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"In the Mount of the Lord It Shall Be Seen" and "Provided": Theophany and Sacrifice as the Etiological Foundation of the Temple in Israelite and Latter-day Saint Tradition

Matthew L. Bowen

Abstract: *For ancient Israelites, the temple was a place where sacrifice and theophany (i.e., seeing God or other heavenly beings) converged. The account of Abraham's "arrested" sacrifice of Isaac (Genesis 22) and the account of the arrested slaughter of Jerusalem following David's unauthorized census of Israel (2 Samuel 24; 1 Chronicles 21) served as etiological narratives—explanations of "cause" or "origin"—for the location of the Jerusalem temple and its sacrifices. Wordplay on the verb* rāʾâ *(to "see") in these narratives creates an etiological link between the place-names "Jehovah-jireh," "Moriah" and the threshing floor of Araunah/Ornan, pointing to the future location of the Jerusalem temple as the place of theophany and sacrifice par excellence. Isaac's arrested sacrifice and the vicarious animal sacrifices of the temple anticipated Jesus's later "un-arrested" sacrifice since, as Jesus himself stated, "Abraham rejoiced to see my day" (John 8:56). Sacrifice itself was a kind of theophany in which one's own redemption could be "seen" and the scriptures of the Restoration confirm that Abraham and many others, even "a great many thousand years before" the coming of Christ, "saw" Jesus's sacrifice and "rejoiced." Additionally, theophany and sacrifice converge in the canonized revelations regarding the building of the*

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latter-day temple. These temple revelations begin with a promise of theophany, and mandate sacrifice from the Latter-day Saints. In essence, the temple itself was, and is, Christ's atonement having its intended effect on humanity.

When Jesus told his opponents, "Your father Abraham **rejoiced** to **see** my day: and he **saw** it, and was glad" (John 8:56), he alluded to his own atoning sacrifice and to the Genesis 22 account of Abraham's "binding"[1] and arrested sacrifice of Isaac. In this narrative, the Hebrew verb *rāʾâ* (to "see") serves as a verbal link that offers both a basis for the site of the temple as a place where the Lord was "seen" and a location where sacrificial substitute was "provided"[2] ("seen-to"). In other words, the Genesis 22 narrative makes the verb *see* a sacrificial and temple-related term. Ancient Israelite writers and editors make this convergence of *theophany* (seeing a manifestation of God)[3] and sacrifice the etiological basis (i.e., cause or origin) of the location of the Jerusalem temple and its name, "Mount Moriah." Using the verb *rāʾâ*, several Old Testament texts create etiological links between the place-names "Jehovah-jireh," "Moriah," and the threshing-floor of Araunah/Ornan, these pointing to the future location of the Jerusalem temple as the place of theophany and sacrifice *par excellence* and serving as the basis for subsequent temple worship, including Latter-day Saint temples.

The arrested sacrifice of Isaac, a prototype sacrifice for the vicarious animal sacrifices in Israel's cult and Jesus's "*un*-arrested" sacrifice, served as the foundation story for Israel

1. Sometimes called the "Akedah" (*[ha]ʿăqēdâ*), "the binding," a term derived from the verb *to bind* in Genesis 22:9 ("and he bound [*wayyaʿăqōd*] Isaac his son").

2. In Genesis 22:8, the Latin Vulgate translates *yirʾeh* (LXX *opsetai*) with *providebit*. English "provide" conveys the sense of "looking ahead" in order to supply something.

3. *Theophany* = "appearance of God," Greek *theos* ("god") + *phaneia* ("appearance").

and Judah's most important temple, the temple in Jerusalem. However, later events in the vicinity of Mount Moriah would imbue every temple experience—from the Jerusalem temple to Latter-day Saint temples—with additional sacred significance. The etiological narratives[4] of the Hebrew Bible (our "Old Testament") that explain the location of the Jerusalem temple as a convergence of theophany and sacrifice help us better understand the Atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ and its relevance in our lives. These narratives also help us better understand events pertaining to the establishment of latter-day temples, beginning with the Kirtland Temple, and how the Savior's atonement is inextricably at heart of their building and everything done in them today. Latter-day temples are also places where theophany converges with sacrifice, both in the temples' concept and day-to-day function, as revealed to the Prophet Joseph Smith.

