresented that quote to say, "There is ample reason to 'challenge the breadth and depth of the data,'" as if Robertson had actually said that. In the next clause, he similarly misquoted Dirk Elzinga.[13] He also turned my quote into something I did not say. My text said, "Yet gullible may better describe those accepting the **fictions about** the book [the Book of Mormon] than those digging in to find the facts."[14] He enclosed this statement in quote marks but changed the boldfaced words: "Yet gullible may better describe those accepting the **[assumptions] in** the book than those digging in to find the facts."[15]

4. Validity of assumptions

It is ironic that Rogers accuses me of "numerous assumptions"[16] in the face of his own several mistaken assumptions, such as asserting that the "only motivation for comparing Semitic languages and Egyptian to the Uto-Aztecan languages seems to be Stubbs' personal investment in Uto-Aztecan languages and linguistics."[17] Nothing could be further from

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10. Hansen, "An Evaluation."
11. Rogers, "Review of the Afro-Asiatic–Uto-Aztecan Proposal," 266.
12. Robertson, "Exploring Semitic and Egyptian in Uto-Aztecan Languages," 114.
13. Rogers, "Review of the Afro-Asiatic–Uto-Aztecan Proposal," 259.
14. Stubbs, *Changes in Languages*, 1.
15. Rogers, "Review of the Afro-Asiatic–Uto-Aztecan Proposal," 261.
16. Ibid., 260.
17. Ibid., 262.

the truth. Navajo and its Athapaskan affiliation were my first exposure to foreign languages, but my own three-day investigation into Athapaskan and various East Asian languages convinced me that Athapaskan came from East Asia. Other linguists later provided evidence for this claim, which received considerable, but not universal, acceptance.[18] After examining Athapaskan, I looked into Yuman, Pomoan, Wintuan, Maiduan, Shastan, Yana, Kiowa-Tanoan, Keresan, Zuni, Salishan, Karuk, Algic, Siouan, Caddoan, Iroquoian, Muskogean, and Uto-Aztecan in North America; and Mayan, Totonacan, Mixe-Zoquean, Otomanguean, and a few isolates in Central America; and Chibchan, Cariban, Tupian, Paez, Arawakan, Aymaran, Witotoan, Quechuan, Matacoan, Pano-Tacanan, Guahiboan, Barbacoan, Macro-Je, Jivaroan, Movima, Zaparoan, and others in South America. An MA in linguistics and studies in Semitic (PhD/ABD in Semitic, Hebrew, Arabic, Aramaic) enabled me to see a substantial infusion of Northwest Semitic and Late Egyptian in UA. So Rogers's assumption has the reality backwards: it was years of investigating dozens of language families throughout the Americas that motivated my 40-year investment in UA.

5. Linguistic comparisons

Rogers insists that "linguistic comparisons require like systems" and that "the similarities identified must come from like systems, such as families, languages, or dialects."[19] Apparently Rogers and Hansen both think that comparisons of only proto-language to proto-language or language to language are permissible. However, discoveries often call for a language or two to be compared with a language family, as when Tocharian A and B were discovered and then proven to belong to the Indo-European (IE) language family,[20] or when Hittite was discovered

18. Edward J. Vajda, "A Siberian Link with Na-Dene Languages," in *The Dene-Yeniseian Connection*, ed. James Kari and Ben A. Potter (Fairbanks: University of Alaska Fairbanks, Dept of Anthropology, 2010), 33–99; Keren Rice, review of *The Dene-Yeniseian Connection*, ed. James Kari and Ben A. Potter, Diachronica 28, no. 2 (2011): 255–71; Lyle Campbell, review of *The Dene-Yeniseian Connection*, ed. James Kari and Ben A. Potter, *International Journal of American Linguistics* 77, no. 3 (2011): 445–51; Paul Kiparsky, "New Perspectives in Historical Linguistics," in *The Routledge Handbook of Historical Linguistics*, ed. C. Bowern and B. Evans (London: Routledge, 2015): 64–102.

19. Rogers, "Review of the Afro-Asiatic–Uto-Aztecan Proposal," 262.

20. Emil Sieg and Wilhelm Siegling, "Tocharisch, die Sprache der Indoskythen, Vorläufige Bemerkungen über eine bisher unbekannte indogermanische

and was shown to belong to IE,[21] or when Catawba was attached to Siouan,[22] or when Cochimi was united to the Yuman language family by my former professor Mauricio Mixco.[23]

Let us pause a moment to consider the methodology of comparison in Semitic languages. First of all, both Semitic and UA are largely reconstructed,[24] though details of each are still being debated. The discovery of new IE languages changed IE reconstructions over the decades, and that new information had to be accounted for. Similarly, Semitic and UA each provide new and valuable information for the other. For example, Semitic clarifies many UA issues, and UA preserves evidence relevant to one Semitic question: whether the so-called Semitic velar fricative x was velar or uvular. The UA evidence suggests uvular.[25]

Second, much remains unknown regarding ancient Semitic languages. For example, ancient written Hebrew contains only a fraction of what was in the spoken language. It is therefore important to understand why Semitists find it necessary to include related forms from other Semitic languages for comparison — as I did also on occasion. As an example, Rogers (262–63) includes set 13 as a flawed set. Here is how I show set 13 in *Exploring the Explanatory Power*:

> Arabic **snw**; Ethiopic **snw**; Hebrew šaani; Akkadian sinitu; and Hopi **soniwa** 'beautiful, bright' share the meanings 'bright/shine' and 'beautiful'

As an example, Rogers (262–63) includes set 13 as a flawed set and in table 2 (263) shows the set this way:

Literatursprache," *Sitzungsberichte der Königlichen Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaft* (Berlin, 1908), 915–32.

21. Bedřich Hrozný, *Die Sprache der Hethiter: Ihr Bau und ihre Zugehörigkeit zum indogermanischen Sprachstamm* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1917).

22. Alexander Francis Chamberlain, *The Catawba Language* (Toronto: Imrie and Graham, 1888). Frank Siebert, "Linguistic Classification of Catawba," *International Journal of American Linguistics* 11 (1945): 100–104, 211–18.

23. Mauricio J. Mixco, *Cochimi and Proto-Yuman: Lexical and Syntactic Evidence for a New Language Family in Lower California* (University of Utah Anthropological Papers, No. 101, 1978).

24. From the various actual attested forms in the descendant languages, linguists reconstruct a form as the probable or most likely, but unattested, original form from which those various forms descended.

25. Stubbs, *Exploring the Explanatory Power*, 313–16; Stubbs, *Changes in Languages*, 33–37.

Arabic	Ethiopic	Hebrew	Akkadian > Hopi
snw	snw	ṣ̃āni	sinitu > soniwa

This makes it appear as if Hopi *soniwa* descends from all of them. For a larger semantic picture, I include several Semitic forms: Arabic snw 'shine'; Ethiopic sny 'be beautiful'; Hebrew šaani 'scarlet, crimson' (as something bright and beautiful), so that one can see that Hopi soniwa shares the same two basic meanings (beautiful, bright) as Semitic.

In *Exploring the Explanatory Power* the key forms to consider are in bold. The original Semitic root consonants are snw (clearly apparent in Arabic), which are also the three consonants in the Hopi form, regardless of how the others lost the third consonant.

Third, Semitic forms are typically built on three consonantal roots, although two or four or five are also possible. Therefore, Semitists do not see vowel variations as invalidating forms that share the same consonantal skeleton. For example, the root ḥrm 'to be sacred, forbidden' is foundation to many vowelings of words for 'woman, wives' — Arabic *ḥuram, ḥurm, ḥurma, ḥaram, ḥarama, ḥariim, ḥirma;* plurals: *ḥaraamaa, ḥuraamaa, ḥiraamaa*, and *ma-* prefixes: *maḥrama, maḥruma* — but despite the several vowelings of (ma)ḥVr(V)mV, all mean 'woman, female(s)'. For this reason, consonantal roots, not vowel variation, anchor cognate relationships in comparative historical work in Semitic, especially since only fractions of the ancient languages are attested. To suppose, for example, that the UA (Guarijio) forms, *oerume/oorume* 'woman' do not reflect Semitic ḥrm 'woman' for lack of an attested voweling would be a mistake, especially as pharyngeal ḥ always shows rounding (w/o/u) in UA. Leonid Kogan, a prominent Semitist, justifiably notes a "wide variety of unpredictable deviations in the vocalic domain in glaring contrast to the full regularity of the consonantal skeleton."[26] Thus I follow the Semitists' tradition in referring to a fuller array of Semitic forms and semantic ranges for a better sense of the larger Semitic picture.

6. Long-distance relationships

According to Rogers, "long-distance relationships are less likely to include a large number of similarities. The sheer number of similarities in Stubbs' proposal is not likely for the type of linguistic scenario presented."[27] For non-linguists, I might clarify that a long-distance linguistic relationship

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26. Leonid Kogan, "Proto-Semitic Phonetics and Phonology," in *The Semitic Languages: An International Handbook*, ed. Stefan Weninger et al. (Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton, 2011), 119–23.

27. Rogers, "Review of the Afro-Asiatic–Uto-Aztecan Proposal," 263.

means a deep time-depth, usually connecting language families. Comparing UA with a Hebrew-Aramaic infusion in America represents a long distance geographically, but not a long-distance linguistic relationship.

Rogers again assumes that I am lumping Afro-Asiatic and UA in a long-distance relationship. Indeed, a time-depth of 10,000 years *would* yield few similarities. However, the bulk of *Exploring the Explanatory Power* identifies a large number of vocabulary words, fitting a system of sound correspondences, that accords with languages of Northwest Semitic of a time period of around 2,500–3,000 years ago. The examples include Aramaic-Hebrew (700 sets) mixed with a substantial number of Late Egyptian (400 sets) — not Middle Egyptian, Old Egyptian, or Afro-Asiatic — exhibiting the Late Egyptian definite article prefixes, which had not yet developed in Middle Egyptian.[28]

7. Lexical similarities

Rogers says "lexical similarities are often used as evidence for genetic relationships between languages,"[29] then he adds, "but these are far from convincing; see Campbell and Poser, *Language Classification*, 165–72."[30] Lexical similarities are an important part of every demonstration of language relatedness, though morphology and other factors are also important. On the pages Rogers cites, Lyle Campbell and William Poser refer to lexical similarities (1) of limited number (as any two languages can have accidental sound-alikes), (2) without additional supporting evidence like sound correspondences, and (3) as referring to long-range comparative linguistics,[31] citing the discredited Greenberg 1987, who uses similarities void of sound correspondences to organize language families. The problem with Rogers's citation of Campbell and Poser is that none of these characteristics apply to my work. My lexical similarities (1) are based on a system of sound correspondences, (2) are numerous, and (3) do not involve a temporally long-distance (deep time-depth) relationship. They do, however, show one language family

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28. Stubbs, *Exploring the Explanatory Power*, 137–38.

29. Rogers, "Review of the Afro-Asiatic–Uto-Aztecan Proposal," 263.

30. Ibid., 263n17.

31. The primary example cited by Lyle Campbell and William John Poser, *Language Classification: History and Method* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), is Greenberg, who lumps language families on lexical similarities without sound correspondences. See Joseph H. Greenberg, *Language in the Americas* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1987).

with considerable language contribution from specific languages at a fairly shallow time-depth.

8. Focus on certain UA languages

Rogers objects to my straying from the usual focus on Proto-Uto-Aztecan to an intermittent focus on certain UA languages, which he claims results in "cherry-picking the data to fit the proposal."[32] This is not cherry-picking, however, and this is why: what happens in comparative linguistics in every language family is that some ancient words provide related cognates in many of the descendant languages, while other ancient words survive in only a few languages or one. I list all cognate/descendant forms available for each established UA cognate set in *Exploring the Explanatory Power* (as in *Uto-Aztecan: A Comparative Vocabulary*); sometimes there are many cognates in various languages and other times few. For example,

> Hopi soniwa 'beautiful, bright' < Semitic snw 'gleam, be beautiful', and
> Hopi hoonaqa 'drunkard' < Egyptian ḥnqt 'beer'; n'-ḥnqt 'the-drinkers' (no vowels are provided in Egyptian, but note that the round vowel in Hopi for the initial pharyngeal in Egyptian is exactly as predicted for UA).

The above two parallels exist only in Hopi, but such impressive matches of expected sounds and meanings deserve to be listed. Only 11 of the 2,700 UA cognate sets yield forms in all 30 UA languages, yet all 11 of those 11 (100%) belong to the Near-East contribution. That suggests that the Near-East component was part of Proto-UA. Some might contend that such could not be the case, given UA's supposed glottochronological time-depth of 4,000 to 5,000 years,[33] but as Campbell and Poser say, "It [glottochronology] has been rejected by most linguists, since all its basic assumptions have been challenged."[34] It is doubtful that it is possible to establish any time-depth for any reconstructed language. James Clackson, after delineating several problems in estimating time-depths, concludes the matter thusly: "In summary the Indo-Europeanist's data and method

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32. Rogers, "Review of the Afro-Asiatic–Uto-Aztecan Proposal," 262.
33. The lexicostatistical time-depth of UA is estimated at about 5,000 years ago by Wick R. Miller, "The Classification of the Uto-Aztecan Languages Based on Lexical Evidence," *International Journal of American Linguistics* 50, no. 1 (1984):1–24; and at 4,018 years ago by Eric W. Holman et al., "Automated Dating of the World's Language Families Based on Lexical Similarity," *Current Anthropology* 52, no. 6 (2011): 841–75.
34. Campbell and Poser, *Language Classification*, 167.

do not allow the question 'When was Proto-Indo-European spoken?' to be answered in any really meaningful or helpful way."[35]

9. Definitions and characterizations of linguistic concepts

Rogers claims to see "mistaken definitions or incorrect characterizations of linguistic concepts" in my work.[36] That is odd because the best Uto-Aztecanists in the world, most holding PhDs in linguistics, have all received my work by now. These men and women have known me for decades, and none of them has spoken to me of incorrect characterizations of linguistic concepts. Throughout my 40 years of presenting at professional linguistic conferences and publishing in several journals, this is the first time I have been accused of mischaracterizing linguistic concepts.[37] When MIT decided to publish a volume on UA, the other Uto-Aztecanists voted me to write the first article to introduce the language family with a comparative overview.[38] When the *Society for the Study of Indigenous Languages of the Americas* decided to do a special session on UA to celebrate the centennial since Sapir's establishment of

35. James Clackson, "Time Depth in Indo-European," in *Time Depth in Historical Linguistics*, ed. Colin Renfrew, April McMahon, and Larry Trask (Cambridge: McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research, 2000), 451.

36. Rogers, "Review of the Afro-Asiatic–Uto-Aztecan Proposal," 260.

37. Two different editors of the *International Journal of American Linguistics* (the most prestigious journal for publishing comparative Native American work, in which I have published four articles) both said (20 years apart) that I do good work. The late Jane Hill, Regents' Professor Emerita of Anthropology at the University of Arizona, at an annual UA conference said, "Brian is the only one of us who does a comparative paper every year" (because a grammatical aspect of one language is easier than dealing with 30). I was invited to give a lecture at UCLA on comparative Uto-Aztecan, and Calvert Watkins, Harvard's internationally renowned Indo-European scholar, happened to attend. Afterwards he told Dr. Munro (a prominent UCLA linguist, accomplished in Uto-Aztecan, Yuman, Muskogean, and Zapotecan) that "we need more lectures like that one" (Brian Stubbs, "Comparative Uto-Aztecan" [lecture, University of California, Los Angeles, 2008]).

38. Brian Stubbs, "New Sets Yield New Perspectives for Uto-Aztecan Reconstructions," in *Studies in Uto-Aztecan*, ed. Luis M. Barragan and Jason D. Haugen (MIT Working Papers on Endangered and Less Familiar Languages, no. 5, 2003), 1–20.

UA in 1915,[39] the other Uto-Aztecan specialists selected me to present the lead paper to begin the session.[40]

10. Disorganization

Rogers calls my work "replete with disorganization."[41] Organization, many times, is in the eye of the beholder. The organization of *Exploring the Explanatory Power* begins with an introduction, then systematically addresses the sound correspondences. It next shows how Semitic or Egyptian provides the underlying forms that explain seven of nine phonological puzzles that Uto-Aztecanists have not been able to solve since Sapir's establishment of the language family in 1913/1915. Finally, it addresses the vowel correspondences, the medial consonant clusters, the grammatical and morphological parallels, and ends with unusual semantic combinations preserved in UA. Rogers may prefer a different organization, but I see nothing radically awry in the organization I chose.

11. Differences between *Exploring the Explanatory Power* and *Changes in Languages*

Rogers says that my two books under review are not substantially different.[42] Most who examine the two would disagree. The larger work (*Exploring the Explanatory Power*), with twenty times greater detail than the smaller, is for linguists, Semitists, and other scholars and establishes the linguistic tie. The smaller work (*Changes in Languages*) is greatly simplified for lay readers, is one-fifth the size, and addresses the data's potential relevance to the Book of Mormon.

12. Tone

Rogers's condescending attitude and derogatory language are apparent throughout. For example, he writes, "it is so replete with disorganization, numerous assumptions, mistaken definitions or

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39. Edward Sapir, "Southern Paiute and Nahuatl: A Study in Uto-Aztecan," in *The Collected Works of Edward Sapir*, ed. William Bright (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1990), 5: 351–444.

40. Brian Stubbs, "The Proto-Uto-Aztecan Lexicon: Distribution of Cognate Sets and Language Family Prehistory" (Paper, Annual Meeting of the Society for the Study of Indigenous Languages of the Americas, Portland, Oregon, January 6–11, 2015). I don't mention these honors to "toot my own horn," so to speak. It does strike me, however, as an unusual list of honors for one supposedly guilty of mischaracterizing linguistic concepts.

41. Rogers, "Review of the Afro-Asiatic–Uto-Aztecan Proposal," 260.

42. Ibid.

incorrect characterizations of linguistic concepts, inexact methods, pedantry, and apologetic rhetoric that the idea [of the language tie] seems dubious, even without careful scrutiny."[43] This dismissive attitude is ironic given that what he missed confirms that his approach was "without careful scrutiny." In contrast, the best UA specialists in the world and Semitic scholars said no such thing but responded either with favorable comments (25%) or no comment (75%).

13. Value of appendices

Rogers even hints at disdain for the appendices: "Other information of varying usefulness to the proposal itself, but which seems personally significant to Stubbs, is presented in the remainder of both books through a number of appendices."[44] In *Exploring the Explanatory Power* the appendices include useful detailed listings of: (A) sound correspondences, (B) an English index to the sets, (C) a Semitic index to the sets, and (D) an Egyptian index to the sets. It should be obvious that the appendices are helpful in locating forms in the massive 435-page, 365,000-word work. Likewise, each appendix to *Changes in Languages* is also relevant to a particular chapter, to a group of chapters, or to the whole book.

14. Evidence for a genetic relationship

Rogers asserts, "A proposal for a genetic relationship … must be supported by two types of evidence."[45] The first type of evidence Rogers proposes is that the languages must be genetically related. That is exactly what *Exploring the Explanatory Power* does: it establishes that a significant amount of early UA derives from the Near East loanwords, with sound correspondences, morphological parallels, unusual semantic combinations, and other parallel patterns. The Near East vocabulary does not genetically descend from anything at a bi-family level but matches a sizable Near-East infusion of loanwords. Rogers continues with his second essential type of evidence: "evidence for the reconstruction of the common linguistic ancestor."[46] Again, Rogers insists on the reconstruction of a non-existent ancestor of Proto-Afro-Asiatic and UA, something I do not propose. Rather, I propose that the reconstructed Proto-Uto-Aztecan (PUA) form often matches the Near-East loanword

43. Ibid.
44. Ibid.
45. Ibid., 261.
46. Ibid.

(all forms are from *Exploring the Explanatory Power* and the dictionaries listed therein). For example:

> Loanword: Aramaic kookb-aa(') 'star-the'

> Rules: b > p, d > t, g > k; and consonant clusters lose first consonant

> Derived form: UA *kuppaa' > Serrano kupaa' 'shine (as of the stars)'

> To add underlying grammar: a fossilized 'the'-suffix typical of Aramaic citation forms

Thus, the Aramaic loanwords, subject to the rules in *Exploring the Explanatory Power*, typically provide a parallel to the original or reconstructed PUA forms:

> (1274) Aramaic kookb-aa(') 'star-the' > UA *kuppaa': Sr kupaa' 'to shine (as of the stars)'
> (a denominalized verb, all vowels as expected; Sr v < *-p-, so Sr p < *-pp- or cluster; the Aramaic 'the'-suffix actually has a written glottal stop, though whether pronounced or not is debated, so the Sr glottal stop is interesting)

> (889) Aramaic rikb-aa 'upper millstone-the' > UA *tïppa 'mortar, pestle'
> (initial r- > UA t- is well demonstrated in 2015, 100–101, 173–74, 221)
> (note that both of the above show the same cluster -kb- > *-pp- in UA)

> (618) Aramaic di'b-aa 'wolf-the' > UA *tï'pa/*to'apa 'wolf
> (UA 'wolf' is not from Hebrew haz-zə'eb 'the-wolf' but from Aramaic)

> (617) Aramaic diqn-aa 'beard-the, chin-the' > UA *tï'na/*tï'ni 'mouth'
> (consonants and vowels align with Aramaic, not from Hebrew zaaqaan 'beard, chin'; also note in the three items above (889, 618, 617), the vowel assimilation *-i-a > UA -ï-a is natural and common)

> (616) Aramaic dakar 'male' > UA *taka 'man, male, person, self, body' (aligns with initial d of Aramaic; the last three

items (616–618) and several others all suggest Aramaic d> UA t, not from Hebrew z)

(1130) Aramaic pagr-aa 'corpse-the' > Hp pïïkya 'skin, fur'

(not from Hebrew hap-pεgεr 'the-corpse')

(1403) Aramaic šigr-aa 'drain, ditch, gutter-the' > Hp sikya 'ravine, canyon of sloped sides'

(743) Aramaic tuumr-aa(') 'palm-the/date-palm-the' > UA *tu'ya 'type of palm tree':

(aligns with Aramaic, but not Hebrew taamaar) (note in the three items above (1130, 1403, 743) that -r- as 2nd consonant in a cluster > -y-: *-Craa > -Cyaa)

(967) Aramaic qušṭ-aa(') 'bow-the' > UA *kuCta-pi 'bow' (usual loss of s in a cluster, again from Aramaic, not from Hebrew qešet/qašt- 'bow')

(1409) Aramaic kuuky-aa(') 'spiderweb' > UA kukyaC: Hopi kookyaŋw 'spider'; Cp kúka-t 'blackwidow spider' (note nine of the ten nouns above show Aramaic suffix: -aa 'the')

(559) Hebrew bky/baakaa 'cry, weep' (perf stem); Aramaic bakaa/baka' > Hopi pak- 'cry'; Tb pahaa'at/'apahaa' 'cry, bawl, howl' (Tb h < *k); Ktn paka' 'ceremonial yeller, clown who shouts all day to announce a fiesta'. (Northern UA (Tb, Ktn, Sr, Hp) sometimes shows the glottal stop of written Aramaic -aa', which suffix Hebrew does not have. The Aramaic article suffix -aa(') 'the' has a written glottal stop, but debates continue whether it was pronounced or simply signifies the long vowel of the suffix. Northern UA languages often show that glottal stop, whereas Southern UA languages do not.)