The Mountain as "Temple": The Place of Sacrifice and Theophany

Mountains as "temples" in the scriptures have been already been widely discussed,[5] because theophanies often occur atop mountains.[6] Sacrifice on mountains, though less often dis-

4. Etiological narratives attempt to explain the "origins" of things, and they are very common in the Hebrew Bible. Scholars widely debate these etiological narratives as "history." To say that a narrative is "etiological," however (in my view), is not necessarily to say that it is "ahistorical."

5. See, e.g., John M. Lundquist, "What is a Temple: A Preliminary Typology," in *Temples of the Ancient World*, ed. Donald W. Parry (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1994), 84–89.

6. For example, Nephi writes about being "caught away in the Spirit of the Lord, yea, into **an exceedingly high mountain**, which I never had before seen, and upon which I never had before sat my foot" (1 Nephi 11:1). On this mountain Nephi not only "beheld" the Tree of Life that his father Lehi had seen (1 Nephi 8), but he saw "the Spirit of the Lord" and "beheld that he was in the form of a man," and the "Spirit of the Lord" spoke to him (i.e., conversed with him) "as a man speaketh with another" (11:11). Nephi also there witnessed "the condescension of God," beholding the "mother of God, after the manner of the flesh,"

cussed, is equally important to what ancient Israelites saw as the *raison d'etre* for the temple.

The connection between mountains and sacrifice in ancient Israel is evident in the practice of sacrificing at "high places" (*bāmôt*), i.e., sacrificing at an elevated place. Sacrifice at these "high places" was later condemned and suppressed by kings Hezekiah[7] and Josiah[8] and evaluated negatively[9] by the Deuteronomistic Historian(s),[10] who promoted a centralized cult at Jerusalem (in accordance with Deuteronomy 12:1–14) versus localized (rural) worship.

Sacrifice on mountains is attested elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible. Genesis 31:54 indicates that Jacob at the conclusion of an oath with Laban, "offered sacrifice upon [a] mount" and held

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and the Savior as "Son of God going forth among the children of men" (11:24). Similarly, it was on a "**mount** which [was] called Shelem, because of its **exceeding height**" (Ether 3:1) that "the Lord showed himself" unto brother of Jared, because the latter knew by faith that the Lord "speak[s] the truth" and is "a God of truth" who could not lie (Ether 3:12–13). Moses's earliest encounters with the Lord are also described as atop or in the precincts of "mountains" (see Exodus 3:1, 19:3 Moses 1:1, 42). Moses's last mortal experience atop a mountain further evidences it as a place of revelation (Deuteronomy 34:1). Ezekiel, the priest and prophet of Judah's exile, records that he was brought back to the land of Israel "in the visions of God" and "set . . . upon a very high mountain," from which he saw a rebuilt Jerusalem temple (the temple had by then been destroyed) in minute detail (Ezekiel 40:2 and following). The Apostle John reports an experience similar to that of Nephi and Ezekiel, stating that the Lord "carried [him] away in the spirit to a great and high mountain" (Revelation 21:10). John notably sees heavenly Jerusalem built like a temple.

7. See 2 Kings 18:4, 22; 21:3.

8. See 2 Kings 23:8–20.

9. Of the thirty-nine kings of Israel (nineteen) and Judah (twenty), the Deuteronomistic Historian evaluates only eight of them positively (all of them from Judah). Of these eight, only two receive an almost "unqualified" positive evaluation—Hezekiah and Josiah—this because they suppressed worship at the high places.

10. On the Deuteronomist and the Deuteronomistic History, see Martin Noth, *The Deuteronomistic History* (JSOTSup 15; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1981); German original: Martin Noth, *Uberlieferungsgeschichtliche Studien* (Halle: Max Niemeyer, 1943).

a communal meal ("they did eat bread, and tarried all night in the mount").[11] According to Numbers 28:6 the "continual burnt offering" of the Israelite temple was "ordained in mount Sinai." A major part of Moses' blessing upon the tribes of Zebulun and Issachar (Deuteronomy 33:18–19) was that "they [would] call the people unto the mountain [where] they shall offer sacrifices of righteousness" (33:19; cf. Isaiah 56:6–7).

Perhaps more significantly, Ezekiel equates the "holy mountain of God" or "the mountain of God" with "Eden the garden of God" (see Ezekiel 28:13– 16; cf. 28:11–19; 31:8–18), drawing on extant pre-exilic Israelite traditions regarding the Fall.[12] Genesis 3:8 indicates that the Garden of Eden was the "presence of the Lord," where he "walked" and was seen. As we shall see below, the "joy" of Adam and Eve's "redemption" (Moses 5:11) was that after the Fall they would "again in the flesh . . . see God" on account of "sacrifice" (5:10).

"Why Dost Thou Offer Sacrifices Unto the Lord?" Adam's Altar and the Regaining of the Lord's "Presence"

Joy and redemption are of a piece with theophany and sacrifice.[13] The "laughing" (a narrative play on "Isaac [*Yiṣḥāq*]" in Genesis 17:17; 18:12–13, 15; 21:6), i.e., "rejoicing" (JST Genesis 17:17; 21:3, 6) that accompanied the Lord's announcement of the birth of Isaac to Abraham and Sarah must have been equaled by the "rejoicing" that accompanied the arrested sacrifice of Isaac when Abraham "saw" the meaning of the offer-

11. This episode is the etiological explanation for Mizpah ("the Lord watch [*yiṣep*] between me and thee"; Genesis 31:49), an important Israelite cultic site in later years.

12. See Umberto Cassuto, *A Commentary on the Book of Genesis. Part 1: From Adam to Noah*, trans. Israel Abrahams (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1961), 74–82; Bruce M. Pritchett Jr., "Lehi's Theology of the Fall in Its Preexilic/exilic Context," *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 3/2 (1994): 49–83.

13. Psalm 27:6; 107:22; Isaiah 56:7; Jeremiah 33:11; 1 Samuel 11:11; Nehemiah 12:43; Philippians 2:7; 1 Nephi 5:9.

ing of his son Isaac and the significance of its arrest. This joy and gladness was noted by the Savior himself: "Abraham **rejoiced** to see my day: and saw it **and was glad**" (John 8:56). Jesus's words also appear to allude to or play on the meaning of the name "Isaac" ("may he laugh"; "may he rejoice"). In the Book of Mormon, $Nephi_2$, the son of Helaman, also alludes to Abraham's "rejoicing" over "seeing" his son's, his posterity's, and his own redemption in Jesus Christ:

> Yea, and behold, Abraham **saw** of his coming, and **was filled with gladness and did rejoice**. Yeah and behold I say unto you that Abraham not only knew of these things, but there were many before the days of Abraham who were called by the order of God, yea, even after the order of his Son; and this that **it should be shown** unto the people, a great many thousand years before his coming, **that even redemption should come unto them**." (Helaman 8:17–18; JST Genesis 15:5[14])

Nephi teaches here that people "a great many thousand" years before the Savior's atoning sacrifice understood the in-

14. JST Genesis 15:5: "And he brought him forth abroad and he said, **Look now toward[s] heaven**, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him: so shall thy seed be. And Abram said, Lord, how wilt thou give me this land for an everlasting inheritance? And the Lord said, Though thou was dead, yet am I not able to give it thee? And if thou shalt die, yet shalt thou possess it, for the day cometh that the Son of Man shall live; but how can he live if he be not dead? he must first be quickened. And it came to pass that Abram **looked forth** and **saw** the days of the Son of Man and was glad and his soul found rest" (emphasis mine). This passage provides important context for what follows in Genesis 15:6: "And he [Abram] believed in the Lord and he [the Lord] counted it [un]to him for righteousness." It is this very "belief" or "faith" that the Lord puts to the test in Genesis 22, when Abraham is again required to "look forth" or "see" his own redemption and the redemption of his son Isaac ("thine only Isaac," JST Genesis 22:16) and the redemption of his numberless posterity in the arrested sacrifice of Isaac and Jehovah's "providing" the ram caught in the thicket. For the JST text see Thomas A. Wayment, ed., *The Complete Joseph Smith Translation of the Old Testament: A Side-by-side Companion with the King James Version* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2009), 70–71.

timate connection between theophany, sacrifice, and temple because they were "shown" that "even redemption should come unto them."