The number of matches with specific Aramaic forms means that the infusion in UA occurred after Aramaic and Hebrew were clearly defined as separate Northwest Semitic languages. Yet Hebrew did not exist as a language until after Jacob's reentrance or Moses's entrance into Canaan, when the Israelites begin adopting the Canaanite language. (Hebrew is the Israelites' dialect of Canaanite.) Furthermore, several UA terms specific to Israeli culture (e.g., *ephod*, *Yahwe*, etc.) suggest that the infusion included Israelite Hebrew or Aramaic.

Regarding the many Aramaic forms that appear in UA, note that Abraham, Jacob, and Laban the Aramean (Genesis 25:20) and his daughters Leah and Rachel (the mothers of future Israel) came from Aramaic-speaking areas. In addition, Northern Israel bordered Aramaic regions, and Semitists like Ian Young[47] and Gary Rendsburg[48] believe that many Northern Israelites may have been bilingual, never losing their Aramaic, even if they did add Hebrew/Canaanite to their repertoire. Even if they lost Aramaic at some point, reacquiring the international lingua franca in their proximity to neighboring Arameans is probable for a percentage of the population. Yet UA's preservation of some archaic phonology and old Hebrew and Aramaic forms points to at least the pre-exilic period. All factors taken together suggest an infusion of language forms like the Hebrew or Aramaic of 1,200–600 BCE, which also approximates the Late Egyptian period. Thus, nothing as far back as Proto-Afro-Asiatic is suggested or possible, which should be apparent from a close reading of either book.[49]

15. Similarities as evidence of related languages

Rogers says, "One of the main methodological issues of Stubbs's proposal is the omission of an explanation for why the UA and Afro-Asiatic languages are being compared in the first place."[50] Again, I am not lumping UA and Afro-Asiatic as related language families but instead am dealing with an infusion or substantial borrowing from Northwest Semitic (Hebrew/Aramaic) and Late Egyptian into UA.

In the next paragraph Rogers repeats his concern, "Stubbs' proposal sidesteps this issue and suggests that the putative similarities are the evidence that these are related languages, but then fails to explain why specific languages are named and used in the comparison."[51] It should go without saying that the languages themselves are the best source for determining whether languages are related or not. Sir William Jones

47. Ian Young, *Diversity in Pre-Exilic Hebrew* (Tübingen, DEU: J. C. B. Mohr, 1993), 54–62, 85–86.

48. Gary A. Rendsburg, "Ancient Hebrew Phonology," in *Phonologies of Asia and Africa*, ed. Alan S. Kaye (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1997); Gary A. Rendsburg, "A Comprehensive Guide to Israelian Hebrew: Grammar and Lexicon," *Orient* 38 (2003): 5–35; and Gary A. Rendsburg, "Aramaic-like Features in the Pentateuch," *Hebrew Studies* 47 (2006): 163–76.

49. Stubbs, *Exploring the Explanatory Power*, 11–12, 34–35, 66, 320–22, 343–44, 357–59; Stubbs, *Changes in Languages*, 64, 71–73, 125–27.

50. Rogers, "Review of the Afro-Asiatic–Uto-Aztecan Proposal," 261.

51. Ibid., 262.

noticed the similarities among key Indo-European languages (Sanskrit, Greek, Latin, Germanic, Celtic) simply because he was familiar with the languages,[52] not because something else (or someone else) told him that "those are the languages you need to look at."

16. Influence of Semitic speakers in the Americas

Rogers contends that the idea of Semitic speakers coming to the Americas "does not limit their contact to the UA languages, perhaps they intermingled with speakers of the Chibchan languages in South America (among other possibilities)."[53] This is an interesting objection, as I never suggested that the UA case means that the Semitic speakers did not also intermingle with other language families. In fact, in *Changes in Languages* I say the opposite several times, that they probably *did* mix with many language families, and appendices D, E, and F (of varying usefulness) are included for the very purpose of showing how easily an ethnic infusion can mix far and wide.

17. Valid and reliable similarities

Rogers continues, "each similarity must be rigorously proven to be both valid and reliable. Many, if not most, similarities in the proposal are not accompanied by the necessary explanations to make them either valid or reliable."[54] The truth is, explanations *are* provided. See under point 14 above. In fact, it was my explanations in *Uto-Aztecan: A Comparative Vocabulary* that pleased the UA specialists. As Ken Hill said, "Each set is discussed in some detail and the serious comparativist will delight in the discussions."[55] Another UA specialist reported "enjoying reading the analyses for pleasurable evening reading."[56]

After explaining that Semitic b > UA *p, how much explanation is needed to show that

> Hebrew boo' 'way to' parallels UA *pooC 'road' (C means unknown consonant)

> Semitic baraq 'lightning' parallels UA berok/*pïrok 'lightning' (vowel changes are explained in the book)

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52. Campbell and Poser, *Language Classification*, 5–6.

53. Rogers, "Review of the Afro-Asiatic–Uto-Aztecan Proposal," 262.

54. Ibid., 263. Can similarities be valid but unreliable or reliable and not valid? Rogers never explains, but the fact is that if a similarity is either, it's both.

55. Hill, review of *Uto-Aztecan: A Comparative Vocabulary*.

56. Karen Dakin, a Nahuatl and Uto-Aztecan specialist and professor of linguistics at Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Mexico.

Semitic baka' 'cry, he cried' parallels UA *paka' 'cry'

Hebrew batt 'daughter' parallels UA *pattï 'daughter'

Aramaic bəquuraa 'herd of cattle/livestock' parallels UA *pukuC 'domestic animal' (vowel changes are explained in the book)?

This continues for more than 1,000 parallels. Regarding the last item, Semitic baqar/baaqaar is the usual voweling in Hebrew and in most Aramaic dialects. However, this one vowel-pattern (Aramaic bqwrh/bəquuraa) is found in Galilean Aramaic, Christian Palestinian Aramaic, Jewish Palestinian Aramaic, Palestinian Talmud Aramaic, but not in Jewish Babylonian Aramaic or the Aramaic dialects of Iraq, Iran, Egypt, and Turkey.[57] Notice that the dialects in which this item appears are geographically located in the same area as ancient Northern Israel.

18. Data rearrangement

Rogers arranges my data to suggest things I never said. In addition to set 13 addressed above, he also misrepresents how I presented the plural suffix. He portrays it as Semitic *-iima > Hebrew -iim > UA *-ima, and then says that an explanation is needed for why the final -a disappeared in Hebrew but was reinserted in UA.[58] Both books he reviewed explain that the Hebrew Bible was voweled by the Masoretes ca. 700 CE, nearly a millennium and a half after contact.[59] So UA did not reinsert -a, but the two independent changes, Northwest Semitic *-iima > UA *-ima and independently *-iima > Hebrew -iim, both derive from the older Northwest Semitic *-iima, not one from the other. In fact, items like this point only to Canaanite/Hebrew *-iima, because Arabic –uuna/-iina, Akkadian -uu/-ii, Aramaic -iin, etc., exclude other Semitic languages, removing it far from Proto-Afro-Asiatic.[60] The esteemed Uto-Aztecanist Wick Miller agreed with my reconstruction of PUA *-ima. Most scholars before me had reconstructed UA *-mï, but they all neglected to consider that five UA languages have a high-front vowel (i or e) preceding -m, as well as other pertinent matters. Though Miller refused to consider my proposed Near East tie, he could not refute it, and he agreed with various

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57. *Comprehensive Aramaic Lexicon Project* (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College; Jewish Institute of Religion), http://cal.huc.edu.

58. Rogers, "Review of the Afro-Asiatic–Uto-Aztecan Proposal," 264.

59. Stubbs, *Exploring the Explanatory Power,* 32; Stubbs, *Changes in Languages,* 69.

60. Stubbs, *Exploring the Explanatory Power*, 66.

points that I brought to his attention, as long as I did not mention the Semitic source of my insights.[61]

19. Three kinds of Semitic s

In table 4, set 3, Rogers calls for explanations of why š > s.[62] Perhaps Rogers missed my explanations elsewhere that all three kinds of Semitic s (š, ś, s) merged to PUA *s. When a speech sound of the lending language does not exist in the borrowing language, the nearest speech sound of the borrowing language replaces the unknown speech sound. The merger of those three is also apparent in appendix A that lists the sound correspondences. The most interesting aspect of this set is that Masoretic Hebrew *yaašab* has been determined to be from an earlier pre-Masoretic Hebrew **yašiba*, another older voweling found in UA. In addition, *yašiba* 'he sat, dwelt' is third-person singular perfect, while *yašibuu* 'they sat, dwelt' is plural. In the Piman branch of UA we also see the plural voweling and the plural meaning **yasipu* 'they sit/dwell', which is another instance of a grammatical fact preserved in UA.

In his criticism that usually p > b between vowels,[63] Rogers must have missed that the Proto-Uto-Aztecan phoneme *p does indeed change to -b- or -v- between vowels in many UA languages, but remains p- in most positions. Therefore, Uto-Aztecanists must rightly reconstruct *p, which then behaves variously in different environments. Rogers also says that changes in vowel length need explanation (shortening of ii > i) (264). That would be nice, but vowel length has not yet been figured out for PUA, as various layers of changes in stress patterns in the different branches and languages caused the lengthening of stressed vowels and the shortening or loss of unstressed vowels. The sorting through those multiple and changing layers has not been accomplished, so only vowel quality is reconstructed for UA, a fact explained twice in *Exploring the Explanatory Power.*[64]

20. Previous scholarship on Uto-Aztecan

Rogers asserts, "while the Uto-Aztecan language family is one of the most studied language families in the Americas, as is the Mesoamerican cultural area, the fact that very little is done to connect the proposal back to this

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61. Miller was kind to me, valued my abilities, and was pleased with and encouraged my comparative work in UA.

62. Rogers, "Review of the Afro-Asiatic–Uto-Aztecan Proposal," 264.

63. Ibid.

64. Stubbs, *Exploring the Explanatory Power,* 12, 37.

previous scholarship is thus odd."[65] It is difficult to understand how Rogers arrived at this misstatement. The latest and largest book on comparative UA (*Uto-Aztecan: A Comparative Vocabulary*) includes and builds on the viable previous linguistic scholarship. If he has in mind cultural, archaeological, and other such factors, the other major linguistic works on UA did not include those either. Or if he thinks UA is a Mesoamerican language family, he needs to realize that Nahuatl (in Mesoamerica) is one of 30 UA languages and the other 29 are not situated in Mesoamerica. Wick Miller wrote *Uto-Aztecan Cognate Sets* with 514 sets.[66] Miller later collected others, and Kenneth Hill added another 400 sets to total some 1,200 sets on a UA computer file.[67] The next publication was *Uto-Aztecan: A Comparative Vocabulary*, which features 2,700 cognate sets.[68] I cite the literature of the "previous scholarship" but present much more data, thus enabling me to further verify some previous views and improve others. *Exploring the Explanatory Power* does not include all of the comparative detail of *Uto-Aztecan: A Comparative Vocabulary*, except when helpful.

21. Math and statistics

His math and statistics on page 265 are creatively wrong. The forms in each UA cognate set are descended from one ancient form, as accepted by Uto-Aztecanists; thus, they are a unity, from one word. So multiplying each set by 30 is a false step. Even if a set's match were wrong, it does not matter whether the UA cognates in that set number 30, 15, or 2 — the one set might be subtracted from 1528 (i.e., 1528–1=1527), but not 30 subtracted for each set. Even if the whole book were wrong, the total number of valid sets would be 0, not -2,598. Furthermore, when the vocabulary is consistent within an established system of sound correspondences, none within that framework is counted as an accidental match. His math pretends to apply as if a system of sound correspondences were lacking, but that is not the case.

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65. Rogers, "Review of the Afro-Asiatic–Uto-Aztecan Proposal," 266.

66. Wick R. Miller, *Uto-Aztecan Cognate Sets*, UCPL 48 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967).

67. Kenneth Hill, *Wick Miller's Uto-Aztecan Cognate Sets*: *revised and expanded by Kenneth C. Hill* (2006), unpublished manuscript.

68. Hill wrote a positive review (review of *Uto-Aztecan: A Comparative Vocabulary*) and Uto-Aztecanists have spoken highly of the work since its first preliminary edition in 2006.

22. Lengthy matches

Moving ever further from probabilities of coincidence are lengthy matches: the longer a match within a word, the less likely the correspondences could be by chance, and this case exhibits many lengthy matches. For example, an eight-segment match is

> (567) Hebrew ya'amiin-o 'he believes him/it' >
>   UA *yawamin-(o) 'believe (him/it)'

The sound change ' > w is established; given 13 consonants and 5 vowels in UA, probabilities of such a match by chance are fewer than one in 17 million (1/13 x 1/5 x 1/13 x 1/5 x 1/13 x 1/5 x 1/13 x 1/5). A few other lengthy matches of six and seven segments include the following:

> (853) Aramaic ḥippušit 'beetle' > UA *wippusi 'stink beetle' (both have geminated -pp-; and both pharyngeals (ḥ and ʕ below) result in UA rounding (w/o/u).

> (87) Arabic ʕgz/ʕagaza 'to age, grow old (of women)' > Tr wegaca- 'grow old (of women)'

> (57) Semitic singaab 'squirrel' = Hebrew *siggoob 'squirrel' > UA *sikkuC 'squirrel' (vowel changes are explained in the book and devoicing of g > k)

> (88) ʕalaqat 'leech' > UA *walaka 'snail'

> (892) ṣanawbar 'stone pine' (type of pine) > UA *sanawap 'pine tree'

> (832) *sarṭoon 'scratcher, crab' > *saCtun > siCtun/*suCtun 'claw, nail, crab'

> (1274) kookb-aa(') 'star-the' > UA *kuppaa 'to shine (as of the stars)' (-kb- > -pp-)

> (614) makteš 'mortar' > UA *maCta 'mortar'; Ca *mattaš 'crush, squash, vt' (with *-tt- and -š)

23. Sound imitation

Rogers proposes that onomatopoeia (sound imitation) explains items in his table 5 (264–65).

Arabic ṣurṣur/ṣurṣuur 'cricket'; Aramaic ṣarṣuur 'cricket'; Akkadian ṣarṣaar 'cricket';

Syriac ṣiṣr-aa/ṣiiṣr-aa 'cricket'; and UA *corcor (tsortsor) 'cricket'

Onomatopoeia is remotely possible, I suppose, but six segments presents less than a one in 200,000 probability by chance — an impressive match with Arabic or Aramaic (after vowel-leveling) or an unattested ancient Hebrew form (cannot always specify a single language): it is six segments long, and I explain the change of ṣ > ts (in fact, the same change as from ancient Hebrew ṣ to Modern Hebrew c/ts). He might even disqualify the Semitic terms as a Semitic cognate set — the vowels do not match; there is no standard correspondence of u:a:i for these Semitic languages — but with the consonants corresponding, no Semitist doubts their relatedness.

At one point Rogers said, "Stubbs purports to provide some insight into the unknowns of Uto-Aztecan grammar."[69] My work not only purports to provide but indeed *does* provide profound insights into UA. In fact, perhaps the most impressive contribution to comparative UA linguistics is the reality that this proposed language tie is able to explain seven of nine puzzles that Uto-Aztecanists have not been able to solve over the last century.

For example, Uto-Aztecanists suppose that PUA initial *t- remained t- in all UA languages, except in Tarahumara (Tr), where some Tr *r- correspond to the *t- of the other UA languages. However, there are as many instances of initial Tr t- also corresponding to PUA *t- of the other languages. Through four generations of linguists, no one could explain the split or discrepancy until now. Semitic and Egyptian provide the solution. In the other UA languages, initial r- in Semitic or Egyptian became PUA *t-. However, Tr kept initial r- along with t-. So Tr's showing both r-/t- corresponding to PUA *t is explained by the fact that Semitic and Egyptian ṭ, t, d > Tr t-, while Semitic r- and Egyptian r- > Tr r-. The probability of chance aligning some 40 Tr terms with Semitic and Egyptian in that way is less than one in a trillion $(1/2)^{40}$.

Another matter is PUA *w > Hopi L before low vowels a, e, ö much of the time, but not always. In many instances PUA *w remains Hopi w. Again, no one has been able to explain the dichotomy, but Semitic and Egyptian provide the solution. Many PUA *w are from Semitic/Egyptian pharyngeals/laryngeals ʕ, ħ, '. Those PUA *w from the Semitic/Egyptian pharyngeals/laryngeals became L before low vowels, while PUA *w from Semitic/Egyptian w, remain w in Hopi before those same vowels, as in Hopi soniwa < Semitic snw, mentioned above. Pharyngeals becoming liquids (r, L) happens in some Arabic dialects also, as I've heard a native Syrian Arabic speaker say sabriina < sabʕiina 'seventy'.

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69. Rogers, "Review of the Afro-Asiatic–Uto-Aztecan Proposal," 260.

The underlying Semitic and Egyptian clarify not only those two issues, but five other previously unresolved matters as well. Having Semitic and Egyptian explain seven of the nine phonological puzzles of UA can hardly be chalked up to happenstance.

24. Connections between Mesoamerican languages and South American languages

Rogers claims that "any connections between Mesoamerican languages and South American languages have been definitively disproved,"[70] referring us to Lyle Campbell's *American Indian Languages*.[71] I will overlook the fact (as Rogers seems to have done) that both the Chibchan and the Arawakan language families are spread into both Central America and South America, though not all definitions of Mesoamerica include all of Central America. Disregarding those two language families, one *can* say that no such connections have yet been demonstrated to the satisfaction of a majority of linguists, but one *cannot* say that a viable proposal will never emerge from such a huge arena of far-from-fully-explored potential (150-plus language families) or that all pertaining to futurity must be automatically rejected out-of-hand as "definitively disproved." While Rogers cites Campbell's book for his authority, Campbell actually seems to leave open a few possibilities. Campbell provides his own assessments of several such proposals, giving a number within a 200-point range from +100 (definitely proven) to -100 (definitely not). Campbell gives the possibility of a connection of Misumalpan (in Nicaragua, Honduras, El Salvador) with Chibchan (South and Central America) a +20, meaning a 60% chance (120/200).[72] He gives much lower probabilities to Tarascan-Quechua (5%)[73] and Maya-Chipaya (10%),[74] the latter of which Campbell was the main critic after others had viewed the proposal favorably.[75] I do not support any of the above. Yet to none of the above does Campbell give 0% chance, as he does to some other proposals; and thus his assessments, though not

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70. Ibid., 266.

71. Lyle Campbell, *American Indian Languages: The Historical Linguistics of Native America.* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997).

72. Campbell, *American Indian Languages*, 326.

73. Ibid., 325.

74. Ibid., 324.

75. Lyle Campbell, "Distant Genetic Relationships and the Maya-Chipaya Hypothesis," *Anthropological Linguistics* 15, no. 3 (1973):113–35.

supportive, are far from saying, as does Rogers, that all such possibilities are "definitively disproved."

In fact, at times I am a stricter judge than Campbell, who gives the UA-Tanoan tie a 50% possibility.[76] In addition to my 40 years in UA, I spent some years investigating the Kiowa-Tanoan (KT) language family and had compiled the largest Tewa dictionary in existence. The tribe asked that I not publish it, so I discontinued working on it. Twenty years later another larger work appeared, whether with permission or not, I do not know. Nevertheless, I am quite familiar with UA and KT and with the UA-KT debate. Their grammars are very different, and the limited lexical similarities look much more like areal loans (loanwords spread through an area, in this case among the Ancient Puebloans) than genetic affinity. I would give a possible UA-KT genetic tie 10%, much less than Campbell's 50%.[77]

I was surprised by Rogers's use of Edward Sapir's article tying Subtiaba to the Hokan hypothesis[78] to exemplify that "long-distance relationships are convincingly determined through submerged features."[79] Campbell cites Rensch, Suarez, and Kaufman as superseding Sapir and says that "it is now clear that Tlapanec-Subtiaba is just one more branch of Otomanguean" and thus is not tied to Hokan, as Campbell, Rensch, Suarez, and Kaufman establish. Therefore, Campbell puts Subtiaba with Otomanguean and gives that tie a 95% probability.[80] So not only is Rogers's and Sapir's Hokan-Subtiaba tie discounted by Campbell, but Hokan itself is a hypothesis "still undemonstrated and controversial," says Campbell.[81] Furthermore, Hokan's hypothetical status is fairly common knowledge among linguists researching in Native American languages.

One take away from Rogers's article is the realization that his comment about "disorganization" may have been partly due to a general sense of *Exploring the Explanatory Power* seeming unfinished. Quite honestly, that's because it *is* unfinished. As I say in *Changes in Languages*, "Only

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76. Campbell, *American Indian Languages*, 269–73.

77. I respect Campbell as a foremost authority in Native American historical linguistics, as his publications demonstrate, and I agree with him most of the time. So this slight difference of opinion in areas in which I may be the more familiar is hardly a criticism of him, but I simply give a possible UA-KT genetic tie much less promise than he does.

78. Edward Sapir, "The Hokan Affinity of Subtiaba in Nicaragua," *American Anthropologist* 27, no. 4 (1925): 402–35, 491–527.

79. Rogers, "Review of the Afro-Asiatic–Uto-Aztecan Proposal," 263.

80. Campbell, *American Indian Languages*, 208, 324–25.

81. Ibid., 68.

when I die do all drafts become final drafts."[82] Such massive reference works as *Uto-Aztecan: A Comparative Vocabulary* and *Exploring the Explanatory Power* are usually compiled by research teams or multiple authors; one lifetime is hardly enough for one individual to bring such works to perfection. Though working on both for 30 years, I can look at any page of either and see wordings that could be improved, a typo, or matters inviting further investigation. The Uto-Aztecanists at each annual conference from 2000 to 2011 heard me say that I hoped to finish the comparative vocabulary "by next year." After three preliminary editions in 2006, 2007, and 2008, the hardbound, published edition finally appeared in *Uto-Aztecan: A Comparative Vocabulary*. Likewise, many wondered for decades when I would have the full measure of the Semitic and Egyptian in UA available. Massive reference works always take years longer than expected, and I finally realized that it may take more years to complete than I have left. There is no end to unfinished trails and questions that many data lead to, but after 30 years of assembling data, I decided I simply had to impose an arbitrary breaking point and call it a decent plateau. Yet even rounding off to finish the content of that arbitrary cut-off took five more years. If I were to attempt to finish the book to perfection, I'd expire first, and then nothing would be available. So I am glad to have made available much data that others can build on.