The antiquity of sacrifice in connection with theophany is further suggested in Moses 5:4, which records that after the fall, Adam and Eve "called upon the name of the Lord and . . . heard the voice of the Lord from the way toward the Garden of Eden, speaking unto them, [but] **they saw him not**; for they were shut out from his presence." The loss of the "presence" or "face" (Heb. *pānîm*, *pĕnê*) of God was one of the earliest consequences of the Fall. In other words, the theophany that was a part of life in the Garden ceased with the Fall.

When Adam and Eve lost the "presence" of God, they also lost the temple. Donald W. Parry has shown that the Garden of Eden, as described in Genesis, represents a prototype temple or sanctuary.[15] **F**or them to regain his "presence" or "face," Adam and Eve and their posterity also needed to "regain" the temple. Mercifully, the Lord took immediate steps to ensure that they could regain his "presence." Parry further suggests that the Lord's clothing Adam and Eve with "coats of skins" (Genesis 3:21) implies that they were taught the ordinance of sacrifice while still in the Garden of Eden and that they were perhaps clothed in the skin of the sacrificial animal,[16] an ever-present *type* of their future redemption that was to be worn upon the body.[17] Once they had been taught the meaning of "sacrifice" (see below), they would be able, with eyes of faith, to "see" their eventual redemption even in the clothing upon their bodies.

Moses 5:5–8 chronicles the sacrifices that Adam and Eve obediently continued to offer after they were driven out of the

15. Donald W. Parry, "Garden of Eden: Prototype Sanctuary," in *Temples of the Ancient World*, 126–51.

16. Parry, "Garden of Eden," 142.

17. They "put on" Christ (see Romans 13:14; Galatians 3:7; cf. Alma 40:2; Mormon 6:21). Cf. "put[ting] off the natural man [i.e., like an article of clothing] and becom[ing] a saint through the atonement of Christ" (Mosiah 3:19).

Garden and lost God's presence. Following their consistent, faithful obedience, Adam and Eve were again granted a theophany in which they were taught the true meaning of the sacrifices that they were offering:

> And he gave unto them commandments that they should **worship the Lord their God**, and should **offer the firstlings of their flocks for an offering unto the Lord**. And Adam was obedient unto the commandments of the Lord. And after many days **an angel of the Lord appeared unto Adam**, saying: Why dost thou **offer sacrifices** unto the Lord? And Adam said unto him: I know not, save the Lord commanded me. Then the angel spake, saying: **This thing is a similitude of the sacrifice of the Only Begotten of the Father**, which is full of grace and truth. Wherefore, thou shalt do all that thou doest in the name of the Son, and thou shalt repent and call upon God in the name of the Son forevermore.

The "offer[ing]" of "the firstlings of . . . flocks" presupposes Adam's having built an altar. The altar upon which Adam makes these offerings in "similitude of the sacrifice of the Only Begotten [cf. Hebrew *yĕḥîd*, used of Isaac; Genesis 22:2, 12, 16] of the Father," is for him and his posterity the beginning of regaining the "temple"—the Lord's presence.

If, as Moses 4:31 (Genesis 3:24) indicates, Adam and Eve were "driven out" to the east of Eden and resided there (cf. Moses 5:1–4), the altar presupposed in this narrative would also have been situated east of the garden temple, the cherubim, and the way of the tree of life. The location of the sacrificial altar on the east of tabernacle and the east-facing Jerusalem temple finds its analog in Adam's altar, and it is not impossible that the former was thought to be a representation of the latter (as it is in present-day Latter-day Saint temple worship). Whatever

the case, the narrative of Moses 5 establishes Adam's altar-sacrifices as antecedents for future temple "worship" among all of the families of the earth and for humanity's regaining the theophany of the garden temple.

The narrative never divulges the identity of the "angel of the Lord" who "appears" to Adam and Eve, although frequently in scripture the "Angel of the Lord" is indistinguishable from the Lord himself.[18] In either case, the "appearance" of this divine being was a reward for Adam's faithful obedience and perhaps especially Eve's "seeing" with an eye of faith (Genesis 3:6; Moses 4:12; 5:10–11). It was a sign to them that the Lord's "presence" or "face" was not irredeemably lost to them. And so it was that the Lord "sent angels to converse with [humanity], and **caused** [them] **to behold of his glory**" (Alma 12:29), i.e., "God [himself] conversed with men and made known unto them the plan of redemption, which had been prepared from the foundation of the world" (Alma 12:30), whose central figure was a sacrificial "Lamb … slain from the foundation of the world."[19] Through the law of sacrifice and a theophany (the appearance of a divine being) which taught its meaning (Moses 5:4–8), Adam and Eve saw their redemption and resurrection with opened eyes: they comprehended that they would "again in the flesh . . . see God" and they had joy (5:10–11).

Thus, according to modern revelation, theophany and sacrifice in a temple setting are inextricably linked from the very beginning, *theophany itself being a sign that the Atonement works—that humanity is redeemed from the fall and brought back into the Lord's presence*.[20] The revelation regarding the Garden and the Fall (Moses 5) that came to the Prophet Joseph

18 John W. Welch, "Ten Testimonies of Jesus Christ from the Book of Mormon" in *A Book of Mormon Treasury: Gospel Insights from General Authorities and Religious Educators* (Provo, UT: BYU Religious Studies Center, 2003), 316–42.

19. Moses 7:47; Revelation 13:8.

20. See especially Ether 3:13; Isaiah 6:1–8.

Smith through his work of translating/revising the KJV extends the tradition of sacrifice and theophany back through time "a great many thousand years" (Helaman 8:18). The Prophet's work of translation effectively grounded the temple in these primeval events. For the Latter-day Saints, temple "tradition" begins here.

Perhaps not coincidentally, revelations to the prophet on the building of a modern temple begin shortly after the revelation of the text of Moses 5 (in June-October, 1830) and the Enoch revelation in Moses 6–7 (November-December 1830). In D&C 36:8, part of a revelation given in December 1830, the Lord promised a theophany in a temple: "Gird up your loins and I will suddenly come to my temple."[21] The latter-day temple was from the beginning also associated with theophany and, as we shall see, with sacrifice.

"God Shall Provide Himself a Lamb": The Arrested Sacrifices of Isaac and Jerusalem

The Genesis narratives that describe the life of Abraham (Genesis 12–24) are concerned with not only Israel's future inheritance of the land promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, but also, the future building of the Jerusalem temple.[22] These narratives describe Abraham's building a number of altars, usually at places where Abraham also experiences a theophany, often accompanied by the Lord's making him promises. In several instances, these places are tied to the theophanic experiences in the text by means of *paronomasia*; that is, a wordplay

21. In a January 1831 revelation, the Lord reiterates this promise of a theophany to the saints: "the day soon cometh that ye shall see me, and know that I am; for the veil of darkness shall soon be rent" (D&C 38:8). This same revelation mentions the "Zion of Enoch" from Moses 6–7, further suggesting that Joseph's notion of "temple" emerges, at least in part, from this nexus of revelations.

22. The Genesis narratives, especially in the much-edited form that we now have them, are sometimes seen by biblical scholars as windows on the contemporary concerns of their editors and redactors.

involving similar sounding words. For example, it is at **Moreh** [*Môrʾeh*] that "the Lord **appeared** [*wayyērāʾ*] unto Abram and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto the Lord, **who appeared** [*hannirʾeh*] unto him" (Genesis 12:6–8). Genesis 13:14–18 reports that the Lord commanded Abram to lift up his eyes, "**and look** [*ûrʾēh*] . . . For all the land which thou **seest** [*rōʾeh*], to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever. And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered." This becomes the basis for Abram's tenting at "the plain [or, at the oak] of **Mamre** [*Mamrēʾ*]," where again he built an altar to the Lord. (Genesis 13:14–18).