Answering Magnus Pharao Hansen's Blog Review

After reading Rogers's article, Magnus Pharao Hansen wrote a blog post, taking issue with the Nahuatl reflex in 14 items of the 1528 sets in *Exploring the Explanatory Power*. Dr. Hansen specializes in the Aztecan/Nahuan branch of UA and was more civil and specific in dealing with the data.[83] Our subsequent discussions on the items have been cordial. I communicated to Hansen that I am always willing to adjust or eliminate an item if it is shown to be incorrect. I am not interested in "fabricating" anything but only in establishing the truth. In that vein, the data in *Exploring the Explanatory Power* were thoughtfully compiled and have held up well, with periodic adjustments. Regarding my subsequent conversations with Hansen, my edited responses follow.

25. Length of UA stems

Hansen says that UA stems are mostly of CV or CVC length. A few, perhaps, but not many are that short. All I ever heard (from Miller,

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82. Stubbs, *Changes in Languages*, 188.
83. Hansen, "An Evaluation."

Freeze, Langacker, Iannucci, Mixco, and all Uto-Aztecanists) is that CVCV is the typical UA stem shape, and perusal of any sizable cognate collection will show the great majority to be CVCV stems. However, in *Uto-Aztecan: A Comparative Vocabulary* at *2.3 Cluster Clutter in Uto-Aztecan*, and other places throughout, I explain considerable evidence for CVCVCV > CVCCV > CVCV, wherein stress patterns and vowel loss create clusters that sometimes reduce, but other times leave evidence, of the former cluster, e.g., the geminated (doubled) consonants in five of the nine items under point 22 above show gemination, which matches the suggested cluster, the first consonant usually being absorbed to double the second.[84] Point 37 treats many other clusters.

26. Multiplicity of languages

Hansen mentions my multiplying languages. Admittedly, three languages (Hebrew/Aramaic, Late Egyptian) is inconvenient; I wish it were fewer in order to be more palatable, but we must follow the evidence. However, Syriac and Coptic should not be added to the count, because Syriac is simply Aramaic. Early/Old written Aramaic is limited, whereas a great deal of Syriac literature exists, and Syriac is not removed from its ancestor Aramaic like Spanish is from Latin but is a dialect very similar to Aramaic. Syriac should be counted as Aramaic; most of what we know of Aramaic is in the descendant dialects. Coptic is occasionally mentioned only as a poor preserver of Egyptian phonology, not as forms that UA descends from, because UA usually preserves Egyptian phonology better than Coptic does.[85] And as I say in point 42 below, mentions of Arabic, Ethiopic, or any other Semitic language cannot be counted as multiplying languages either because they are used when a probable cognate existed in Hebrew or Aramaic, which matches the Hebrew or Aramaic sound correspondences.

27. Nonlinguistic evidence of Semitic infusion in ancient America

According to Hansen there is zero independent (other, nonlinguistic) evidence of Semitic infusion in ancient America. This is in line with the accepted paradigm because the DNA evidence of Semitic infusion does not receive much press, so most people are oblivious. However, the DNA parallels between Arabs and Uto-Aztecan peoples have been published

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84. Stubbs, *Uto-Aztecan*, 14–15.
85. Stubbs, *Exploring the Explanatory Power*, 343–44.

in at least four different publications by Cavalli et al., Guthrie, Jett, and Leonard.[86] They note various Human Lymphocyte Antigens (HLAs) that Guthrie calls "Afro-Asiatic" because of their prominence in northern Africa and southwestern Asia but also among certain Native American populations — the antigens of significant percentage in Semitic areas and in some Native American groups are A1, A29, A30, A32, B14, B17, B18, B21, and B37. For example, B21 was not found in most of indigenous America, was negligibly found near one percent in India, Japan, China, Mongolia, Malaysia, Cambodia, and the Philippines, and was not found in Australia, Micronesia, nor in most of the rest of Asia. However, the high-occurrence areas have the following percentages of HLA B21:

22.2	Saudi Arabia
21.3	Tigre (Ethiopia)
16.0	Jordan-Palestine
12.5	Papago (Uto-Aztecan)
12.1	Tuareg
12.0	Berber
10.7	Pygmies of Zaire
9.5	Iraq
9.4	Pima (Uto-Aztecan)
8.9	Turks
7.5	Central American composite, mainly Uto-Aztecan
6.8	Lebanon
6.7	Sardinia
6.0	Spain
5.6	Italy

86. L. Luca Cavalli, Paolo Menozzi, and Alerto Piazza, *History and Geography of Human Genes* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994); James L. Guthrie, "Human Lymphocyte Antigens: Apparent Afro-Asiatic, Southern Asian, and European HLAs in Indigenous American Populations," *Pre-Columbiana: A Journal of Long-Distance Contacts* 2 and 3 (2000, 2001): 90–163; Stephen Jett, Ancient Ocean Crossings (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2017), 345–46; Phillip Leonard and Ali Ahmad Al-Shahri, "Undeciphered Script-like Signs Shared by Oman and Colorado," Pr*e-Columbiana: A Journal of Long-Distance Contacts* 5, no. 2–4 & vol. 6, no. 1 (2011–2014): 184–88.

4.7	Belgium
4.3	Mande (West Africa)
4.0	Ibo (West Africa)
3.8	Iran
3.8	Uzbek
3.7	Jugoslavia
3.6	Austria
3.5	Nahua (Uto-Aztecan)
3.5	Greece

The three highest percentages are in the heart of the Arab world, and the fourth highest appears in Papago, a Uto-Aztecan people. Looking at the top twelve areas (above the line), eight are Arab areas and three are Uto-Aztecan people. (We must keep in mind that North African areas became destinations of Arab genes since the eighth-century Islamic expansion.) So eleven of the top twelve populations are Arab or Uto-Aztecan peoples/areas, while most of the world displays little to nothing of HLA B21, including most of indigenous America.[87] Hansen responded that only ancient DNA should be considered. However, the 6% in Spain and even lower percentages in the rest of Europe would not raise indigenous levels to 9% and 12% after post-Columbian European admixture. Not only is B21 highest among Arabs and Uto-Aztecans, but both also share B17 and B37. Of course, the great variety of peoples arriving in ancient America means that populations have greatly mixed over time. So even if ancient Near East ships did shove ashore, they naturally would have mixed with other kinds of DNA over the centuries, such as Bering Strait DNA and likely others, just as most of us have several different ethnic groups in our ancestry.

28. Cognates of Classical Nahuatl (CN) koosamaaloo-tl

CN koosamaaloo-tl 'rainbow' (< koo + Egyptian šmrwt 'long bows') is not only in Aztecan, but cognates are in almost every SUA language, though not in NUA. Hansen suggests that the term incorporates CN kosa- 'yellow', yet the combining form CN koo- 'snake' and all the compounds that koo- is in have a long -oo-, but CN kosa 'yellow' and all the compounds that kosa- is in have short -o-. Also I checked number

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87. Leonard and Al-Shahri "Undeciphered Script-like Signs," 184–88.

264 in 2015, and I do have the suffix -t or -tl separated, whether the final -t of šmrwt was absorbed or lost. I have not seen Hansen's suggested morphological division of kosa-ma-l-o in the literature, and it is likely his guess, but not substantiated by Nahua specialists generally. In contrast to that morphological analysis, most other SUA languages have cognates too, some of them loans, and the kosa-ma-l-o morphological division is hardly PUA or even SUA. Relevant to whether that morphology is strictly Aztecan or PUA, we need to look at the related forms in the other SUA languages, as all of the following also mean 'rainbow':

> NT kiihónali (Piman h < *s); TO gihonalï (*s > h expected, but also m > n); m > n is common enough in these SUA languages, but not understood; the stress shift to the 2nd syllable seems to have caused oo > ii in the 1st, the UA unstressed schwa equivalent)

> Tr ginorá; Wr kenolá (perhaps a loan from Piman with loss of hV syllable; notably, the vowel line (i-o-a) is preserved though shifted from the consonant line, which happens frequently enough in Tr/Wr)

> Eu bainóra/vainóra (these prefix *pa- 'water' and are otherwise identical to Tr/Wr *kinor/la with loss of -k- at the morpheme boundary)

> TO kiohod (h < *s); LP(B) kiuhur; LP(EF) kiáhur; Nv kiorha; ST ki'oor (*s > h/'); these Piman forms lose -m-, but not -h-, and anticipate the 2nd V (as upper Piman often does)

> Yq kurúes; AYq kurues; My kurués (these Cahitan forms appear to derive from a Piman form like the above but have lost -h-)

> Cr kú'usa'a; CN koosamaaloo-tl; Pl kusamaalu-(t)

Related forms appear in all SUA branches, as seen above, and while some are loans from other UA languages, the widespread prevalence of the forms suggests a deep enough time-depth that the morphology suggested by Hansen seems improbable. I might add that, while in English we must add 'rain-' to 'rainbow', in Hebrew and Aramaic and other Near East languages, the words for 'bow' are also used for 'rainbow' without adding anything: Hebrew qešet 'bow, rainbow' and Aramaic qušt-aa 'bow, rainbow-the' (note expected UA *kuCta-/*kutta-pi 'bow' aligns with Aramaic). So for 'bow' to also mean 'rainbow' is expected if from Semitic. In addition, because snakes are colorful, UA *koo- is a prefix used for color terms in a number of SUA languages, though there is no

proof yet of the same in CN. However, of additional interest is Hansen's saying that Nawa myth has the Nahuatl 'rainbow' word more closely aligned with 'snake' than 'rainbow' — I was not aware of that before — and 'snake' (koo-) is my suggestion for the first part of the word. The snake cognate in other UA languages also means 'color(ful)'. In fact, in *Uto-Aztecan: A Comparative Vocabulary*, set number 1771, are listed three Southern Numic languages in which the word for 'rainbow' is the very word for snake, either 'water-snake' or 'rattlesnake' or a derivative of 'snake' with a prefix; so words for 'snake' also mean 'rainbow' far away in the extremities of NUA as well. That weighs well for Nahuatl koo- in the rainbow term being from koo- 'snake'.

29. Matching segments of Nahuatl tool-in

Hansen mentions Nahuatl tool-in 'reeds' (< Egyptian twr 'reed') as matching only three of five segments, yet the suffix -in is separated by Kartunnen[88] as well. So we really have three of three matching segments, not three of five. True, it is short, but is a 100% match. The suffix -in appears in a number of words: CN ocuil-in 'worm'; CN ocoxaal-in 'pine needles carpeting forest floor'; CN sool-in 'quail', etc. Further evidence of that morpheme division is the place-name toollaan < tool-tlaan 'reed-place', which also divides the morphemes to isolate tool- (< twr) 'reed'.

30. Translation of CN iskali

For CN iskali, Hansen claims that I did "a massaged translation of the Nahuatl term that makes a large semantic stretch seem less problematic." I looked more closely into the semantics and find no semantic gap: though the two packages of dimensions are not entirely concentric, they do have a 3/4 overlap, and hardly ever do semantic modulations enjoy 100% overlap. The full definitions of a word often necessitate eight or ten or more words. In case I streamlined the definitions too narrowly, let's now list the fuller definitions of both, quoting exactly from the standard dictionaries: Hebrew[89] hiśkiil/hiśkal- 'understand, comprehend, have insight, act prudently, make wise, instruct, teach, make insightful, achieve success, prosper, attend closely to, show good understanding, show good skill, do (e.g., sing or play) artfully' > CN iskali-(aa) 'hatch, sprout, bud,

88. Francis Karttunen, *An Analytical Dictionary of Nahuatl* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1983), 244.

89. Ludwig Koehler and Walter Baumgartner, *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*, rev. Walter Baumgartner and Johann Jakob Stamm; trans. and ed. M. E. J. Richardson (Leiden, NDL: Brill, 1994).

grow, mature (to adulthood, wisdom), come to one's senses, revive, resuscitate, nourish, train, instruct, teach, taught, educate(d), rear/raise (children), correct (by word or punishment), discipline, be able, intelligent, prudent, discreet'. Hansen deems the Simeon dictionary as less desirable, though other Nahua specialists use it and see it as sound. So for CN in this exercise, I use Kartunnen[90] and R. Joe Campbell's[91] 4,000-page vocabulary of the multivolume Florentine Codex. (I do not have Molina.) No doubt, a primary meaning is to 'grow, revive (as a plant), i.e., sprout', but the claim is that word relates to "reviving and coming back to life, and not to understanding or knowing." However, 'teach, correct, nurture' are in Kartunnen, and occurrences of 'teach, correct, nurture, be able, prudent, discreet, educated, taught, train(ed)' are abundant in R. Joe Campbell. Above and below I do not take time to distinguish intransitive and transitive (be prudent vs. make prudent/teach, etc.). Campbell seems to list all occurrences of word usage in the Florentine works, so I counted the number of times the various groups of definitions occur:

Grow, mature:	9
Come to life, revive:	15
Raise/rear (children):	6
Correct, teach, train:	16
Be wise, prudent, discreet, able:	24

The "understanding and knowing" dimensions (last two) constitute the majority of the uses (40 of the 70). Let's also compare the two columns of meanings:

Hebrew	Classical Nahuatl
—	grow, come to life, revive
understand, comprehend, act prudently,	be intelligent, prudent, discreet
instruct, teach, make wise,	instruct, teach, train, correct
achieve success, prosper, do s.th. well	be able

Hebrew and CN share three of the four groups of meanings. I am not sure how Hansen interprets that as "really bad." These are not massaged translations; they are exact words from the respective dictionaries. The assertion that Simeon made up 'prudent, discreet' is countered by Campbell,

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90. Karttunen, *An Analytical Dictionary of Nahuatl.*

91. R. Joe Campbell, *Draft Lexicon of Molina and the Florentine Codex Vocabulary* (computer files, 2006), 123.

who lists the same (prudent, discreet) in several occurrences in the Florentine Codex — it seems that Simeon is also correct. In short, the semantic parallel and majority overlap certainly seem viable and worth considering.

31. Cognates of CN sipak-tli

Although CN sipak-tli 'crocodile' (< Egyptian sbk 'crocodile', sobek 'crocodile god') as yet lacks other UA cognates and so is not part of a PUA cognate set, that hardly excludes its possible survival in the Nawan branch. Cyrus Gordon, the internationally renowned Semitic and Ugaritic scholar, was the first to publish the similar Aztec and Egyptian terms for crocodile.[92] I merely added another 400 Egyptian parallels to his. The similarity of the two crocodile terms is impressive enough; however, what Gordon did not know is that because UA *u > CN i, the first vowel (CN i) could be from either UA *supak or *sipak, the first of which is identical to the probable original Egyptian voweling *subak. Hansen's association of CN sipak- with Cora haaši 'caiman' (< *paasi) requires (1) dividing it paa-si 'water-something' (a possible division, but is it compelling?) and (2) then reversing the order of morphemes (si-paa). Still, we would have to (3) wonder where the -k- came from, (4) explain why not PUA *p > ø in Nahuatl as its regular sound change, since that regular sound change did happen in Cora (*p > h), and (5) explain what -si-k- might mean. Altogether, those five unknowns seem a much more complex proposal than simply Egyptian *subak > UA *supak > Nawan *sipak, both meaning 'crocodile'.

32. Cognates of CN sool-in

We can examine CN sool-in 'quail' relative to Hebrew śəlaaw 'quail'; Aramaic/Syriac salway 'quail'; Arabic salwaa 'quail'; Samaritan šalwi; Hebrew plural: śalwiim (I list several Semitic forms to give a better sense). I am grateful to Hansen for making me aware of Cora sa'u and Huichol ši'au 'cordoniz [quail]'. I had missed those Corachol terms, but now we can add the Corachol branch to the cognates in the other four UA branches. My *Uto-Aztecan: A Comparative Vocabulary* has a section showing the UA liquid(s) (L) going to glottal stop in Cora: 2.9.5 Medial *-L- > -'- in Cora (L = liquid).[93] The data are listed below. Thus, Cora sa'u 'quail' < Semitic *salw- 'quail' is a perfect match; four of the five Semitic forms above show *salw-. The first -a- was the unstressed vowel (in Semitic), making it more likely to assimilate, in this case toward -w-:

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92. Cyrus H. Gordon, *Before Columbus: Links between the Old World and Ancient America* (New York: Crown, 1971), 135.

93. Stubbs, *Uto-Aztecan*, 29.

salw(i) > solwi. The -lw- cluster in CN lost -w- (sool-in) and Mn lost -l- (sowi), but Cora (sa'u) lost neither, only changed the first (-L- > -'-), kept the original vowel, and reflected the order of consonants: -lw- > -'u-. Thus metathesis is not involved. Perhaps there was an objection to the semantic change of 'quail' to 'wild pigeon' (Mn), but it is not a significant deviation. Some even greater variations in bird-type occur in UA, for example, UA *wiLhukuN 'turkey buzzard' > CN wiiloo- 'dove'. PYp tesoli/te'soli/tesori 'quail' is likely a loan from Aztecan with some sort of te- prefix, since we should see *s > h in the Piman branch; and Tr ŕe'čorí 'cordoniz [quail]' may also be a loan. TO hohhi 'mourning dove' and Tr soho 'paloma torcaz' both show the expected initial syllable *so . . . (*s > TO h), and TO -hh- usually means a far-from-obvious cluster of some sort. We will only count those as possibilities, not yet secure.

2.9.5 Medial *-L- > -'- in Cora (L = liquid) [94]

UA *taLu 'egg [huevo]': Tbr ne-telu-r 'huevo'; Cr ta'u 'blanquillo, huevo'.

UA *mïLa/*mïLi 'run, flow, go, want': aligning with the many *mïLa/*mïLi forms, found in nearly all UA languages, is Cr me / me'i 'go, sg subj'.

UA *mo'o-kaLi 'hat, head-house' (Tr mo'ó head'): Tbr mo-kalí-t; Wr mo'kóri; Tr mokoyo-/mokoho-/mokoo- 'put on hat'; Tr mokoyóra/mokohóra/mokoora 'hat, head-wear';

Cr muúku'u-ci 'hat.' Note Cr's glottal stop at the place of the liquid.

UA *taLowi 'edible root sp': Tr ŕerowi 'potato'; Wr teloé 'potato'; Tbr teró-t; Ca tályki 'Indian potato'; Cr tá'upu'u 'potato.' Because *L > -'- in Cr and *o > u in Cr, then *taLo > Cr ta'u fits perfectly.

UA *pa-suL 'sweat': TO wahuD/wahul- 'sweat, vi'; TO wahulðag 'sweat, n.; sweaty, adj';

Nv vahurhu 'sweat, v'; Nv sivahurhudaga 'sweat, n'; PYp vahar 'sweat, v'; PYp vahagdar 'sweat, n'; NT vaahúraryi 'sweat, vi'; the latter two syllables of Cr táisï'e 'sweat, vi',

note Cr -sï'e < *suLV, as Cr ï < *u.

94. Ibid.

UA *kwaL 'soft [blando, suave]': Eu barínari 'blando, lo que fue ablandado por otro'; My bwalko 'blando'; first two syllables of Cr kwa'ačíra'a 'está suave, blando, tierno, débil', note *-L- > Cr -'-.

UA *kaLi(sV) 'squash [calabaza] species': Tr arisí/garisí/karisí 'calabacilla, calabaza de coyote'; Wc káisa 'sonaja'; Nv sarkarhkaari 'calabaza'. The close sister-language to Cr in Corachol is Huichol, and Huichol káisa also shows loss of the intervocalic liquid, which is retained in the other languages.

Besides the seven examples listed above of PUA *-L- > Cr -'-, other instances can be found in *Uto-Aztecan: A Comparative Vocabulary*.

33. Cognates of CN tamal-li

As for CN tamal-li 'tamale, bread made of steamed cornmeal' (< UA *tïmaL 'bury, bake under ashes' < Semitic ṭmr 'hide, bury, bake under earth or ashes'/ Aramaic ṭəmar), Kartunnen does not separate -l- from the stem as a separate morpheme[95] like Hansen proposes for this CN tamal-. Furthermore, the UA forms in the other six branches of UA that show cognate forms also suggest a final third consonant as part of the stem, which suggest that the final -l- of tamal- is part of the stem. The semantic correlation is good: Semitic 'bury, cook under earth or ashes' and UA 'bury, cook under ashes'. The original UA form also reflects the Aramaic second-syllable stress pattern: Aramaic təmar > UA *tïmaC. Thus, the vowels match as well. Returning to evidence of a third consonant in the other branches, SP tocci-rï'ma-ppi 'roasted bread' shows geminated -pp-, which means an underlying final consonant in the preceding morpheme. In the following NUA languages (and others), a final liquid is often anticipated as a glottal stop (CVCVL > CV'CV): WMU tïm'má- 'bake (usually underground)'; Ch tïm'á 'bake, v'; SP tï'ma- 'roast under ashes, bury'; CU tu'má- 'bake, roast' and Tb tï'ma'at 'gasp for breath, for instance, while drowning, choking, or suffocating' (as if, while covered or buried in water) all show such an extra consonant. Because the standard UA reflex of Semitic ə (schwa) is UA ï or i, and as UA *ï > Aztecan e, then Aramaic təmar > UA *tïmaC > Azt temaC is a match of five of five segments, not two of five segments.

34. Match of CN no'pal-li

Hansen accepts the phonological match of CN no'pal-li < Aramaic/Syriac n'bl except for saying that I ignored the Nahuatl glottal stop. Actually,

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95. Kartunnen, *Analytical Dictionary of Nahuatl*, 214.

I highlighted the Aztecan glottal stop, as it matches exactly the Aramaic/Syriac glottal stop; in fact, all four consonants are exactly in the same order in both, and the terms I bolded for primary comparison were CN no'pal-li and Syriac n'bl. For a fuller semantic picture, I mentioned Hebrew nebel 'skin-bottle, skin' (most frequent use is nebel yayin 'skin-bottle of wine'). His main objection is with the semantic shift, though the shift is not that great: 'skin, flask, bottle (of wine, most often)' > 'prickly pear cactus plant (whose fruit is used to make alcohol)'. Nahuatl does indeed distinguish some details of the cactus plant vs. its fruit. However, I was following Voegelin, Voegelin, and Hale[96] and Miller and Kenneth C. Hill[97] in their terminology for that set, 'prickly pear cactus/fruit' and 'cactus fruit', respectively. I was defining the set for the score of languages having cognates, in many of which the meaning extends to its fruit also. While it is true that Nahuatl has separate cactus vs. fruit terms, I listed no Nahua definition, only its cognate form. While the Semitic term nebel/n'bl does mean 'bottle' (made of skin/leather), its most frequent language use was as a container of wine, and containers are often semantically extended to their contents: he's on the bottle (drinking binge), let's bring a keg (i.e., alcoholic beverage), he has a pint in his pocket, what dish would you like? (food on the dish, not choosing the ceramic creation). And semantic extensions from the plant to the alcohol made from its fruit are also frequent: vine and wine are related terms. So while it is indeed a semantic shift from 'bottle' > 'alcohol' < 'plant from which alcohol is made', it seems well within the bounds of plausibility. Each investigator is free to discard whatever semantic shifts she or he deems not plausible enough, but the data of the remaining 1500 correspondence sets must still be dealt with in an honest fashion.

35. Singular pronouns in Nahuatl

Nahuatl's singular pronoun series resembles Aramaic's conjugated 'be' verb. Hansen's consideration that the Nahua series may be an innovation because of its existence only in the Aztecan branch and not elsewhere is reasonable. However, its being a surviving retention is possible as well. Favoring the latter is evidence elsewhere in UA of t- for 2nd person pronouns and y- for 3rd person. Below are the Semitic singular pronoun verb prefixes

96. C. F. Voegelin, F. M. Voegelin, and Kenneth L. Hale, *Typological and Comparative Grammar of Uto-Aztecan*, Indiana University Publications in Anthropology and Linguistics: Memoir 17, supplement to the *International Journal of American Linguistics* 28, no. 1 (1962).

97. Hill, *Miller's Uto-Aztecan Cognate Sets*.

and Classical Nahuatl singular pronoun series, aligning with the Aramaic verb 'be': hawaa (perfective stem), and -hwV (imperfective stem):

	Semitic sg	Hebrew/Semitic pl	Maghrib Arabic	Nahuatl
1st	'e-/'a- 'I (verb)'	ni-/na- 'we (verb)'	n- 'I verb'	ne'wa/nehwa 'I'
2nd	ti-/ta- 'you sg (verb)'	ti-/ta- 'you pl (verb)'	t- 'you verb'	te'wa/tehwa 'you, sg'
3rd	yi-/ya- 'he (verbs)'	yi-/ya- 'they (verb)'	y- he verbs'	ye'wa/yehwa 'he'

The CN singular pronoun series — nehwa (I), tehwa (you), yehwa (he) — parallels the imperfective of the Aramaic 'be' verb — 'ehwe, tehwe, yehwe. Though the Nahuatl 1st person (nehwa 'I') differs from Semitic 'e-, the n- of the CN form is analogically like the fundamental n- of both the UA 1st person pronouns (I/me) and the n- of most Semitic 'I/me' forms. In fact, the Maghrib Arabic dialect did the same analogy, analogizing the verb prefixes to be n-, t-, y-,[98] as the Classical Nahuatl singular series did — nehwa, tehwa, yehwa. The comparison, however, is not with Maghrib Arabic, but only with Hebrew, Aramaic, and Egyptian.

Regarding the suggestion that the ti- of CN ti- 'you, sg' was adopted from the ti- of CN ti- 'we', I am not familiar with any other instances of a 2nd person singular (you, sg) adopting a 1st person plural form (we). In fact, besides CN ti-/te- 'you sg', we have additional instances in UA of 2nd person t-, like Semitic 2nd person t-: Serrano t 'you sg'[99] and the Tarahumara 2nd person plural subject pronoun tumu, not only shows t-, but is rather identical to pre-Aramaic *-tum/attum (later to Aramaic -tuun/-attuun):

	subject pronouns 'you, plural'	object pronouns 'you, plural'
Semitic/Arabic	'antum (independent pronoun)	-kum (obj/suffix pronoun)
Hebrew	'attem (independent pronoun)	-kem (obj/suffix pronoun)
Aramaic	'attuun < *'attum (indep. pronoun)	-kum (obj/suffix pronoun)
Arabic	-tum (subject pronoun on a perfect verb)	
Hebrew	-tem (subject pronoun on a perfect verb)	
Aramaic	-tuun (< *-tum, subject pronoun on a perfect verb)	
Tr	tumu / tumuhe (you, pl subj)	emi (you, pl dative/object pronoun)
SP		ŋumi 'you, your, pl obj pronoun'[100]

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98. Gideon Goldenberg, *Semitic Languages: Features, Structures, Relations, Processes* (Oxford, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, 2013), 86.

99. Kenneth C. Hill, *A Grammatical Sketch of Serrano* (2001), unpublished manuscript on Serrano grammar.

100. Stubbs, *Exploring the Explanatory Power*, 85.

Tarahumara has both the 2nd person plural *subject* pronoun matching the Semitic 2nd person plural *subject* pronoun, and the 2nd person plural *object* pronoun matching Semitic's 2nd person plural *object* pronoun.

I also might slightly adjust another of Hansen's statements: I do not reconstruct pu- as "the" 3rd person singular pronoun in PUA, but as "a" or "one of" the 3rd person pronouns. UA pronouns show considerable variety in the 3rd person, some of them being innovations indeed, though variants of the following 1st and 2nd person forms appear in most UA languages:[101]

	sg	pl
1	nï'	tammu
2	'ï	'ïm

Like Semitic hu/huwa, UA yields 3rd person singular *hu/*huwa (SP, NP, Cm, CU, My, Yq, Ca, Tr, thus in both NUA and SUA). Hebrew 3rd plural hum, hem 'they, subj' resembles NP ïmï; Kw imï; CU umïs; and Hebrew -am 'them, their' (obj or poss 3rd pl suffix). Hopi has -'am 'their'; My -am 'them'; Yq 'am- 'direct obj, them'; Yq -'ame-u 'to them'; Yq -'ame-mak 'with them' (also in both NUA and SUA). UA *pu 'he, it' (< Egyptian pw) in Ls -pu-; Huichol pï- (< *pu); My -po, Wr puu, Tr -pu, Kw pu/pï, SP pï (in both NUA and SUA).[102] Now these seven languages belong to five different branches, so *-pu is reconstructable to PUA but persists in only one-fourth of the UA languages, others showing other forms. So where it does show up, it is a rather rare continuance or retention of the *pu in those seven languages and five branches, scattered throughout both NUA and SUA.

To consider Nahuatl ye- to be from PUA *pu > *hï > ye might be imaginable if it were not for Huichol pï, Cora's sister language. The standard correspondence for both Cora and Huichol is ï < *u, and Nahuatl takes that vowel change one step further: *u > ï (Corachol) > i (Nahuatl). A bigger obstacle is *pu > hï for Cora or as an intermediate step for Nahuatl, when we see *pu > pï in Huichol. Nahuatl shows both p < *p, as well as the loss of p, or ø < *p. Again Cora and Huichol reflect half of what Nahuatl usually does: some *p > p, and others *p > h. However, to say Cora and Huichol do differently (pï) than Nahuatl (ye) is not consistent with how the Nawa-Corachol branch usually behaves.

The Egyptian demonstratives *p'y/pay/pa'i 'this, that' resemble UA pa/pe '3rd sg' in Sr pat, Tb paaim, Hp pam, Ca pe' 'he/she/it'; Cp

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101. The origins of all of those main UA pronouns are explained in Stubbs, *Exploring the Explanatory Power*, 84–86, 302.
102. Ibid., 89–90.

pə/pə'/pə'ə 'he/she/it'. So none of these four 3rd person forms dominates, but each appears three to seven times, their sporadic retentions scattered throughout UA in various branches. Hansen suggests that the final -wa of the Nawa pronoun series is an added affix. That's certainly possible but not a significant detraction from the Semitic parallel. For even Nahuatl nV, tV, yV is impressive, yet being attached to -hwa, which aligns with the conjugation of the 'be' verb, makes it even more noteworthy. Besides Huichol pï, an additional obstacle to that 3rd singular yehwa being from *pu > hï > ye, and in Semitic's favor is that Semitic's 3rd person singular verb forms beginning with y- show up in fossilized verb forms throughout UA. Some examples follow:

> **UA *yawamino** 'believe him/it' < Hebrew ya-'amiin-o 'he believes him/it' (in 4 UA languages)

> Interestingly Ca hée'an 'believe s.o., agree on s.th.' lost -m-, but shows the vowels and the initial h- of the Hebrew 3rd sg masculine perfective of the same verb: hɛ'ɛman (> UA hee'an).

> UA *yaka 'cry', yet both m. and f. in NP yaka/taka 'cry'

> from Semitic ya-bka/ta-bka 'he/she cries' (the masculine is in many UA languages, but both masculine and feminine are in NP, and there are some 20 examples of bilabial stops absorbed/lost as 1st C in a cluster; see under point 37)

> UA *yu'pa/*cu'pa 'fire go out, become dark, end' < Hebrew m. y-u'pal/f. t-u'pal 'become dark' (with palatalization of t- > c- before the high vowel u)[103]

> UA *kwasïC 'cook, boil, ripen' < Hebrew baašel/baašal 'cook, boil, ripen' (b > kw covered later); UA *kwasïC 'cook, boil, ripen' provides a cognate literally in every UA language while CN yoksi 'cook, ripen' has the y- prefixed to the -kw-s consonant sequence.

Further examples exist.

Even the Semitic is divisible into two separate morphemes: ne-hwa, te-hwa, ye-hwa. So for them to separate, or only the first to remain in instances or dialects, is not surprising. To list a few:

> Classical Nahuatl: nehwa, tehwa, yehwa

> Tetelcingo Nahua: naha, taha, yaha   (loss of -w-?)

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103. Palatalization of t- > c- before the high vowel u; see forms in Stubbs, *Exploring the Explanatory Power*, 218.

> North Pueblo Nawatl: ne'wa, te'wa, ye'wa (h > ' in a cluster?)
>
> Huasteca Nahuatl: na, ta, ya   (only the 1st morpheme)

36. Wa- perfective prefix

Regarding the wa- perfective prefix, the Corachol perfective prefix wa- also exists in addition to Nawa oo-; and Corachol wa- is identical to the Hebrew wa- and also changes imperfective verbs to perfective verbs (as in Hebrew), as does CN oo- in western Nawa. A similar prefix *wV- exists in NUA branches in addition to the two SUA branches. Furthermore, truncation (chopping off the end) of the stem for perfective happens in all languages of the Piman branch, in Tubatulabal, Corachol, and Aztecan, that is, in at least four branches that I know of, and in both NUA and SUA. So stem truncation is not only reconstructable for Aztecan-Corachol, but for PUA. The perfective -kV suffix is also found in most of UA's 11 branches. So stem truncation for perfective and -kV both appear in both NUA and SUA and thus are from PUA, such that the Aztecan branch kept both to varying degrees in varying dialects. So the bigger picture of UA may suggest that Eastern Nawa innovated to *lose* what was in both Western Nawa and Corachol and other branches rather than Western Nawa's borrowing from Cora. For Cora to affect that many dialects of western Nawa would be impressive, if not surprising.

On tlakpak, I was wrong, and Hansen is right. I had it right in *Uto-Aztecan: A Comparative Vocabulary*, but in 2015, a forgetful moment produced an error. The Nawa morphemes are *ta-kupa-ko. The -kupa- does indeed tie to iikpa-tl 'thread' < UA *kupa 'hair, head'. I shall delete that example.

On CN seewal-li 'shade, shadow' (< Egyptian šwt 'shade, shadow'; and other examples of -t- > -l-exist), I will look into some relevant matters and discard this example as well if further investigation recommends such.

37. 'Snake, twin' meaning of CN kooaa-tl

CN kooaa-tl 'snake, twin' (< *koNwa < Egyptian qarḥat 'serpent, partner') preserves an unusual semantic combination — 'serpent, partner' > 'snake, twin'. I have not yet found the 'partner/twin' dimension in another UA language. *koNwa 'snake' is reconstructable to PUA, found in nine of eleven branches, though the meaning 'twin' is only in the Aztecan branch as far as I've noticed so far. If 'twin' is a semantic innovation, it is an unusual one. What is the probability of UA innovating such an unusual pair of meanings to be identical to the Egyptian very unusual

pair of meanings? Furthermore, its cluster is replicated in other terms too, addressed below. R. Joe Campbell in his article[104] does not specifically mention kooaa-tl 'serpent, twin'; I discussed it with him and erred in not distinguishing between our discussion and his article. However, he does mention several Hueyapan Nahuatl verbs ending in -VwV whose past tense ends as -Vŋ, dropping the final vowel and w > ŋ. This is one of his reasons for suggesting underlying *-ŋw- in some places where CN and other Nawa dialects show -w-. Furthermore, Kaufman does reconstruct *konwa 'serpent, twin' with a nasal dimension to -w- in that term as well.[105] In addition, Ls and other NUA languages reflect *-ŋ- in their 'snake' cognates, and certain other items show PUA *-w- > -ŋ- in Ls (but not all -w- > ŋ):

> (332) Cp qeqiŋi-ly 'king snake' and Ls qiqeŋ-la 'ring snake' < Takic *koŋo reveal Takic -ŋ- as expected of the cluster -rħ- (a liquid-pharyngeal cluster), given the similar behavior of similar clusters. The cluster of -r- plus the other pharyngeal (-ʕ-) behaves the same way: *-rʕ- > -ŋ-:

> (737) *-rʕ- > -ŋ-: ṣirʕaa 'hornets' > UA *saŋa 'yellowjacket, stinging one' (Sr, Ls, Ktn)

> (1066) *-rʕ- > -ŋ-: ṣrʕ/ḍrʕ 'weak, lean, emaciated' > UA *corowa/*corwa 'be hungry' (Wr/Tfr) > coŋo 'hunger' (Hopi). Wr and Tr show the consonants separated (-r- < -r- and -w- < -ʕ-), but when clustered (Hopi), *-rʕ- > -ŋ- again.

Another -r- + uvular cluster (*-rq-) behaves similarly:

> (957) *-rq- > UA/Tak -ŋ-: qarqaḍ-aan 'squirrel' > UA *koŋi 'squirrel'

Nasals in clusters with those laryngeal/pharyngeal consonants also yield velar nasal *ŋ (*-m'- > -ŋ-, or *-Nʕ- > -ŋ-):

> (280) *-m'- > -ŋ-: Egyptian ḥm't 'salt' > UA *omwa > *oŋwa/*oŋa 'salt' (initial ḥ > o)

> (281) *-m'- > -ŋ-: Egyptian sm' 'lung' > UA *somwo > *soŋo 'lung'

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104. R. Joe Campbell, "Underlying /ŋw/ in Hueyapan Nahuatl," *International Journal of American Linguistics* 42 (1976): 46–50.

105. Terrence Kaufman, "Comparative Uto-Aztecan Phonology" (manuscript, 1981).

(284) *-m'- > -ŋ-: Egyptian qm' 'create, beget' > UA *kumCa/*kumwa > *kuŋa 'husband'

In all three examples above, some Numic languages show m/mw, while the rest of NUA shows ŋ; this suggests an original cluster involving -m- that became -ŋ-; the m and ŋ reflexes would be mysterious, if not for the underlying cluster *-m'- that clarifies them, as *-m'- > -mw- is expected. Otherwise, why would ŋ blossom into various reflexes with m? These are also among the most pervasive lexical items in UA, appearing in 29, 14, and 27 of the 30 UA languages, respectively. Other Semitic terms below, having the same cluster, show the same result:

(1246) *-m'- > -ŋ-: Old Canaanite hassim'al 'the-left' > UA/Tb aašiŋan 'left side' (l > NUA n)

(940) *-mʕ- > -ŋ-: -mʕak 'squeeze, crush, rub' > UA *ŋaka/i 'grind, scrape, rub against'

In 2015 I outlined some 200 examples of cluster behavior.[106] To exemplify, I will highlight only one pattern for stops: the first consonant is lost or absorbed to double the second.

(1274) *-kb- > -pp-: kookb-aa' 'star-the' > UA *kuppaa': Sr kupaa' 'to shine (as of the stars)' (a denominalized verb, all vowels as expected; Sr v < *-p-, so Sr p < *-pp- or cluster)

(889) *-kb- > -pp-: Aramaic rikb-aa 'upper millstone-the' > UA *tïppa 'mortar, pestle' (initial r- > UA t- is well demonstrated in 2015, 100–101, 173–174, 221)

(99) *-kb- > -pp-: Hebrew rakb-uu 'they mounted, climbed'; Aramaic rakb-uu-hi 'they climbed it' > UA *tï'pu 'climb up': NP tïbbu'ya 'climb up'; Wr mo'tepú-na 'climb up s.th.'

> Note the three instances above of *-kb- > -pp-. When the first vowel is *i*, palatalization changes *t-* > *c-*, and the Western Numic forms below even show an object suffix: Aramaic rakb-uu-hi 'they climbed it'.

UACV-461b *ciCpuhi 'climb': Mn cibuhi 'climb with arms and legs'; NP cibui 'climb up on s.th.'

In contrast, the Southern Numic forms reflect a plural participle raakbiin > tVppin > cippin.

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106. Stubbs, *Exploring the Explanatory Power*, 324–31.

UACV-461c *ciCpiN/*cippiN 'climb or come out/onto': Kw čipii-'climb'; Ch cipí- 'come out'; SP cippiN 'come out, appear, ride'; WMU čihppí-y 'come out, bubble out (like a spring), climb into (car), onto (horse)'; CU čipí 'mount, climb on, get on top'. Also related are Ca čípi 'get covered (hole), vi' and Ca čípi-n 'cover, vt (causative)' all the above showing geminated *-pp-, and covering (a hole) is causing s.th. to get on top of it, and a hole getting covered is as a spring bubbling out, its hole being covered by water' or 'surfacing to the top'.

All of the above reflect *-kb- > -pp-. Consider some *-Cp- > -pp-:

(1264) *-pp- > -pp-: Semitic *tappir 'sew together' > UA *tappiCta 'tie'

(1265) *-pp- > -pp-: Semitic tpr/tuppar 'sown' > UA tuppa 'tie(d)'

(1151) *-tp- > -pp-: Aramaic etpakkan 'speak much, chatter' > NUA/Num *appaka/*aNpaka- 'talk'

(182) *-tp- > -pp-: Egyptian ḫtp/hotpe 'be gracious, peaceable, set (sun)' > NUA *huppi 'peaceable, behave, sink, go down' > Hp hopi; otherwise, *hopi > hovi

(398) *-'p- > -pp-: Egyptian k'p 'close (eyes), cover' > UA *kuppa / *kuCpa 'close (eyes)'

(434) *-'p- > -pp-: Egyptian g'p 'cut' > UA *kappi 'break, cut'

*-'p- > -pp-: Semitic 'pl 'be dark, go down, set, be hidden/absent'; unattested y/tuCCaC 3rd m/f

(872) *yu'pal > UA *yuppa and (871) *tu'pal > *cuppa, t- > c-palatalized before -u:

Tb cuppat 'fire be out' (dark); Mn cuppa 'disappear' (hidden/absent); NP coppa 's.th. sinking' (go down, set); My cúppa 'finish'; AYq čupa 'finish, complete, fulfill (vow)'; Wr cu'píba-ni 'finish' (still shows -'-). 'Finish the day (sun) > finish (task)' is the one semantic shift of the four

(872) *yu'pal > *yuppa 'go out (of fire), (get) dark, black': Ktn yo'vï-k 'be dark/black' (Ktn still has glottal stop of the original cluster *-'p-, which becomes geminated -pp- in languages with -p- (< *-pp-), while forms with -v- lost gemination: e.g., Ls yúúpa 'go out (fire), not burn' vs. Ls yúúva 'be dark'.): Ca yúpi 'be overcast (of sky), cloudy'; Gb yupíxa' 'black'; and Wc yïvi/yïïvi 'black' (because Wc ï < *ü)

Below are three among dozens of nonlabials wherein first C is absorbed to double the second:

(57) Semitic singaab 'squirrel' = Hebrew *siggoob 'squirrel' > UA *sikkuC 'squirrel'

(832) Semitic sarṭoon 'scratcher, crab' > UA *saCtun > sittun/*suttun 'claw, nail, crab'

(614) Hebrew makteš 'mortar' > UA *maCta 'mortar'; Ca *mattaš 'crush, squash, vt' (with *-tt- and -š)

Also per that pattern, bilabial stops (b, p) are lost when they are the first consonant in the cluster, while the second consonant goes to its usual reflex: d > t, x > k, ħ > w, ʕ > w, ' > w.

(294) *-pš- > -s-: Egyptian xpš 'foreleg, thigh' > UA *kapsi 'thigh' (Tb)/*kasi (in 11 others)

(295) *-pd- > -t-, Egyptian xpd 'buttocks' > UA *kupta 'buttocks' (Ls); the others *kutta

(486) *-ft- > -t-: Egyptian xfty(w) 'enemies' > UA *qaytu 'enemy, opponent'

(298) *-bx- > -k-: Egyptian ʕbxn 'frog' (> *wapkan) > UA *wakaN-ta > *waqatta 'frog'

(1218) *-px- > -k-: npx 'blow, breathe'; *napxat 'puff, breath, gust' > UA *nïka 'be windy, blow'

(757) *-pħ- > -w-/Tak -ŋ-: šipħaa 'maid' > *siwa 'female, girl, sister, daughter'

(747) *-bʕ- > -w-: ṣibʕ- 'finger' > UA *sïwa /WMU *sipwa 'finger'

(299) *-pʕ- > -w-: Eg ḫpʕ 'chew' > UA *hiwa 'taste'

(297) *-p'- > -w-: Eg sp' 'centipede' > UA *ma-siwa 'centipede' (*sipwa > siwa)

(296) *-b'- > -w-: Eg ib' 'dance, run' > *yab'a/i > UA *yawa / *yawi 'dance'

38. The Phoenician-like Semitic-kw Corpus

The last two items that Hansen raises belong to the Phoenician-like Semitic-kw body of data, which corpus is introduced here. Their treatment requires some background, and then those two (26 and 20) are

treated later below, only mentioned here: (26) Hebrew bənee(y) 'children' > (UA *kwnee >) CN konee- 'child, offspring'; and (20) Semitic brr/barra 'select, choose' > UA *kwi 'take'.

Rogers claims that I am choosing from any of the three Near Eastern languages, thus inflating the number of possibilities. He and others seem to overlook these two paragraphs in *Exploring the Explanatory Power*:

> Such a tripartite combination might be labeled suspect, except that the quantity for each is more than sufficient for each corpus or section to stand on its own merit, as each has 400–700 sets … . If one simply cannot bear the thought of the three, then pick only one of the three groups, any one of which yields 400 to 700 items. Ought a correlation of 400 sets be ignored? Even 400 sets is two or three or four times what many Native American language families were founded on.[107]

The explanation above follows and refers to the first page in *Exploring the Explanatory Power*, which provides comparisons relevant to the strength of the case:

> After Sapir established Uto-Aztecan as a viable language family,[108] Voegelin, Voegelin, and Hale produced the first numbered list of 171 cognate sets.[109] Klar brought the Chumash languages to clarity with 168 sets.[110] Taylor established Caddoan, assembling 107 cognate sets.[111] Hale did the definitive study for Kiowa-Tanoan with 99 sets.[112] … Chamberlain began the union of Catawba with Siouan via 17 comparisons,[113] and Siebert secured it with mostly

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107. Stubbs, *Exploring the Explanatory Power*, 9.

108. Sapir, "Southern Paiute and Nahuatl."

109. Voegelin, Voegelin, and Hale, *Typological and Comparative Grammar of Uto-Aztecan*.

110. Kathryn Ann Klar, "Topics in Historical Chumash Grammar" (PhD diss., University of California, Berkeley, 1977).

111. Allan R. Taylor, "Comparative Caddoan," *International Journal of American Linguistics* 29 (1963): 113–31.

112. Kenneth Hale, "Toward a Reconstruction of Kiowa-Tanoan Phonology," *International Journal of American Linguistics* 33 (1967): 112–20.

113. Chamberlain, *Catawba Language*.

morphological correlations,[114] as not enough clear cognate sets were known at the time to establish correspondences.[115]

So between 50 and 171 sets have been sufficient to establish many, if not most, Native American language families, though more sets are invariably added later. Ought not this case of 1,528 sets merit proportionate consideration? Or any one of the single groups of data: the 400 sets of the Phoenician Semitic-kw, or the 400 sets of Egyptian, or the 700 sets of the Hebrew-Aramaic Semitic-p? Even 400 sets is nearly two-and-a-half times 171, or four times 99! Semitic-kw and Semitic-p are defined by what Semitic b changed to in that dialect: Semitic b > p in Semitic-p, and Semitic b > kw in Semitic-kw. Each has its own set of sound correspondences: b > p vs kw, non-initial r > r vs. y, ṣ > s vs. c, etc.

Below are examples of data and sound correspondences from the Phoenician-like Semitic-kw wherein Semitic b > UA *kw (set numbers are from *Exploring the Explanatory Power*):

(4) Hebrew baašel 'boiled, cook, ripen' > UA *kwasïC 'cook, ripen'

(5) Hebrew báášaar 'flesh, penis' > UA *kwasi 'tail, penis, flesh' (r > y/i)

(6) Hebrew baalaʕ 'swallow' > UA *kwïluC 'swallow'

(7) Semitic bahamat 'back' > UA *kwahami 'back'

(8) Semitic ḍabba 'hold, grasp, lock, guard' > UA *cakwa 'catch, grasp, lock'

(9) from ḍabba 'grasp' is a term for 'lizard' > UA *cakwa 'lizard'

(10) Semitic šabber 'break, break in pieces' > UA *sakwi 'break, ruin' (r > y/i)

(11) Semitic dabber 'speak' > UA *tïkwi 'say, talk, speak' (r > y/i)

(15) Semitic baaz(aa) 'falcon, hawk' > UA *kwasa/*kwisa 'eagle, bird of prey'

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114. Frank Siebert "Linguistic Classification of Catawba," *International Journal of American Linguistics* 11 (1945): 100–104, 211–18; and Campbell, *American Indian Languages*, 140.

115. Stubbs, *Exploring the Explanatory Power*, 1.

(16) blm 'muzzle, wrap, curb, restrain' > UA *kwalma 'put arm around, carry under arm'

(23) bilṭii 'worm' > UA *kwici 'worm'

(24) bky/bakaaʸ 'cry' > UA *kwïkï 'cry'

(27) brm 'worn out, weary, bored with' > UA *kwiyam 'be lazy, do lackadaisically' (r > y)

(1457) Arabic ṣabba 'pour, drip, overflow' > UA *cikwa 'rain'

(26) Hebrew bɛn 'son'; pl: bəneeʸ 'children (of)' > kʷnee > Nahuatl *konee 'child, offspring'

In regard to the above set (26), I appreciate Hansen's acceptance of and citing my reconstruction *kumCa 'husband, male' (284 above), though considering it the source of CN konee 'child, offspring' faces some phonological challenges: 27 of the 30 UA languages have a reflex of *kumCa 'husband': Numic *kuCma/*kumCa/*kumma; the rest of NUA *kuŋa; SUA *kuna. Cora and Huichol both have their expected vowel (kïna) for the SUA reflex *kuna; in fact, all 27 languages possessing a reflex have their expected vowel except for Tbr kona. So the first vowel of CN konee may be possible in UA *CuCa > CoCa, as such assimilations are possible if they happen before *u > CN i, but it does vary from the usual and expected UA *u > CN i; and the second vowel does not match either in quality (e vs. a) nor in length. None of the other UA languages show a long final vowel, and many lose that vowel completely (Ls, Cp, Cr, and most of Piman). If they do have a long vowel, it is the first vowel (Hp kooŋya, Tb kuuŋa, Ls kúúŋ, and Yq and My kuuna). However, the very short schwa-vowel of Hebrew/Phoenician after b > kw would have the rounding of kw easily become a short round vowel in a nearly vowel-less syllable: bənee > kwnee > konee. And the semantics match well: 'children' > 'child, offspring'.

> (20) Hebrew brr 'to select, choose' > CN kwi 'take something/someone';[116] actually, 'select, choose' > 'take' is a lesser/small/negligible semantic shift, and CN kwii-liaa 'to take something for self/others'.[117]

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116. Kartunnen, *Analytical Dictionary of Nahuatl*, 71; and Michel Launey, *An Introduction to Classical Nahuatl*, trans. and adapted by Christopher Mackay (Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 2011), 432.

117. Kartunnen, *Analytical Dictionary of Nahuatl*, 71.

Also of interest is Ls čikwáyi- 'to choose, select' aligning with the imperfective voweling and with *ti- prefix: *ti-barr > čikwáyi-. And of the same root is 19 below with similar reflexes in Semitic and UA: Semitic barr > UA kwiya even has an -r- instead of -y- in one UA language, Tbr kwira, but *kwiya in the other six branches of UA:

> (19) barr- 'land (as opposed to sea)' > UA *kwiya/*kwira 'earth' (r > y/i)

> (35) birkaa 'blessing' > UA *kwika 'sing, song'

Hebrew brk 'to bless, praise'; praises are often sung; and Syriac Semitic zmr also means both 'sing' and 'praise', so the denominalized verb's change from 'bless' to 'sing/song' is reasonable:

> (36) Semitic bġy > bʕy/baʕaa[1] 'enquire, search' > UA *kwawa 'invite, call'

> (37) Semitic bġw > bʕy/baʕaa[2] 'swell, bring to a boil > UA *kwawa 'boil' (36 and 37 above are separate Semitic verbs but merged to the same root in Hebrew-Phoenician)

> (38) bahiya 'become empty, compete with' > Hp kwahi/kwaha 'suffer loss, deprive, take'

> (39) bhl/bahal 'cease, be tranquil, calm, gentle' > UA *kwaha 'tamed, tranquil, gentle'

We might note that items 36 and 37 exemplify the Phoenician sound changes (Semitic ġ > Phoenician ʕ > UA *w), because Semitic-p has Semitic ġ > UA *k (would have yielded UA *paka), that is, Israeli Semitic and UA's Semitic-p distinguish Proto-Semitic ġ and ʕ, while Phoenician and UA's Semitic-kw do not, but merged both ġ and ʕ to ʕ about 1,000 years before Israeli Semitic did.

39. Long-distance relationships (again)

Hansen is generally civil, but other times he suggests that I'm excusing myself from "the strict methods for demonstrating long distance relationships." Did he miss that it is *not* a long-distance relationship? (See point 1.) Furthermore, both books (2011 and 2015) adhere to the comparative method, establishing an extensive network of lexica abiding sound correspondences, noting morphological parallels, and several other systems of parallels. Hansen continues: "He [Stubbs] claims that it is only natural that some forms borrowed into the proto-language survive only in some of the daughter languages." Of the 2,703 UA

cognate sets, only 11 survive in all daughter languages; nearly all — 2,692 — survive in only some of the daughter languages. How many Indo-European cognate sets appear in all daughter languages? Very few, I'm sure. Hansen writes further: "This is perhaps true, … but he [Stubbs] apparently does not recognize, or address, the fact that this practice leads to a much higher risk of chance resemblance being mistaken for cognates, that is, random noise being mistaken for a signal." Apparently Hansen did not read the book and seems to be taking Rogers's word for it, but it appears that Rogers also did not read the book. (See points 1, 6, 7, 21, 22, and 41.) Nonetheless, I express appreciation to Hansen for bringing to my attention one erroneous set and possibly a second, and for causing me to examine the other 12 items in greater depth, a process which served to strengthen the viability of those 12.

Answering Others' Questions

40. Peer reviews

Online inquirers ask why my 365,000-word work was not peer reviewed. A single peer review may be reasonable and fair, or it may be biased and unfair, the latter being more probable for a potentially career-damaging topic and for a large book that few feel inclined to digest very thoroughly. Unless all the data are carefully considered, a rejection is meaningless. Thus, better than a single review preceding the publication are multiple reviews, both official and unofficial, following the book's appearance, letting the eventual collective comprehension and opinion among specialists run its typically lengthy course for proposals outside the accepted dogma of the day. First came the unofficial responses to the data from Uto-Aztecan specialists: One reluctantly conceded, "Well, the sound correspondences are in order, and the amount of data seem convincing." Another well-versed Uto-Aztecanist, while looking through the data, periodically said, "You're kidding! I can't believe it. O ___! O my ___!" and other colorful expletives, as he conceded that the data were unexpectedly persuasive. Another well-versed Uto-Aztecanist emailed back: "I have looked over the work and find it convincing."[118]

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118. Anonymous, email message to author, January 25, 2016. These four responses were spoken in my presence or emailed to me from four non-Latter-day Saint PhDs in linguistics, who are all well-versed publishers in comparative UA as well; however, they probably prefer to remain anonymous.

Another prominent Uto-Aztecanist emailed back, "I was impressed with what I saw, of how much you have and the obvious similarities there."[119]

Other responses came from competent linguists who are not Uto-Aztecan specialists: Roger William Wescott — Rhodes Scholar at Oxford, president of the Linguistic Association of Canada and the United States, and author of 500 articles and 40 books — spoke positively of the work.[120] David H. Kelley, a Harvard PhD who has published in anthropology and linguistics and contributed to the decipherment of the Mayan glyphs, said upon receiving a draft: "The thick thing came in the mail and I did not want to tackle it, but dutifully opened it, intending to look at a page or two. However, I started to read and ended up reading the whole book. It is the most interesting and significant piece of research I have seen in years."[121] Besides the foregoing positive responses, most were silent, and a few expressed dislike — "it couldn't be!" — but none refuted it with specifics.

Then came the published reviews. The first two were positive[122]: one by Dirk Elzinga, a specialist in the Numic branch of UA, and one by John S. Robertson, a Harvard-trained historical linguist and prominent Mayanist. Two years later, the negative review by Rogers and the post by Hansen appeared. This is a detailed response to their reviews, from which a few illuminating insights were offered by Hansen, though the data show that both Rogers's and Hansen's efforts combined did more to clarify and strengthen than to overturn. Rogers's and Hansen's investigations together eliminated one item, maybe two, leaving 1,526 matches (1,528–2), but that does not include the additional parallels found since publishing those works. Those will be added into future editions.

41. Sound correspondences applied to loanwords

Some have questioned sound correspondences applying to loanwords. Borrowings and sound correspondences are not mutually exclusive. Early borrowings also obey laws of sound change subsequent to their entrance into the data. The problem with Rogers's criticism is that he assumes

119. Anonymous, email message to author, February 9, 2015.
120. Roger William Wescott, "Early Eurasian Linguistic Links with North America," in *Across before Columbus*, ed. Donald V. Gilmore and Linda S. McElroy (Laconia, NH: New England Antiquities Research Association [NEARA], 1998), 193–97.
121. John Sorenson sent David H. Kelley a copy of an early draft of my work, which Kelley read, then asked Sorenson for my phone number. Dr. Kelley called me and over the phone spoke these words to me along with other complimentary details.
122. Elzinga, review of *Exploring the Explanatory Power of Semitic and Egyptian in Uto-Aztecan*; and Robertson, "Exploring Semitic and Egyptian in Uto-Aztecan Languages."

common descent from Afro-Asiatic. In contrast, descent from a first millennium BCE Hebrew-Aramaic offshoot that joined with a language family in ancient America may be an easier way for some to visualize it. Indeed, borrowed vocabulary is often identified by its departure from the sound correspondences of the larger backdrop of a deeper time-depth; however, if the borrowing or the infusion occurred near the origins of the language family, then its vocabulary would adhere to a system of sound changes from that point on. As Robertson comments, there is an initial compulsory transformation of some sounds to accommodate the phonological inventory of the speakers of the receiving language,[123] and he gives examples of consistencies in sound change among borrowed lexica. He also adds, "There are many studies that deal with rules of borrowing. Changes are not random, as Hansen claims, but largely rule-governed."[124] Some initial changes relative to that initial contact seem apparent: for example, initial r- > t- probably occurred because those with whom they mixed did not have initial r- in their phonological inventory, though intervocalic -r- occurs as an allophone. Similarly, other Near East fricatives became stops: x > k and ġ > k and f > p. So there is a larger pattern of Near East fricatives becoming stops in the initial position. After the initial reception, normal sound changes would be expected from that point on. The data suggest that that process happened early in UA because most of the few cognate sets that are found in all or nearly all UA branches belong to the Near East infusion.

The 2011 work has 2,700 sets and 2015 has 1,500, some of which are not in 2011. So roughly half of the 2,700 sets (in *Uto-Aztecan: A Comparative Vocabulary*) may be of non-Near East contact group(s) and half from the Near East immigrants, perhaps subject to a series of contact situations. If the Near East group(s) arrived and mixed with other group(s), it might be thought of as a genetic descent from the Northwest Semitic offshoot that was later subject to contact scenarios. That is, the Near East data genetically descended from the language stage they brought with them — thus yielding a consistent set of sound correspondences — and later received outside admixture, borrowing more outside data through time for an increasingly complex picture. However, the Near East offshoot

123. John S. Robertson, November 4, 2019, reply to Gordon P. Richards, https://journal.interpreterfoundation.org/an-american-indian-language-family-with-middle-eastern-loanwords-responding-to-a-recent-critique/.

124. John S. Robertson, October 31, 2019, reply to Gordon P. Richards, https://journal.interpreterfoundation.org/an-american-indian-language-family-with-middle-eastern-loanwords-responding-to-a-recent-critique/.

did not extend as far back as Proto-Semitic, let alone Afro-Asiatic. In fact, the details in the language data point to the Near East components aligning with the late second millennium or early first millennium BCE — after a clear distinction materialized between Hebrew and Aramaic forms in Northwest Semitic but before the phonological mergers of *x and *ħ > ħ, and *ġ and *ʕ > ʕ.[125] This generally reflects pre-exilic Israeli Semitic (1200–600 BCE) and parallels the Late Egyptian period (1300–700 BCE), and the UA data also reflect Late Egyptian morphology.

42. Use of Syriac or Arabic

Some critics complain of my using languages such as Syriac or Arabic, which are attested after the presumed Old World departure. Of course, all such dialects and languages existed long before their attestation. Every lexicon of Hebrew cites Arabic, Syriac, Talmudic Aramaic forms, and semantics, and so forth, as related to the Old Testament (OT) language, because those forms and meanings have a history going back much further than their first attestations, even though they became attested after the OT was written. In fact, relative to reconstructed proto-Semitic, Arabic often exhibits better-preserved phonology that is closer to Proto-Semitic than Hebrew/Phoenician, Akkadian, and other Semitic languages written long before Arabic became written or attested. And as I said under point 26, Syriac is simply Aramaic. Little exists of early/old written Aramaic compared to a great deal of Syriac literature, and Syriac is basically the same as older Aramaic. Most of what we know of Aramaic lexicon is in the descendant dialects.

Similarly, no one should object to my using Arabic items when UA exhibits a form reflecting the sound correspondences of a Hebrew cognate to that Arabic term. The Hebrew OT accounts for the great majority of what we know of ancient Hebrew, but the OT contains only a small fraction of the spoken language of the time. For example, there is no word for 'squirrel' in the OT. Yet in UA we have two words for squirrel that match unattested Hebrew cognates for two Arabic words for squirrel. So (57) cannot be misconstrued as drawing from Arabic (yet another language), because UA *sikkuC matches an unattested Hebrew cognate, not the Arabic form:

> (57) Semitic/Arabic singaab 'squirrel' > Hebrew *siggoob 'squirrel' > UA *sikkuC 'squirrel'

(Proto-Semitic and Arabic -ng- yields a doubled second consonant

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125. Stubbs, *Exploring the Explanatory Power*, 178–90.

in Hebrew -gg-; also Proto-Semitic and Arabic long -aa- > -oo- in Hebrew; all sound changes are thus explained in the book.)

(957) Arabic qarqađ-aan 'squirrel' > UA *koŋi 'squirrel'; Arabic -aan is a suffix, not part of the noun stem. So Semitic *qarqađ 'squirrel' > UA *qoŋi 'squirrel', explained under point 37, is a second interesting case. When 1,500 such matches emerge, do we ascribe it to coincidence?

Relevant to the above and to point 43 below and to the criticism that using multiple Near Eastern languages inflates possibilities, let it be clear that three separate bodies of data align with one language each. Regarding the Phoenician corpus (Semitic-kw), Phoenician and Hebrew are basically the same language. Hebrew is the Israeli dialect of Phoenician/Canaanite, yet the ancient Hebrew database (the OT) is much larger than is available in Phoenician inscriptions. So it is perfectly valid to list Hebrew forms for comparison. However, Phoenician merged/combined some sounds that Hebrew kept separate through OT times, and the Semitic-kw data align with the Phoenician sound changes, not Israeli Semitic. In contrast, Semitic-p does retain the separate sounds (not yet merged) in Israeli Hebrew or Aramaic. So Semitic-p is, admittedly, a language that drew from both Hebrew and Aramaic. The Egyptian corpus is Late Egyptian data whose sound correspondences are the same as the Semitic-p data.

43. Semitic-p and Semitic-kw

Another complaint was 'why intervocalic -r- > -r- in Semitic-p, but -r- > -y- in Semitic-kw?' with the suggestion that I created another dialect to accommodate more data. No, the two sets of data are quite consistently cohesive within themselves: Semitic-p has *b > p, and *-r- > -r-, and *ṣ > s, while Semitic-kw has *b > kw, and *-r- > -y-, and *ṣ > c. Final -r behaves quite differently in the two sets as well. In Semitic-kw, where y/i is the usual reflex, it tends to assimilate vowels toward the high-front y/i:

(5) bááśaar 'flesh, penis' > UA *kwasi 'tail, penis, flesh'

(10) šabber 'break, break in pieces' > UA *sakwi 'break, ruin'

(11) dabber 'speak' > UA *tïkwi 'say, talk, speak'

(27) brm 'worn out, weary, bored with' > UA *kwiyam 'be lazy, do lackadaisically'

(19) barr 'land' > kwiya 'earth' though one language actually has kwira

(20) brr 'choose' > kwi 'take'

(65) mrr 'pass, go, walk'   > UA *miya 'go'

(64) krr/krkr 'go in circles, dance' > SP kiya 'have a round dance'

(62) srq/saraq 'to comb' > UA *siyuk/*ciyuk 'to comb'

In contrast, the Semitic-p data show it to have retained intervocalic -r- (baraq > berok 'lightning'; ḥaram > oerume 'woman') and final -r had no raising effect on the preceding vowel:

(616) dakar 'male' > UA *taka 'man, male, person, self, body'

(1279) yagar 'hill, heap of stones' > UA *yaka/*yakaR (AMR) 'nose, point, ridge'

(565) makar 'sell, give' > UA *maka 'give, sell' (all branches)

(664) ḫtr 'dig' > UA *hotaC 'dig'

(1331) 'ikkaar 'plowman, tiller of ground' > UA *wika 'digging stick'

(566) 'ariy 'lion' > UA *wari 'mountain lion'

(550) Aramaic bəsár 'flesh, penis' > UA *pisa 'penis'

(533) baṣṣara/*buṣṣar 'open eyes' > UA *pusa/*pusaC 'open eyes, wake up'

To those criticizing me for not having the UA liquids (r, L) all figured out, I say, no one has ever had the UA liquids figured out. In UA, the liquids and nasals are an as-yet-unresolved puzzle. Some think PUA had no liquids (that PUA *n and *t are the source of later liquids); others think PUA had one liquid (that surfaces as r or L, or both in a few languages); yet some evidence may suggest UA had both r and L. In *Uto-Aztecan: A Comparative Vocabulary* are eleven pages that address the nasal-liquid spectrum more thoroughly than anywhere else in the literature[126] and bring to bear data that either no one has noticed before or prefers not to talk about. The data show evidence of the UA liquid(s) going to -y-, within UA itself, independent of any Near East issues.

44. "Flea" vs. "jackrabbit"

Some object to the 'flea' vs. 'jackrabbit' inclusion. It is one of those on the list of semantic shifts, so one can discard it, if so inclined. I personally think there is much to place it as more probable than not. The

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126. Stubbs, *Uto-Aztecan*, 20–30.

four-consonant Semitic verb prʕš 'to jump' yields Hebrew parʕoš 'flea' signifying a 'jumper'; then in UA we have *par'osi/*paro'osi 'jackrabbit', which is also a fantastic jumper. A six-segment match (all four consonants and two vowels) between Semitic parʕoš and UA *par'osi/*paro'osi is well worth considering when parʕoš basically means 'jumper'. Regarding other semantic shifts, like 'chin' > 'mouth', Robertson comments that there are frequent associations among terms for mouth, lip, chin, jaw, cheek, and throat.[127] And yes, a 'ditch' and 'ravine/canyon' are the same thing, only differing in size.

In conclusion, many of the criticisms seem more attitudinal than substantive. It is tempting to suppose that lacking a few answers invalidates all answers, when in reality solid answers exist for over 90 percent of the questions. The 2015 work provides many answers to comparative UA matters that all previous linguists over the last century had not yet solved. Whether in comparative Indo-European or Uto-Aztecan, each specialist in his/her turn contributes a handful of insights but leaves many unanswered questions. Nevertheless, it should be apparent from the above response that the data in the book contain many more answers than Rogers, Hansen, and others became aware of. This suggests that a thorough, careful approach to *Exploring the Explanatory Power* should be fruitful in more accurately evaluating the claims.

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127. John S. Robertson, November 4, 2019, reply to Brad Anderson, https://journal.interpreterfoundation.org/an-american-indian-language-family-with-middle-eastern-loanwords-responding-to-a-recent-critique.

Appendix:
Abbreviations of Languages, Branches, and Other Terms

Northern Uto-Aztecan Languages (NUA)

Language	Branch
Mn Mono	Western Numic (WNum)
NP Northern Paiute	WNum
TSh Tumpisa Shoshoni	Central Numic (CNum)
Sh Shoshoni	CNum
WSh West Shoshoni	CNum
Cm Comanche	CNum
Kw Kawaiisu	Southern Numic (SNum)
Ch Chemehuevi	SNum
SP Southern Paiute	SNum
WMU White Mesa Ute	SNum
NU Northern/Uintah Ute	SNum
CU Colorado Ute	Num
Hp Hopi	its own branch
Tb Tübatülabal	its own branch
Ls Luiseño	Takic
Ca Cahuilla	Takic
Cp Cupeño	Takic
Sr Serrano	Takic
GB Gabrielino	Takic
Ktn Kitanemuk	Takic

Southern Uto-Aztecan Languages (SUA)

Language	Branch
TO Tohono O'odham	Piman
UP Upper Pima	Piman
NV Nevome	Piman

Language	Branch
LP Lower Pima	Piman
NT Northern Tepehuan	Piman
ST Southern Tepehuan	Piman
Ed Eudeve	Opatan
Op Opata	Opatan
Tbr Tubar	its own branch
Yq Yaqui	Cahitan
AYq Arizona Yaqui	Cahitan
My Mayo	Cahitan
Wr Guarijo	Tarahumaran (Trn)
Tr Tarahumara	Trn
Cr Cora	Corachol
Wc Huichol	Chorchol
CN Classical Nahuatl	Aztecan
Pl Pipil	Aztecan

Other Abbreviations

Abbrev.	Meaning
adj	adjective
C	any/unknown consonant
f	feminine, a grammatical gender in Semitic and Egyptian, whose fossilized morphology remains in UA, though no longer identified as feminine
IE	Indo-European, a large language family of Europe and western Asia, including Greek, Latin, Sanskrit (in India), Celtic, Germanic, Slavic, Hittite, and others
KT	Kiowa-Tanoan, a language family mainly of the Tewa, Tiwa, Towa pueblos in New Mexico, and Kiowa on the plains

Abbrev.	Meaning
m	masculine, a grammatical gender in Semitic and Egyptian, whose fossilized morphology remains in UA, though no longer identified as masculine
n	noun
NUA	Northern Uto-Aztecan, which includes the Numic, Hopi, Tübatülabal, and Takic branches
obj	object
OT	Old Testament
pl	plural
poss	possessive
PUA	Proto-Uto-Aztecan, the theoretical ancestor of the UA language family
sg	singular
s.th.	something
SUA	Southern Uto-Aztecan, includes Piman, Opatan, Cahitan, Tbr, Trn, Corachol, and Aztecan branches
subj	subject
UA	Uto-Aztecan, a Native American language family of the languages and branches listed above
V	any/unknown vowel
v	verb
vt	verb transitive
vi	verb intransitive

Understanding Ritual Hand Gestures of the Ancient World: Some Basic Tools

David Calabro

Abstract: *The ritual use of hand gestures in covenant-making in ancient times is a topic of peculiar interest to Latter-day Saints. In this article, David Calabro summarizes results drawn from his doctoral research, providing readers with some tools to evaluate ancient gestures. The questions he suggests are novel, as is the way they are couched in an organized scheme. The author concludes that Latter-day Saints, who belong to a tradition saturated with ritual gestures, should be among those most educated about them.*

[**Editor's Note:** Part of our book chapter reprint series, this article is reprinted here as a service to the LDS community. Original pagination and page numbers have necessarily changed, otherwise the reprint has the same content as the original.

See David Clabro, "Understanding Ritual Hand Gestures of the Ancient Word: Some Basic Tools," in *Ancient Temple Worship: Proceedings of The Expound Symposium 14 May 2011,* ed. Matthew B. Brown, Jeffrey M. Bradshaw, Stephen D. Ricks, and John S. Thompson (Orem, UT: The Interpreter Foundation; Salt Lake City: Eborn Books, 2014), 143–58. Further information at https://interpreterfoundation.org/books/ancient-temple-worship/.]

The ritual use of hand gestures in ancient times is a topic of peculiar interest to Latter-day Saints. A book by Alonzo Gaskill on the meaning of gospel ordinances includes several sections devoted to ritual hand gestures.[1] Gaskill explores the meaning of these gestures in ancient times in order to illuminate the meaning of these gestures for

modern Latter-day Saints. In his discussion of ritual gestures used in covenant-making, he writes, "The meaning of such oath-making rituals is sometimes defined, and at other times left for the participant to discover. But each is clearly laden with symbolic meaning and, consequently, with a divine offering to the inquisitive participant who seeks understanding."[2] According to Victor Ludlow, the ordinances of the temple tune our minds to the significance of the hands as used in worship.[3]

From 2008 to the present, I have been conducting research on the use of ritual hand gestures in the ancient Near East. Much of this research was gathered in my 2014 doctoral dissertation on Northwest Semitic hand-lifting gestures and handclasps.[4] Occasionally, in conversations with fellow Latter-day Saints, I am asked to summarize the findings of my research. Those who ask me this usually wish to gain insights about the ordinances of the Church, particularly temple ordinances, through understanding the ritual gestures of the ancient societies. The possibility of such comparisons is also of interest to me. Indeed, the deeper I delve into the ritual practices of ancient societies, the more I find these practices and those of the Latter-day Saint temple to be mutually instructive.

Nevertheless, like many people who have written a doctoral dissertation, the request to summarize my findings usually leaves me tongue-tied. One reason for this is that research in the humanities involves discovering questions as well as answering them; describing the answers is thus difficult without laying the groundwork of the questions that were asked. This is particularly true with ritual gestures, a topic whose complexity few realize. Discussion of sacred priesthood ordinances is subject to bounds of place and manner, which means that many members of the Church, even though they have reflected extensively on the meaning of ritual gestures, have not considered questions that arise from dialogue with those who hold alternate interpretations. In short, members of the Church readily recognize that ancient ritual gestures are relevant to their own, but they lack the tools to evaluate the ancient gestures in an appropriate way.

In this essay, I intend to provide some tools that can help interested Latter-day Saints to evaluate ancient gestures. Unlike most essays, this one does not aim to answer a research question. Instead, it aims to suggest questions, with the intent of preparing interested readers to discuss possible answers while having a clear view of the issues involved. Based on my interactions with many Latter-day Saints, even including those with academic training, I am convinced that many of the questions I will suggest are novel. The presentation of these questions as an organized

scheme is also a new contribution. The overarching assumption of this essay is that Latter-day Saints, who belong to a tradition saturated with ritual gestures, a tradition which also lays claim to ancient origins, should be among those who are most educated on ancient ritual gestures.

Sources and the Question of Gesture Reconstruction

Ancient sources relevant to the study of ritual gestures can be divided into two basic kinds. First, there are textual sources. The books of the Old and New Testaments are examples of ancient textual sources that include information about ritual gestures. For example, in Genesis 14:22, Abram says, "I have raised my hand to Yahweh El Elyon."[5] The raising of the hand described here is a ritual gesture, in this case one of covenant-making.[6] Other relevant textual sources can be found in a variety of ancient languages and genres, from Homer's Iliad to hieroglyphic texts on stelae from ancient Egypt. Many of these sources can be found in published collections in libraries.

Textual sources are especially useful for reconstructing the larger sequence of events in which ritual gestures were situated. For example, Abram's reference to the gesture in Genesis 14:22 is followed by an oath, which helps to identify this as a covenant-making gesture. However, textual sources also carry some inherent ambiguities. The text does not tell us, for instance, whether Abram raises his hand with the palm inward, outward, sideways, or with some special finger articulation. Neither does it tell us how high Abram raised his hand or for how long. These questions can only be decided by comparison with other sources. Only rarely does an ancient text go into detail about the form of a gesture, and even the rare detailed descriptions are never enough to reconstruct a gesture with full accuracy.

The second kind of source is visual representations, often called "iconographic sources." These include sculptures, cast figures, engravings, paintings, and other art forms. These sources are extremely abundant in the ancient world — as far as my own research area goes, the iconographic sources far outnumber the textual sources. As one example, a number of carved ivories from the Assyrian fortress of Nimrud show a male figure wearing a crown, kneeling and raising both hands with the palms outward.[7]

Iconographic depictions are of great value for understanding the forms of ritual gestures. However, there are limitations to this. Ancient visual representations do not depict movement, so it is impossible to know whether what is represented is one moment in a motion sequence

or simply a static gesture. Ancient iconography is also prone to sacrifice accuracy for the sake of visually pleasing composition. For example, an image of two figures facing each other and performing the same gesture in mirror image may be suspected of having switched the right and left hands of one figure in order to preserve symmetry.

The key issue to bear in mind with textual and iconographic sources is that these sources provide evidence for gestures, but they do not include actual gestures. For example, the Hebrew phrase used to describe the gesture in Genesis 14:22 is *herim yad*, "raise the hand." Even though some scholars are accustomed to using locutions like "the gesture *herim yad*," and some even go so far as to assume that there is a one-to-one correspondence between phrase and gesture, this is inaccurate and potentially misleading.[8] Just as we might describe a given gesture in English as "he raised his hand" or "he put up his hand," ancient textual sources also use different phrases to describe what is really the same gesture; they also occasionally use the same basic phrase to describe different gestures. Likewise, with iconographic sources, one has to make adjustments to account for the inherent ambiguities of the ancient artistic style.

Therefore, understanding ancient ritual gestures always involves reconstructing these gestures in the imagination, based on clues found in the ancient sources. The two main aspects that have to be reconstructed are the gesture's form and its context. Given the ambiguities inherent in the sources, one should consider multiple possibilities. One should ask questions like the following: What might this gesture have looked like? What kind of setting was it performed in? In asking these questions, both scholars and laypeople can learn much from contemporary artists, playwrights, and moviemakers, who are accustomed to thinking about these issues. Considering the possibilities of form and context is critical, since these aspects establish the basis for comparison across sources, as well as comparison with ritual gestures that can be observed in modern religious practice.

Gestures as a System

Most studies of ancient gestures focus on one particular gesture, marshalling textual and iconographic evidence to illuminate the gesture's form or its meaning in context. However, it is important to keep in mind that ritual gestures usually exist as part of a system of nonverbal signs in a culture. Their meaning derives as much from similarities and contrasts with other gestures as from aspects of context. In The Church of Jesus

Christ of Latter-day Saints, for example, in ordinances involving the laying on of hands, each officiator typically uses two hands. But when there is a large number of Priesthood holders officiating in the circle, each uses only the right hand, while the left hand is placed on the shoulder of the person to the left. When an infant is being blessed, hands are placed under the infant rather than on the head. A full account of the gesture of the laying on of hands should account for all of these variations, which are part of the same system.[9]

One important consideration in dealing with ancient ritual gestures is the overall complexity of the system. This consideration is related to the characterization of the system as a whole, including the origins of gestures and how they have developed from those origins. In Hinduism and Buddhism, there exists a large body of gestures known as *mudra*, which appear in ritual and especially in religious dance. The *mudra* are also described in mythology and depicted in iconography. There are many dozens of *mudra*, each having a very specific form and meaning. The large number of signs in the system allows each sign to function almost like a word in spoken language; gestures can be strung together to form sequences of meanings, such as to tell a story in dance. We know a great deal about *mudra* because Hindu and Buddhist scholars wrote treatises in which the gestures are described in detail.[10] Unfortunately, most ancient societies have not bequeathed to modern times a treatise on ritual gestures. Evidence of the total number of gestures in ancient Near Eastern ritual is relatively scant. But it makes a great deal of difference whether we assume on the one hand that the available evidence represents the total system, or whether we assume on the other hand that this represents only the tip of the iceberg. If the latter is true, then each gesture may have a very specific meaning.

At the beginning of the 20th century, some scholars suggested that ancient Near Eastern gestures were originally part of an extensive system like the *mudra* (other models included Masonic ritual and the nonverbal signs of Chinese secret societies). According to this point of view, gestures that originally functioned as part of an extensive system in temple rites have gradually been reduced in number and used in less sacred contexts.[11] More recent scholarship on Near Eastern gestures has taken a nearly opposite view: the ritual gestures are thought to be few in number and to have derived their meanings from mundane contexts. For example, raising both hands with the palms upward was thought to have begun as a simple begging gesture and to have become a prayer gesture when transferred to a temple context.[12]

Given the limited extent of available evidence, it is unlikely that any one of these views can be conclusively proven. Considering both viewpoints opens up a number of interesting questions, such as the following: Is the ancient system of ritual gestures explainable in terms of another form of behavior, such as dance, spoken language, drama, or mundane human interactions? If not, might there be vestiges of an earlier system that is explainable in these terms? In light of modern gestures that are analogous to the ancient ones and that may be historically related, could there be a development in the overall nature of the system from ancient to modern times?

Do Ancient Ritual Gestures Have Correct and Incorrect Interpretations?

One of the most interesting things I have found in my research is the great diversity of interpretations that have been suggested for ritual gestures. As one example, for the gesture of raising one hand with the palm outward (as found in Genesis 14:22 and elsewhere in textual and iconographic sources), at least 12 distinct interpretations are found in the literature. Several scholars regard it as a gesture of "adoration" or "worship," others call it a "gesture of greeting or blessing," some describe it as an apotropaic sign (a sign whose purpose is to ward away evil), one views it as a symbol of a deity, one suggests that it is a sign of non-treachery or purity, and the list goes on.[13] Is there any way to say that one interpretation is correct and that another is incorrect? There are some criteria that can be applied. One of these is the form of the gesture. The interpretation that the gesture signifies either a lack of treachery or the purity of the one making the gesture, for example, is less viable if the palm of the hand is turned inward, and it is likewise less viable if the gesture involves making a fist and raising it high above the head as if to smite. As it turns out, based on comparison with iconographic sources, the gesture likely involved raising the hand in front with the palm facing toward the addressee, so this interpretation (which was made by David Seely) is among the more likely ones.[14] Another criterion is the ritual context of the gesture. The fact that Abram takes an oath after making reference to the gesture, using standard Hebrew oath formulae, means that an interpretation that fits with the idea of oath-taking is more likely than one that involves, say, destroying enemies. Nevertheless, we should be careful not to assume that the idea of oath-taking is identical with the meaning of the gesture, since the gesture may impart its own distinctive meaning within the oath-taking context.

Even after applying the criteria of form and context, the number of possible interpretations of any given gesture is rather high. All of the interpretations mentioned above are still viable in terms of these two criteria, despite the fact that some who have suggested these interpretations have argued as if their interpretation is valid to the exclusion of others. In rare cases, the range of interpretation of a gesture may be narrowed if the gesture has an obvious relationship to something whose interpretation is indisputable. For example, it is thought that the ancient Mesopotamian oath gesture of "touching the throat" involved a motion signifying that the consequence of breaking the oath would be the cutting of the oath-breaker's throat.[15] Here the gesture's visual similarity to cutting the throat would guarantee the interpretation of the gesture. Moreover, ritual gestures may change their form over time, and a gesture that once bore a strong resemblance to another action may develop into a less obvious sign. In such cases, one could possibly say that the historical origin of the gesture suggests the correctness of a certain interpretation. However, people do not always know the origins of the ritual gestures they perform, and it is questionable whether an interpretation based on historical development is more correct than one that applies directly to the current gesture as experienced by those who perform it.

Can one appeal to factors external to the gesture itself to decide if one interpretation is uniquely correct? Often, scholars who study ritual gestures appeal to ideas found in ancient sources, claiming that because an interpretation matches that of a particular source, it must be representative of the ancient culture in a way that other interpretations are not. For example, Johan Lust cites a host of ancient sources to prove that the core meaning of the raised-hand gesture has nothing to do with oath-taking but rather signifies entering into action to the addressee's favor or detriment.[16] The main problem with this kind of approach is that the ancient sources can be used to prove a great number of interpretations, and these interpretations may all be indicative of the ancient culture. It is useful to think of this in general terms, as if the gesture were practiced in our own time. Latter-day Saints are especially suited to think in these terms, since ritual gestures are an important part of our own living religious tradition. (In fact, Abram's oath gesture of raising the hand appears analogous to the act of raising the right hand to sustain leaders and to administer the ordinance of baptism, both of which are connected with covenant-making.) As long as an interpretation is plausible in terms of the gesture's form and context, what is there to exclude it? If a dozen people participating in a ritual interpret the same gesture, each in a

different way, who is to say that one participant is correct and the others are not? If our own religious practice is taken as a model, it would seem likely that the interpretation of gestures was a matter of private introspection and inspiration; ideas may have been shared in certain settings, but there would be no penalty for having a divergent interpretation or indeed for having no interpretation at all. This means that citing an ancient source for an interpretation does not prove that the interpretation is exclusively correct, and claims of exclusive correctness probably get us further from the ancient state of affairs rather than closer to it.

It is possible to imagine the interpretation of a gesture in the ancient society being rendered consistent by convention, either with the intervention of an authoritative institution or simply by popular consensus. A study by Desmond Morris on ritual gestures in Europe included a survey of large numbers of people to determine how people in different locales interpreted various gesture forms used in daily life.[17] When a majority of the members of a community agree on the interpretation of a gesture, this lends correctness to the interpretation, just as the correct meaning of words in a language is based on consensus in the community of those who speak the language. However, interpretations of ritual gestures often are not subject to convention. According to the anthropologist Roy Rappaport, one of the main characteristics of ritual is that it is "not encoded by the performers."[18] This means that ritual gestures are viewed as deriving from a world outside that of human interaction. When asked what ritual gestures mean, informants often reply that they do not know, that they are performing the gestures simply because that is what they have always done.[19] If the meaning of ritual gestures is not rendered consistent by repetition among members of the community, and if interpretations are not censored by a higher authority, then there is nothing to stop people from developing a diversity of interpretations. The question of correctness may then be essentially moot. An interpretation found in an ancient source would be speculative to the same degree as that of a modern scholar (provided that the scholar is knowledgeable about the ancient culture and has a workable reconstruction of the ritual).

The statement that ritual is "not encoded by the performers" suggests the possibility that the interpretation of a ritual gesture may be regarded as a mystery whose correctness is based not on convention but on divine ratification. This idea is implicit in the concept, familiar to Latter-day Saints, of "ordinances" — that is, rites that are prescribed by God through revelation. If God is the author of a gesture, then God is the ultimate determiner of its interpretation. In some cases, a revelation

having to do with the interpretation of a gesture may be included as part of the ritual itself or in a text associated with the ritual's origins. This is seen, for example, in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. One of the texts describing the inauguration of this ordinance includes an interpretation of passing the bread and pouring the wine: "This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me … This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you" (Luke 22:19-20, kjv). The sacrament prayers used in the Church today (which are based on passages in the Book of Mormon and the Doctrine and Covenants) mention eating and drinking in remembrance of the Son. However, it is almost impossible for explanations such as these to exhaust the meaning of a gesture. The sacrament of the Lord's Supper can be interpreted beyond the words of the ritual and its inaugural texts, and these interpretations are not necessarily invalid just because they are not explicit in the texts.[20] Thus divine revelation as encoded in the ritual can be cited as a standard of correctness, but it does not exclude other interpretations.

While it is usually impossible to narrow the interpretations of a gesture down to a single correct one, it is usually possible to find an interpretation that is more fundamental to the inherent properties of the gesture than others. Arriving at this fundamental kind of interpretation involves, once again, paying close attention to the form of the gesture and its context as reconstructed from the available evidence. It also involves paying more attention to what the gesture *does* than to what it *resembles* or *signifies*. If we take as an example the hand-lifting gesture in Genesis 14:22, we can see that the form of the gesture as revealed in iconography, with the palm of the hand facing toward an addressee and with the fingers pointing upward, has important implications for the way the ritual as a whole is organized. The gesture designates not only an agent (the one making the gesture) but also a single addressee who is roughly on the same level as the agent. It also has the potential to call attention to a participant in the ritual who is located above the agent and addressee (such as a heavenly witness), since the fingers point upward. We can thus say that the gesture sets up a ritual interaction in which there is one agent, one addressee, and sometimes a heavenly participant. All of the interpretations of this gesture mentioned above presuppose this kind of interaction format. Further, if we assemble all of the evidence for the contexts in which this gesture is performed, we find that the function that best describes what this gesture does in all cases is that of marking a performative act — that is, the gesture signals a ritual action that brings

about a new state of affairs, such as putting the agent or the addressee under an obligation.[21]

In summary, some questions that can be used to evaluate the extent of an interpretation's "correctness" are the following: Does this interpretation accord with the form of the gesture? Does it accord with the context? Does the interpretation exclude other interpretations, and if so, on what basis? Finally, is the interpretation fundamentally related to how the gesture functions in context, or is the gesture viewed in terms of a similarity or symbolic relationship to other concepts?

How Many Interpretations Can Ancient Ritual Gestures Have?

Since a ritual gesture can have multiple correct interpretations — some having to do with the gesture's basic functions and others having to do with its more abstract significance — the proper task of those interested in the meanings of gestures is not to identify a single correct interpretation but rather to identify the possible interpretations in an organized way. The number of possible interpretations is infinite, of course. However, a finite number of universal categories can be used to classify all the possible interpretations. These categories have been defined in the disciplines of semiotics (the study of signs) and linguistic anthropology. The ten sets of questions outlined below can facilitate understanding of hand gestures in ancient sources by helping the interested person to identify possible interpretations and to place these interpretations in proper perspective.

Most interpretations of ritual gestures focus on what a particular aspect of the gesture resembles or signifies. For example, Zeev Falk focuses on the upward motion of the hand-lifting gesture in Genesis 14:22, stating that this signifies affirmation (based on a perceived likeness to clasping the hand of a judge in court).[22] We may call these interpretations *referential*, since they concern things that the gesture refers to through likeness or symbolism.

Referential interpretations can be classified by the aspect of the gesture that forms the basis of the interpretation. Hand gestures can be broken down into seven aspects, which include the components of the gesture itself and the larger aspects of which the gesture forms a part. First, there are the *body parts* used to perform the gesture: the arm, the hand, and the fingers. Second, these body parts are formed into a certain *shape*. For example, in one gesture depicted on Egyptian reliefs of battle scenes, the hand is formed into the shape of a bull's head, with the thumb and little finger extended and the other fingers bent forward.[23] In the raised-hand oath gesture discussed above, the hand shape is basically

flat, with the fingers extended and close together, and the elbow bent approximately to the square. A third component is the *position* of the shaped hand: whether it is held high, low, to the front, to the side, etc. Fourth, in many cases, the gesture involves a certain *motion* of the hand, such as moving it repeatedly from a high to a low position or changing its shape from an open hand to a closed fist. Fifth, the gesture may involve holding or manipulating an *object* (or pretending to do so). As for the larger aspects of which the gesture forms a part, we can mention the *body* of the agent performing the gesture and the overall *setting* of the ritual. We can outline these seven aspects as follows:

Aspects of Ritual Hand Gestures
Components of the gesture itself:
    1. Body parts (arm, hand, fingers)
    2. Shape
    3. Position
    4. Motion
    5. Object
Larger Aspects:
    6. Body
    7. Setting

Each of these aspects can be made the basis of a referential interpretation. For example, Wolff suggests that the hand in ancient Hebrew society was a symbol of one's power. Thus raising the hand would be equivalent to exalting or vaunting one's own power, and "giving the hand" (2 Kings 10:15) would signify offering one's power in helping the addressee.[24] This is an example of a referential interpretation based on the body part used to perform the gesture, namely the hand. In the cases of the larger aspects of which the gesture forms a part, the meaning of the gesture fits within a referential interpretation of the agent's body or the larger setting. For example, Falk's interpretation of the raised-hand gesture as one of affirmation fits within an interpretation of the ritual setting as a legal one, akin to a courtroom presided over by a judge.

The following questions can help one to identify possible referential interpretations:

    1. What might the arm, hand, and fingers symbolize? Given this symbolism, what would it mean to shape, position, and move these body parts as done in the gesture? If the gesture involves use of an object, does this relate to the symbolism of the body parts?

2. Does the hand shape (including any special finger articulation) or the shape of the arm resemble anything in the observed world? Might the shape stand symbolically for a personage or an abstract idea?

3. Is the position of the gesture high or low, and is the hand positioned toward or away from an addressee? Might this position contrast with that of another gesture? If so, might this contrast have significance in the ancient society?

4. Is there an indication that the gesture involves motion? If so, does the motion resemble any kind of movement commonly observed elsewhere? Might the features of the motion (such as its speed, its repetition, or the overall amount of movement) carry cultural significance?

5. Is there an object, real or imagined, associated with the gesture? What is the significance of this object, and why would it be used in this gesture?

6. Might the person performing the gesture represent another personage? Aside from the hand gesture in question, do the performer's ritual actions resemble actions commonly observed elsewhere? How does the gesture in question fit with the role or overall actions of the performer?

7. Is the ritual setting analogous to a setting known elsewhere in the observed world or in mythology? If so, is the gesture similar to an action associated with this other setting?

In addition to referential interpretations, there are interpretations that focus on the fundamental function of the gesture, including both what the gesture does to the context and how it is affected by the context. An example of this is the interpretation of the hand-lifting gesture that I suggested above, including the shaping of the context into a two- or three-part interaction and the function of marking a performative act. This kind of interpretation is known in semiotics as *indexical*; when a gesture either affects or is affected by an aspect of context, the gesture is said to *index* that aspect of its context.

Indexical interpretations can be classified by the aspect of context that is singled out as affecting or being affected by the gesture. A gesture's context can be analyzed in many ways. Three main aspects, however, are especially important with regard to the indexical functioning of gestures. The first aspect is the participants defined by the gesture. Some gestures are directed inward or lack a specific addressee, in which cases the format consists only of the agent of the gesture. The gestures I have studied,

however, usually have a specific outward directionality and designate at least one addressee.[25] The gesture may be affected by the participant format, such as when one salutes an officer of higher rank in a military ceremony. The gesture may also impact the relative status of participants, their roles (such as when a person is ordained), or their physical states. Second, ritual gestures index the surrounding space. For instance, they may be directed toward one of the cardinal directions. They may also be performed close-up or at a distance, defining the breadth of the ritual space. Third, gestures index the ritual sequence as it progresses through time. The beginning of the gesture and the return of the hands to a resting position mark off the ritual act as such. Further, the gesture may function as a key allowing the agent to progress to a new stage of the ritual.

Questions to ask in order to identify indexical interpretations include the following:

1. Who does the gesture to whom? What are the relative statuses of the agent and addressee of the gesture? Does this status change during the course of the ritual? Does one of the participants take on a new role or an obligation through the performance of the ritual? How does it feel to perform the gesture and to be its addressee? Is there evidence that the gesture was thought to bring about supernatural changes in the physical world?
2. Where are the participants located, and what is the distance between them? Do those who perform the gesture form a distinct group, so that the gesture effectively creates a boundary between participants?
3. What parts of the ritual precede and follow the gesture? How might the gesture recall, anticipate, or lead into other parts of the ritual?

In identifying indexical interpretations, one must pay attention to speech that accompanies the gesture, since the function of the ritual may be shared between gesture and speech. For instance, the oath and the gesture in Genesis 14:22-23 work in tandem to carry forward the function of obligating Abram.

Conclusion

Ritual hand gestures are a complex topic with great promise for future research. Among the most important tools for understanding the multifaceted meanings of gestures are questions that force one to probe into the gestures, their sources, and their interpretations. I have provided

several sets of questions which, I hope, will be of service to those who wish to undertake this process.

Answers to these questions can be found in the sources cited. But answers are relatively easy to come by; what is more difficult is knowing how to evaluate these answers and place them in a larger perspective. I have focused on describing the issues and suggesting relevant questions, with the aim that interested people will be better prepared to obtain their own lasting insights.

Questioning the meanings of gestures is something that can be done by scholars and laymen alike. To be sure, answers to some questions are more easily accessible to scholars trained in the particulars of the society in question. Nevertheless, Latter-day Saints have an advantage in hailing from a tradition that encourages us to think deeply about the meanings of ritual gestures. When we regard the gestures of the ancients, we can feel not only fascination but also kinship.

Notes

1. Alonzo L. Gaskill, *Sacred Symbols: Finding Meaning in Rites, Rituals, and Ordinances* (Springville, Utah: CFI, 2011), 75-78 (with notes on pp. 86-89), 186-97 (with notes on pp. 199-213), 219-23 (with notes on pp. 243-47), 259-61 (with notes on pp. 267-68).

2. Gaskill, *Sacred Symbol*s, 186.

3. Victor L. Ludlow, *Isaiah: Prophet, Seer, and Poet* (Salt Lake City: Deseret, 1982), 473.

4. David Calabro, *Ritual Gestures of Lifting, Extending, and Clasping the Hand(s) in Northwest Semitic Literature and Iconography* (unpublished University of Chicago dissertation, 2014).

5. The translations from ancient languages herein are my own unless otherwise indicated.

6. Calabro, *Ritual Gestures*, 63-66.

7. See David Calabro, "Gestures of Praise: Lifting and Spreading the Hands in Biblical Prayer," in *Ascending the Mountain of the Lord: Temple, Praise, and Worship in the Old Testament*, ed. David R. Seely, Jeffrey R. Chadwick, and Matthew J. Grey (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2013), 113.

8. As just one example of this tendency, compare the extremely influential book by Mayer Gruber, *Aspects of Nonverbal Communication in the Ancient Near East* (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1980), 25-44. On these pages Gruber discusses the "gestures" *paraś kappayim* "spread the palms" and *naśaʾ yadayim* "lift the hands." According to him,

these expressions represent two gestures with different meanings. For a critique of this approach, see Calabro, "Gestures of Praise," 105-21.

9. For discussion of gestures as a system in the Old Testament, see David Calabro, "'When You Spread Your Palms, I Will Hide My Eyes': The Symbolism of Body Gestures in Isaiah," *Studia Antiqua* 9 (2011): 16-32.

10. See Ananda K. Coomaraswamy and Duggirala Gopalakrishnayya, *The Mirror of Gesture: Being the Abhinaya Darpana of Nandikesvara* (New York: E. Weyhe, 1936); Ernest Dale Saunders, *Mudrā: A Study of Symbolic Gestures in Japanese Buddhist Sculpture* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1960).

11. See especially J. S. M. Ward, *The Sign Language of the Mysteries* (2 vols.; London: Baskerville Press, 1928).

12. Gruber, *Aspects of Nonverbal Communication*, 25-44.

13. For discussion and references, see Calabro, *Ritual Gestures*, 636-51.

14. David Rolph Seely, "The Raised Hand of God as an Oath Gesture," in *Fortunate the Eyes that See: Essays in Honor of David Noel Freedman in Celebration of His Seventieth Birthday*, ed. Astrid B. Beck et al. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 417, no. 3.

15. Paul Sanders, "So May God Do to Me!" *Biblica* 85/1 (2004): 91-98; Gaskill, *Sacred Symbols*, 186-88.

16. Johan Lust, "For I Lift up my Hand to Heaven and Swear: Deut 32:40," in *Studies in Deuteronomy in Honour of C. J. Labuschagne on the Occasion of His 65th Birthday*, ed. F. Garcia Martinez et al. (Leiden: Brill, 1994), 155-64; Johan Lust, "The Raised Hand of the Lord in Deuteronomy 32:40 according to MT, 4QDeut-q, and LXX," in *Textus: Studies of the Hebrew University Bible Project, Volume XVIII*, ed. Alexander Rofé (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1995), 33-45. Lust goes so far as to deny that this gesture belongs in an oath-taking context, which can be shown to be incorrect. However, for the sake of argument, we can adjust Lust's suggestion by applying it only to the symbolic meaning of the gesture.

17. Desmond Morris et al., *Gestures: Their Origins and Distribution* (New York: Stein and Day, 1979).

18. Roy Rappaport, "The Obvious Aspects of Ritual," in *Ecology, Meaning, and Religion* (Richmond, California: North Atlantic Books, 1979), 175, 179.

19. Frits Staal, "The Meaninglessness of Ritual," *Numen* 26/1 (1979): 2-22.

Vaughn J. Featherstone's Atlanta Temple Letter

Christopher J. Blythe

Abstract: *In this essay, I examine a letter written by Elder Vaughn J. Featherstone in 1983 and deposited in the cornerstone of the Atlanta Georgia Temple. The letter is addressed to twenty-first century members of the Church and is written with the expectation that these future Saints will have been alive for the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. I consider the claims made about this letter from a recent viral video entitled "7 Year Tribulation in the SEVENTH Seal TIMELINE."*

On March 12, 2020, the video "7 Year Tribulation in the SEVENTH Seal TIMELINE" was released on YouTube.[1] Six weeks later it had 375,000 views and had made the rounds on various Facebook groups, including one devoted to discussion among seminary teachers. The video presents a last days timeline that places the Second Coming in the very near future. The video's creator, Masayoshi Montemayor, makes his points largely through official Church sources, including the Church's website, institute manuals, and conference reports. However, in other instances, he points to obscure sources, including an April 1983 letter written by Seventy Vaughn J. Featherstone. This letter serves as Montemayor's final piece of evidence for an imminent second coming. In this essay, I examine this document to understand its limitations for the argument Montemayor makes. My goal is not to criticize Elder Featherstone or to disparage sincere Latter-day Saints — among them presumably this video's creator — who like myself are eager to be present for our Savior's coming.

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1. Millennial Reign, "7 Year Tribulation in the SEVENTH Seal TIMELINE," YouTube video, 54:00, March 12, 2020, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Klg4aj7C5vk.

The Letter

On April 6, 1983, Elder Featherstone drafted a letter addressed to twenty-first century members of the Church. It would be deposited in a time capsule at the dedication of the Atlanta Georgia Temple presumably, like other Church time capsules, to be opened fifty years later. This powerful document predicts the millennial ministry of the Savior and the future success of the Saints' missionary labors in the American South. The opening paragraph describes what Featherstone believed the experience of these future Latter-day Saints would be like fifty years in the future.

> Those of you who read this letter have witnessed the second coming of Christ, the day for which we have long awaited. What a glorious experience to live in the day when our Lord, our Redeemer, the very Son of God is reigning personally upon the earth. We can imagine what General Conference must be like, to have the Savior address the people. ... Oh what a blessed generation you are and must be.[2]

Featherstone notes that in his own time the Church was facing great adversity. "I believe we are on the very threshold of great trials. The darkest clouds in the history of the world are on the horizon."[3]

Featherstone then turns his attention to the future growth of the Church in the American South.

> The Atlanta Temple is the first temple in the South. I can see temples in Charlotte, Columbia, Birmingham, Jackson, Nashville, and in Louisiana and Arkansas. We now have more than 110,000 members of the Church in this area. I can see in my mind[']s eye great hosts of converts to exceed a million members in the South. We will baptize people in the tens of thousands. These members, traditional Protestant and Catholic Christians are being prepared right now. … Ten times tens of thousands will be baptized into the Lord's true Church. I know that the spirit of the Lord is brooding over the South. You who are reading this letter are witnesses to my words.[4]

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2. Vaughn J. Featherstone, "To My Beloved Fellow Saints in the Twenty-First Century," (letter, April 6, 1983), https://catalog.churchofjesuschrist.org/assets?id=3438179d-a8c0-499d-a2cc-82d6a239cef7.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid.

The letter concludes with a personal message of gratitude to the Savior in the event that "this letter come to the attention of our Lord who is reigning personally upon the earth."[5]

The Letter's Provenance at "Church Headquarters"

Many among Montemayor's audience have come away with the impression that Elder Featherstone's letter received the official sanction of the Church's leadership. "[Featherstone] wanted to make sure that it was good to go for the time capsule, so he sent a copy to Salt Lake, and the Brethren said, 'Great. Go ahead.'"[6] Montemayor also states that the copy he cites comes "from Church headquarters."[7] In a blurb below the video, he states that the "letter is found on the church website. The photocopy digital information was uploaded by Elder John E. Enslen from the Church History Department."[8] This is misleading. When Montemayor speaks of "Church headquarters," he is referring to the Church History Library, which does in fact house a copy of the letter. This copy, rather than having been sent to Salt Lake in 1983, was donated by then senior missionary John E. Enslen on February 15, 2010. Enslen had only acquired this letter the week previous.[9] However, Enslen, who was serving in an Alabama stake presidency in 1983, recalled that he had heard Featherstone "read this letter at a meeting in Alabama a short time after the letter's date."[10] We have no way of knowing whether Featherstone shared his letter with other general authorities, but its inclusion in the Church History Library does not imply it came with any official approval.

The Church History Library houses all sorts of documents that could be significant for preserving the Latter-day Saint past, not simply what has received official endorsement. These documents are published on the Church History Library website in order to assist historians in their work. In fact, these include documents critical of the Church and others that have been repudiated by Church leaders. For example, there are

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5. Ibid.

6. Millennial Reign, "7 Year Tribulation in the SEVENTH Seal TIMELINE," 48:57.

7. Ibid., 49:23.

8. Ibid., video description.

9. John E. Enslen, Journal Manuscript, January 25, 2010, in possession of author. The author expresses his gratitude to John E. Enslen for allowing him access to his personal journal.

10. Elder John E. Enslen, "To Any Who May Be Interested," (letter, February 15, 2010). This letter is included in the same collection as the Vaughn J. Featherstone letter. MS 22631.

several copies of the White Horse Prophecy — a prophecy traditionally credited to Joseph Smith but denounced by the president of the Church, Joseph F. Smith, at the October 1918 General Conference — on the website and many more at the archives.[11] To avoid anyone's thinking the prophecy was legitimate, Church Historian (and future president of the Church) Joseph Fielding Smith marked copies donated to the archives with phrases like "not true," "not to be accepted," and "not a word of truth in it."[12] This is an exception. In most cases, refuted documents are not marked in any way. It is assumed that Church History Library patrons would be aware that documents housed at the Church History Library did not necessarily hold a Church endorsement.

Vaughn J. Featherstone's "Phenomenal Prophecy"[13]

I do not mean to suggest that Featherstone's letter is a forgery or that it has been repudiated by Church authorities. It has not. By all accounts, Featherstone's letter appears genuine. Copies have been in circulation for many years, and the letter has similarities to other statements that Elder Featherstone made during his ministry.[14] John Enslen recalls its being read in a meeting in the mid-1980s. But were Featherstone's remarks intended as a prophecy? Did Elder Featherstone believe he had a personal revelation on the timing of the Second Coming?

In the past, when this letter circulated among the Saints, it was usually to discuss Featherstone's prophecy of the American South, rather than his statements on the Second Coming. This is also how

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11. Joseph F. Smith, (*Eighty-Ninth Semi-Annual Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, Salt Lake City, October 4–6, 1913): 57–58, https://archive.org/details/conferencereport1918sa/page/56/mode/2up. See also "The White Horse Prophecy," FairMormon, https://www.fairmormon.org/answers/Joseph_Smith/Prophecies/White_Horse_prophecy.

12. "Collected copies of the white horse prophecy, circa 1902–1970," Church History Library, https://catalog.churchofjesuschrist.org/record?id=f7fda731-7fd2-48f6-adb5-ce3236a2b841.

13. Montemayor describes Featherstone's statements on the Second Coming as a "phenomenal prophecy." See Millennial Reign, "7 Year Tribulation in the SEVENTH Seal TIMELINE," 48:43.

14. One returned missionary who served in Oklahoma recalls having a copy in the early 1990s. Another who served in Little Rock, Arkansas, recalls discussing portions of the letter involving "baptisms in the Southern states all throughout my mission from 2000–2002." The mission even had a song that included a verse stating, "A million will join us! It's the end of the drought! We're called to the harvest, It's the day of the South!" (Brett D. Dowdle, correspondence with the author, April 30, 2020.)

Enslen stated it was used by Church leaders in the South in the years after 1983.[15] The language in these two portions of Featherstone's letter are distinct. Featherstone takes for granted the fact that the Second Coming would have occurred by the time these future Saints had read his letter, but he speaks only of "seeing in my mind's eyes" and offers specific details of the future when it comes to the South.[16] Even in that regard, John Enslen recalled that over time "Elder Featherstone seemed somewhat uncomfortable about calling his statements a 'prophesy' [sic]. He preferred that they be referred to as his 'prediction.'"[17]

What is certain is that Vaughn J. Featherstone believed the Second Coming was imminent. He was often open about these beliefs in a way in which others might have been more cautious. In the 1990s, a different statement from Elder Featherstone began to circulate. In 1995, I was given a copy of this statement, then titled "A Haven in a World of Turmoil," dated June 1987, as part of a photocopied packet with various statements on the last days. There are several copies on the internet. Featherstone spoke on the importance of temple attendance in the last dispensation, when "Satan has unleashed every evil." He was also quoted as saying, "I believe we may well have living on the earth now, or very soon, the boy or babe who will be the prophet of the Church when the Savior comes. Those who will sit in the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles are here."[18]

In 1993, an institute director contacted Elder Featherstone to confirm that this was a genuine statement. Elder Featherstone replied by providing a "slightly revised" copy of the statement, now titled, "Holiness to the Lord." In this new version, a brief explanatory note was added following the comment that the last prophet was already born or would soon be born:

> *Author's Note: This could take place deep into the 21st century or in a relatively few years. If a man lives to be 80 or 90 and is now a boy or not yet born, it could be many years after the turn of the century. There has been some who misunderstand my statement.*[19]

15. Enslen, "To Any Who May Be Interested."

16. Featherstone, "To My Beloved Fellow Saints in the Twenty-First Century."

17. Enslen, "To Any Who May Be Interested."

18. "Elder Vaughn J. Featherstone Given at the Manti Temple in April 1987," Kieran's Mission Notes (website), https://sites.google.com/site/kieransmissionnotes/quotes-spiritualthoughts-extracts/elder-vaughn-j-featherstone-given-at-the-manti-temple-in-april-1987.

19. Vaughn J. Featherstone, "Holiness to the Lord," Nick Literski's Latter-day Saint Temple Homepage, https://web.archive.org/web/20000916092439/http://

Importantly, when a reworked version of "A Haven in a World of Turmoil" was published as part of his 1995 book, *The Incomparable Christ*, Featherstone modified the language to state simply, "There are among our youth today who will be someday called to the holy apostleship." While his statement was still surrounded by descriptions of the Second Coming, he no longer emphasized his belief that those who would serve as the last prophet and apostles were already living. In fact, he would go on to state "Those who live in that day — whether that be us, our children, our children's children, or some future generation — will bow down at His feet and worship Him as the Lord of lords, King of kings."[20] We should weigh both Featherstone's 1993 explanatory note and his published sentiments in 1995 when we consider whether he claimed to have had a revelation on the matter.

Based on a February 2001 devotional at Brigham Young University, it appears that Featherstone remained convinced that the Second Coming would be in our present lifetimes. He started his remarks by reading a passage from the Book of Jeremiah describing the Millennium, when "they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them."[21] Featherstone then said, "It is my conviction that most of you will live to see that day."[22] Montemayor also pointed to this passage as confirmation of Featherstone's letter.

So why would Featherstone have believed the Second Coming was scheduled for the early twenty-first century if it had not come to him by an independent revelation? Featherstone's reasons were likely similar to those Montemayor offers in his video. According to Doctrine and Covenants 77:7, the seven seals opened by the Lamb in Revelation chapter 5 represent things relative to "this earth during the seven thousand years of its continuance, or its temporal existence." If we are to understand these thousand-year periods as exact and literal, and we hold that the Savior was born on 1 CE, then it would reason that the Millennium was scheduled to begin at 2000 CE. That the Millennium

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www.ldstemplepage.org/vjfeathr.html, spelling and grammar as in original. I have confirmed that this is genuine from the institute director, although he would prefer to remain anonymous.

20. Vaughn J. Featherstone, The Incomparable Christ: Our Master and Model (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1995), 4–5.

21. Jeremiah 31:34, quoted in Hebrews 8:11

22. Vaughn J. Featherstone, "Things too Wonderful for Me," BYU Devotional, February 13, 2001, https://speeches.byu.edu/talks/vaughn-j-featherstone/things-wonderful/.

would occur after six thousand years of the Earth's temporal existence was a position held by Gerald Lund in *The Coming of the Lord* as well as Bruce R. McConkie in *Millennial Messiah*. Both Lund and McConkie, however, acknowledge the problems of assuming we can pinpoint when the Millennium would begin. In Lund's words, "The scholars disagree on exactly how many years the earth has undergone since the Fall of Adam, however, so it cannot be said that the Millennium will occur in the year 2,000 A.D. (as some enthusiastic interpreters of scripture would like to conclude)."[23] McConkie similarly stated, that we "cannot tell with certainty how many years passed from the fall of Adam to the birth of Jesus, nor whether the number of years counted by our present calendar has been tabulated without error."[24]

McConkie also commented on the half-hour period of silence that follows the opening of the seventh seal in Revelation 8. He suggests a possible reading of this half-hour as a clue to the timing of prophecy. "If the time here mentioned is 'the Lord's time' in which one day is a thousand years, the half hour would be some twenty-one of our years. Could this be interpreted to mean that such a period will elapse after the commencement of the seventh thousand-year period and before the outpouring of the woes about to be named?"[25] This is important to the timing suggested by Masayoshi Montemayor as well.

I would suggest the most likely explanation for Elder Featherstone's assumption that the twenty-first century readers of his letter would have lived through the Second Coming was that he shared the belief of Elder McConkie and Elder Lund that the seventh seal would open in 2000 CE and that it would not be much longer before the Second Coming occurred. I am not interested in refuting this idea, but it is based on a speculative calculation of scripture rather than an independent revelation.

"No Man Knows the Day or the Hour"

What have other recent general authorities suggested about knowing the timing of the Second Coming? Let us consider an experience that happened to Gordon B. Hinckley, then an apostle, only five years before Elder Featherstone wrote his letter. In 1978, a document circulating among the Saints alleged that Elder Hinckley had revealed to missionaries

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23. Gerald N. Lund, *The Coming of the Lord* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1971), 21.

24. Bruce R. McConkie, *The Millennial Messiah: The Second Coming of the Son of Man* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1982), 31.

25. Ibid., 382.

serving in South Africa that the Second Coming would occur on April 6 and would be on a Sunday. The document found that there were three April 6th Sundays leading up to the year 2000. "1980 seems too soon and 1997 too late. The year 1986 could be the one we're looking for." In a 1979 devotional at Brigham Young University, Elder Hinckley addressed this rumor and had this to say:

> I assume that no one in the Church would think that a member of the Council of the Twelve would make such statements as these attributed to me. Furthermore, should any such idea have come into my mind, it would not have stood unchallenged with the President of the Church seated immediately behind me. The fact is that the whole thing is a fabrication. … Of course I do not know when the Savior will come. He himself said: *Of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.* … If anyone were to ask me the day and the hour of the Second Coming, I could only answer that I do not know. But while neither I nor any other man knows when He will come, there are some things that I do know — and that knowledge comes from the scriptures, and the testimony of its truth comes by the power of the Holy Ghost. Although I do not know the time, I look forward to the Lord's coming."[26]

M. Russell Ballard made a similar comment in his own Brigham Young University devotional on March 12, 1996.

> So can we use this scientific data to extrapolate that the Second Coming is likely to occur during the next few years, or the next decade, or the next century? Not really. I am called as one of the apostles to be a special witness of Christ in these exciting, trying times, and I do not know when He is going to come again. As far as I know, none of my brethren in the Council of the Twelve or even in the First Presidency know. And I would humbly suggest to you, my young brothers and sisters, that if we do not know, then nobody knows, no matter how compelling their arguments or how reasonable their calculations. The Savior said that "of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only" (Matthew 24:36).

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26. Gordon B. Hinckley, "We Need Not Fear His Coming," BYU Devotional, March 25, 1979, https://speeches.byu.edu/talks/gordon-b-hinckley/need-not-fear-coming/.

> I believe when the Lord says "no man" knows, it really means that no man knows. You should be extremely wary of anyone who claims to be an exception to divine decree.[27]

Though I have questioned the significance Vaughn J. Featherstone's letter should play into our sense of the nearness of last days events, that does not mean we don't have reason to prepare and enthusiastically look forward to the Lord's return. One of President Russell M. Nelson's key messages to the Saints seems to be the significance of the Restoration leading to the Second Coming. "It is our charge — it is our privilege — to help prepare the world for that day."[28]

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27. M. Russell Ballard, "When Shall These Things Be?" BYU Devotional, March 12, 1996, https://speeches.byu.edu/talks/m-russell-ballard/shall-things/.

28. Russell M. Nelson, "The Future of the Church: Preparing the World for the Savior's Second Coming," Ensign, (April 2020), https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/ensign/2020/04/the-future-of-the-church-preparing-the-world-for-the-saviors-second-coming?lang=eng.

The Sacred Embrace and the Sacred Handclasp in Ancient Mediterranean Religions

Stephen D. Ricks

Abstract: *This article describes examples of the sacred embrace and the sacred handclasp in the Old, Middle, and New Kingdoms of ancient Egypt, in ancient Mediterranean regions, and in the classical and early Christian world. It argues that these actions are an invitation and promise of entrance into the celestial realms. The sacred embrace may well have been a preparation, the sacred handclasp the culminating act of entrance into the divine presence.*

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See Stephen D. Ricks, "The Sacred Embrace and the Sacred Handclasp in Ancient Mediterranean Religions," in *Ancient Temple Worship: Proceedings of The Expound Symposium 14 May 2011,* ed. Matthew B. Brown, Jeffrey M. Bradshaw, Stephen D. Ricks, and John S. Thompson (Orem, UT: The Interpreter Foundation; Salt Lake City: Eborn Books, 2014), 159–70. Further information at https://interpreterfoundation.org/books/ancient-temple-worship/.]

The Sacred Embrace in Ancient Egypt: Introduction

A number of years ago, while planning to travel to Egypt to visit our son who was studying Arabic there, my wife and I were encouraged

Figure 1: The Divine Horus (with a falcon head) embraces the Royal Horus on the Qa Hedjet Stela

to visit the White Chapel of Senusret I at the Temple of Karnak in Luxor, Egypt. There, we were told, we would see a number of scenes of "sacred ritual embrace," in which the king is depicted being embraced by one of the gods before being received into heaven (the "Fields of Bliss"). We were also told that there were several other scenes of sacred embrace in the temple complex at Karnak. We went expecting to see a few at Karnak and elsewhere but were nearly overwhelmed with the embarrassment of ritual riches we saw there at that time and on a subsequent visit: many scores of scenes of embrace (at least 150) at the temples at Karnak, at the ancient Egyptian Ptolemaic temple at Philae near modern Aswan, Egypt, as well as at the Egyptian Museum in Cairo. Here we will focus on examples of the sacred embrace in the Old, Middle, and New Kingdoms of ancient Egypt.

The Sacred Embrace in
Ancient Egyptian Iconography

One of the earliest scenes of sacred embrace may be seen on the (Hor) Qa Hedjet stela (Figure 1), dating from the Third Dynasty of the Old Kingdom around the middle of the 27th century BC.[1] The stela itself is made of polished limestone and shows the divine Horus (depicted with a falcon head) embracing the royal Horus with foot by foot, knee facing knee, hand to back, and mouth to nose so that the divine Horus might "inspire" (i.e., breathe life) into the royal Horus.

An eleven-foot pillar from the Middle Kingdom (Figure 2) celebrates the *sed* (royal jubilee) festival of the Egyptian King Senusret (reigned 1971–1925 BC) in about 1940 BC. Two sides of this four-sided pillar group are illustrated. In the first scene Senusret stands opposite the god Amon, who faces him foot by foot, knee to knee, and hand on back. In the fourth panel Senusret faces the god Ptah from the right; both hands grasp his back, and he stands face to face in order to breathe life into him.

The final scene (Figure 3) is from a New Kingdom relief from the tomb of Tutankhamun who died as a very young king in his teens in the 14th century BC. The discovery of his tomb by the British archaeologist Howard Carter in 1923 created an international sensation. Tutankhamun

— known popularly as "King Tut" — ruled Egypt after the death of Akhenaten, the king of Egypt who introduced the monotheistic belief in the solar disk Aten in the 15th century BC. This sacred embrace scene illustrated below is part of a larger "Opening of the Mouth" scene in which Tutankhamun is being prepared to enter the Fields of Bliss. In the final, culminating scene, Tutankhamun, accompanied by his *ka*, embraces Osiris, who is depicted as a man in a sarcophagus. In this scene the deceased king faces Osiris with foot facing foot, knee facing knee, the king's hand behind the head of Osiris, with his arm around the deity's waist. Osiris, in turn, touches the king's chest. As Tutankhamun embraces Osiris he is described as "given life for all time and eternity."[2] The rite, according to Svein Bjerke, "transfers vital power [his *ka*[3]]
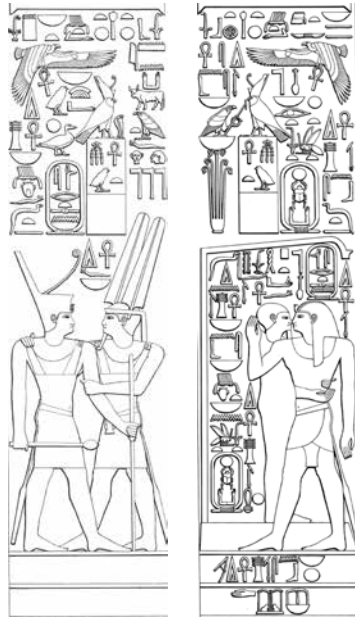

Figure 2: Left: The pharaoh Senwosret faces the god Amon, who embraces him. Right: Senwosret is embraced by Ptah, who faces him from the left.

from the god to the king."[4] What is recorded in a ritual for Amenophis I (18th dynasty, 16th to 15th centuries BC) may also be understood for Tutankhamun:

> You go forth from embracing your father Osiris
> You revive through him, you are made whole through him.[5]

The Sacred Embrace by Mother Deities in the Religious Literature of Ancient Egypt

The scenes illustrated above are of male deities embracing kings. But the sacred embrace by mothers, or mother deities, was also a concept that was current in the sacred literature of ancient Egypt. "The embrace of the individual entering the afterlife by his mother," observes the distinguished Egyptologist Jan Assmann, "is an idea that has its origins in the cult of the dead. The dead king as Osiris embraces his mother Nut and revives in her arms."[6] This embrace by the goddess can be understood "in connection with the entrance of the deceased into the afterlife as overcoming the separation of mother and child at birth."[7] Thus, for example, in the 11th

Figure 3: Tutankhanum (middle), accompanied by his *ka* (right), embraces Osiris (left), from the tomb of Tutankhamun, ca. 1320 BC

hour ritual of the "Ritual of the Hours" from Edfu we read: "Your mother, who embraces you, has purified your bones, she causes you to be healthy and full of life … Your father embraces you [lit., 'wraps his arm around you.'] You lead millions on the western horizon."[8] On the Pyramidion Leiden K 1 from the reign of Amenophis III (18th Dynasty, 14th century BC), Isis is substituted for Hathor, the mother of the sun god:

> You go forth, as you are well,
> From the embrace of your mother Isis.[9]

The Purpose of the Sacred Embrace

Scenes in which a god or goddess embraces a king "often appear," observes the Egyptologist Horst Beinlich, "since the embrace by a deity appears to have been a privilege of the king … . Such scenes of embrace on pillars may have to do with a god's greeting the king."[10] Beinlich further notes that "through close contact with the body of the deity … the king is (in the role of a child) newly enlivened, transfigured, and receives the power of the *ka*." The sacred embrace is thus part of an initiatory ceremony in which the king is made priest as well: "Before becoming a king, he must first become a priest, and for that also he must be purified with divine water, receive a garment, be crowned, and be led into the sanctuary to receive" the god's embrace.[11] "The embracing (*Eg. shn*) of

the king by the god"[12] is the definitive consecration of the king, "who at that moment becomes fully consecrated, crowned, and sanctified."[13] The embrace represented on the walls of the inner sancta of Egyptian temples — forbidden or inaccessible to others — may be either the preparatory embrace by a priest representing a god at his coronation when he is "consecrated, crowned and sanctified" or also the confirmatory embrace by the god at the time of the king's passing beyond the halls of judgment to the Fields of Bliss.

By way of conclusion, we may note that (1) in scenes of sacred embrace, the deity faces the king foot by foot, knee to knee, hand to back, and mouth to nose to "inspire" (breathe life or vital force — his *ka*) into him; (2) scenes of sacred embrace in ancient Egyptian religion occur in the Holy of Holies — the most sacred and (to the unauthorized) inaccessible precincts of the temple (the center of the temple, the rear of the temple, the side chapel); (3) scenes of sacred embrace are found throughout ancient Egypt (from the Delta to Philae) and throughout Egyptian history (from the Old Kingdom on); (4) the sacred embrace is preparation for entrance into the presence of the gods; and, finally, (5) although the scenes depict only royalty being embraced by the gods and entering into their presence, in ancient Egypt everyone — men, women, and children — of whatever social status and era, were candidates for entrance into a blessed afterlife.[14]

The Sacred Handclasp in Ancient Mediterranean Religions

On a gravestone dating to the end of the fifth century BC from Attica in Greece, the husband Philoxenos (whose name, as well as that of his wife, is carved in the register above his head) is seen grasping the right hand of his wife Philoumene in a solemn and ceremonial handclasp (Figure 4). This handclasp, the description informs us, "was a symbolic and popular gesture on gravestones of the Classical period," which could represent "a simple farewell, a reunion in the afterlife, or a continuing connection between the deceased and the living."[15] The handclasp, known in Greek as *dexiosis* and in Latin as *dextrarum iunctio*, means "giving, joining of right hands" and is to be found in classical Greek art on grave stelai but especially in Roman art, where it is to be seen on coins and sarcophagi reliefs as well as in Christian art in mosaics and on sarcophagi reliefs.

Why were early Christians in the Roman world also depicted performing the *dextrarum iunctio*? They did so in part because they agreed with the non-Christian Romans that "fidelity and harmony are demanded in the longest-lasting and most intimate human relationship,

marriage."[16] But they also did so because they accepted, perhaps, the ancient Israelite view that marriage was a sacred covenant[17] and further because they understood "marriage," in the words of the Protestant scholar Philip Schaff, "as a spiritual union of two souls for time and eternity."[18] For the ancient Christians, the sacred handclasp — the *dextrarum iunctio* — was a fitting symbol for the most sacred act and moment in human life.

The Sacred Handclasp in Scenes of Introduction to the Heavenly Realms in the Classical and Early Christian World

The *dexiosis/dextrarum iunctio* is used as a symbol of union, harmony, equality, and fidelity in marriage. But the right hand is also given in scenes of introduction into the realm of

Figure 4: Late fifth-century BC Greek gravestone showing Philoxenos grasping the hand of his wife Philoumene

the blessed in ancient Mediterranean religions. The first scene (Figure 5) is from a series of illustrations from the tomb complex of the Sabazian

Figure 5: The "good angel" (Lating *bonus angelus*) grasps the hand of Vibia to lead her to the banquet of the blessed, from a Sabazian tomb near Rome

priest Vincentius near Rome, dating from the second century.[19] One depicts the "good angel" (labeled in the scene as *bonus angelus*)[20] grasping Vibia, the deceased wife of Vincentius, by the right hand in a *dextrarum iunctio* and leading her into a place where the blessed (some of whom are identified by name) are enjoying a celestial banquet.

The hand is held out to introduce individuals into the celestial realms. Two other scenes are mosaic illustrations from Christian churches built in the sixth century AD in Ravenna, Italy, one from the Basilica of San Vitale (Figure 6), the other from the Basilica of Sant Apollinare in Classe (Figure 7). Each of the scenes shows the altar on which Melchizedek is making an offering to the Lord. In the mosaic in St. Apollinare in Classe, Melchizedek, clad in a purple cloak and offering bread and wine at the altar, is flanked to the viewer's left by Abel, who holds a sacrificial lamb toward the altar, and, to the viewer's right, by Abraham with his young son Isaac, whom he gently pushes to the altar[21] (in the scene in San Vitale, Melchizedek is at the viewer's right, opposite Abel holding the lamb). In front of the altar is the so-called "Seal of Melchizedek," two golden interlocking squares.[22]

Behind the figures (in St. Apollinare, to the right of Melchizedek; in San Vitale, above the altar) there is a right hand stretching out from behind the veil, inviting the figures (and, by implication, the viewer) to grasp it in the *dextrarum iunctio* in order to be introduced into the heavenly realms behind the veil.

In both actions depicted in these scenes — the sacred embrace and the sacred handclasp — there is an invitation and promise of entrance

Figure 6: Abel and Melchizedek making an offering, with the hand reaching from behind the veil, Basilica of San Vitale, Ravenna, Italy

Figure 7: Abel, Melchizedek, Isaac, and Abraham surround the altar, with the hand reaching from behind the veil, Basilica of St. Apollinare in Classe, Ravenna, Italy.

into the celestial realms. The sacred embrace may well have been a preparation, the sacred handclasp the culminating act of entrance into the divine presence.

Figure Credits

Figures 1-3 appear courtesy of Brigham Young University's Neal A Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship. Figure 4 is courtesy of the J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles, CA. Our thanks to the Maxwell Institute for Figure 5, which was redrawn from an image found in Johannes Leipoldt, *Die Umwelt des Urchristentums* (Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1967), 3:fig. 60. Figures 6 and 7 are used with the kind permission of Val Brinkerhoff.

Notes

1. The name Qor Hedjet may also be an archaizing "representation of Thutmose III" a New Kingdom ruler from the eighteenth dynasty, who reigned in the fifteenth century BC, cf. Jean-Pierre Pätznick, "L'Horus Qahedjet: souverain de la 3eme dynastie," in ed. Jean-Claude Goyon and Christine Cardin, *Proceedings of the Ninth Congress of Egyptologists/ Actes du neuvième Congrès international des égyptologues* (Leuven/Dudley MA: Peeters, 2007), 145. I have been greatly benefitted in the preparation of this paper by reading sections in Hugh W. Nibley's *The Message of the Joseph Smith Papyri:*

An Egyptian Endowment (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book/Provo: Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, 2005), dealing with ritual sacred embraces.

2. Hugh W. Nibley, *The Message of the Joseph Smith Papyri: An Egyptian Endowment* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book/Provo: Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, 2005), 433.

3. The *ka* is the vital power (conceived of as a doppelganger) or spirit that departs from the body at the time of death, in Peter Kaplony, "Ka," in ed. Wolfgang Helck and Eberhard Otto, *Lexikon der Ägyptologie* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1980), 3:275-76; Liselotte Greven, *Der Ka in Theologie und Königskult*. Ägyptologische Abhandlungen 17 (Glückstadt: Augustin, 1952), 27; Ursula Schweitzer, *Das Wesen des Ka im Diesseits und Jenseits der alten Ägypter*. Ägyptologische Abhandlungen 19 (Glückstadt: Augustin, 1956), 13-19.

4. Svein Bjerke, "Remarks on the Egyptian Ritual of 'Opening the Mouth' and Its Interpretation," *Numen* 12 (1965): 215. As an additional note, Jacob, before his return to Canaan, met a "man" (in fact, a heavenly being) who "struggled" with him: "And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled [Heb. *yeʾaveq*] a man with him until the breaking of the day. And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him. And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me. And he said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob. And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed. And Jacob asked him, and said, Tell me, I pray thee, thy name. And he said, Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after my name? And he blessed him there" (Genesis 32: 24–29).

   Given that this episode includes the giving of a new name to Jacob (symbolizing Jacob's entering a new, higher stage in his life), the angel's hesitance to disclose his name, may we not also understand the Hebrew *yeʾaveq* ("wrestle") in an additional sense of "embrace."

5. "Libation Utterance for Re," from the "Ritual for Amenophis I"=Papyus Chester Beatty IX recto 5:13–6:3 cited in Jan Assmann, *Liturgische Lieder an den Sonnengott* (Berlin: Hessling, 1969), 57.

6. Assmann, *Liturgische Lieder*, 56.

7. Horst Beinlich, "Umarmung," in ed. Wolfgang Helck and Eberhard Otto, *Lexicon der Ägyptologie* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1985), 6:844.

8. Émile Chassinat and Marquis de Rochmonteix, *Le Temple d'Edfou* (Cairo: Institut francais d'archéologie orientale du Caire, 1984) 3:226–27, cited in Assmann, *Liturgische Lieder*, 56.

9. Pyramidion Leiden K 1, cited in Assmann, *Liturgische Lied*er, 58.

10. Beinlich, "Umarmung," 6:844–45.

11. Hugh W. Nibley, *The Message of the Joseph Smith Papyri: An Egyptian Endowment* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, 2005), 433.

12. Alexandre Moret, *Du caractère religieux de la royauté pharaonique*. Annales du Musée Guimet. Bibliothèque d'études, vol. 14 (Paris: Leroux, 1902), 101.

13. Nibley, *Message*, 433, citing Alexandre Moret, *Rituel du culte divin journalier en Égypte*. Annales du Musée Guimet. Bibliothèque d'études, vol. 14 (Paris: Leroux, 1902), 100–101, n. 4.

14. I wish to thank my former student, now colleague, Egyptologist John Thompson, for this insight.

15. *J. Paul Getty Museum Handbook of the Antiquities Collection* (Los Angeles: Getty Publications, 2002), 22.

16. "Fides und Concordia sind im besonderen Masse gefordert bei der intimsten menschlichen Dauer-verbindung, der Ehe." Kötting, "Dextrarum iunctio," in *Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum*, ed. Theodor Klauser (Stuttgart: Hiersemann,1957), 3:883.

17. Gordon P. Hugenberger, *Marriage as a Covenant: A Study of Biblical Law and Ethics Governing Marriage, Developed from the Perspective of Malachi* (Leiden: Brill, 1994), has argued persuasively that marriage was a covenant, using sources ranging throughout the entire Hebrew Bible.

18. Philip Schaff, *History of the Christian Church*, 5th ed. (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson,1996), 2:367. Further, see John Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology: Historical Trends and Doctrinal Themes*, 2nd ed. (New York: Fordham University Press, 1979), 196–97, who observes that "as a sacrament, or *mysterion*, marriage reflects the union between Christ and the Church, between Yahweh and Israel, and as such can be only one — an eternal bond, which death itself does not destroy.

In its sacramental nature, marriage transfigures and transcends both fleshly union and contractual legal association: human love is being projected into the eternal Kingdom of God." Later (pp. 198–99) Meyendorff notes that "the most striking difference between the Byzantine theology of marriage and its medieval Latin counterpart is that the Byzantines strongly emphasized the unicity of Christian marriage and the eternity of the marriage bond; … the West seemed to ignore the idea that marriage, if it is a sacrament, has to be projected as an eternal bond into the Kingdom of God."

19. On the illustrations of the tomb of the Sabazian priest Vincentius, see Erwin R. Goodenough, *Jewish Symbols in the Greco-Roman Period*, 13 vols. (New York: Bollingen/Pantheon, 1953-58), 3: figs. 839, 842, 2:45-50; Franz Cumont, *Recherches sur la symbolisme funéraire des Romains* (Paris: Geuthner, 1942), 418, n. 1.

20. In the view of Henri Leclerq, "Sabazios," in *Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne et de liturgie* (Paris: Librairie Letouzey, 1924-53), 15:213, the "good angel," whose identification may have been influenced by Judaism or Christianity in Asia Minor, was the god Sabazios himself.

21. Hugh W. Nibley, "Sacred Vestments," in ed. Don E. Norton,, *Temple and Cosmos: Beyond This Ignorant Present* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book/Provo: Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, 1992), 109.

22. On the "seal of Melchizedek," see Alan Rex Mitchell's informative study *Melchizedek's Seal and Scroll* (n.c.: Greenjacket Books, 2012).

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