In other words, Abraham built functional "temples"—or the beginnings of temples— at places where he received the promise of eternal seed and land and where the Lord required him to "see," or look forward to, the fulfillment of his promises to him with "an eye of faith" (cf. Ether 12:19; Alma 5:15; 32:40). Throughout his life, Abraham had to "**see** the promises afar off" (Hebrews 11:13; JST Genesis 15:5), yet he persistently "believed God and it was counted unto him for righteousness" (Genesis 15:6; Romans 4:3; Galatians 3:6; James 2:23). It is important to note that Abraham himself never inherits "the land" in mortality as promised here (see Hebrews 11:8–13) but "dies in faith" as a "stranger and pilgrim" on that land (Hebrews 11:13).

Here at Mamre another significant event is that the Lord himself acts to bring about the promise (see Hebrews 11:11–12) of a numberless "seed" or posterity to Abraham through Sarah.[23] What follows will prove to be one of the defining events in Abraham's life: "the Lord **appeared** [*wayyēraʾ*]" to Abraham again at the "plains [or oak] of **Mamre** [*Mamrēʾ*]"

23. Abraham has already been granted a son in Ishmael by Hagar, but Isaac is the one through whose line the Messiah would come and in whose seed the promises would be fulfilled (see especially Genesis 17:19; 21:12).

as "tent of the door in the heat of the day." "And he lift[ed] up his eyes **and looked** [*wayyarʾ*], and lo, three men stood by him: and **when he saw** them [*wayyarʾ*], he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground" (18:1–2). Abraham's obeisance (*hištaḥăwâ)* and hospitality hint at the importance—and perhaps the divinity—of these three visitors. Here at Mamre, Abraham receives the promise of Isaac, the fulfillment of which he and Sarah will be required to "see" with "an eye of faith."

Abraham's and Sarah's ability to "see" with an "eye of faith" was truly put to the test later in Isaac's life when the Lord subsequently commanded Abraham to offer up his son Isaac, the child on whom all of the Lord's promises to Abraham rested (see Hebrews 11:17–18): "Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of **Moriah** [*hammōriâ*]; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of" (Genesis 22:2) Abraham obediently "goes unto the place of which God had told him" (22:3). The narrative then notes that "on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and **saw** [*wayyarʾ*] the place afar off" (22:4; cf. Hebrews 11:13; Isaiah 33:14). Abraham's ability to see Moriah "afar off"[24] suggests more than good eyesight in a physical sense or "farsightedness," but his ability to "beh[o]ld with an eye of faith" (Ether 12:19).

In Genesis 22:8, the Hebrew verb *rāʾâ* ("see") takes on the sense "provide," thus becoming a sacrificial term: "And Abraham said, My son, God **will provide himself** [*yirʾeh-lô*, literally, "will see to himself"] a lamb for a burnt offering" (Genesis 22:8). Thus far, Abraham has been either the subject or the indirect object of the verb to "see." Here God is the subject but he also becomes an implied object of the verb. God will "see to" the lamb that will be the burnt offering: he will provide

24. Cf. see 2 Peter 1:9; Moses 6:27.

himself as the lamb. It is not clear yet that Abraham knows exactly how this will happen, but he knows that all things are possible to the Lord (see Genesis 18:14),[25] and he proceeds in faith:

> And they came to the place which God had told him of [Moriah]; and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood. And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son. And the angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here am I. And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto him: for now I know that thou **fearest God** [*yereʾ-ʾElōhîm*], seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me. And Abraham lifted up his eyes, **and looked** [*wayyarʾ*], and behold behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son. And Abraham called the name of that place **Jehovah-jireh** [*Yhwh yirʾeh*]: as it is said to this day, **In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen** [*behar Yhwh yērāʾeh*]. (Genesis 22:9–14)

A number of things merit attention here. First, the Hebrew expression "mount of the Lord [*har Yhwh*]" is identical to the phrase used by Isaiah to describe the temple, "the mountain of the Lord's house" (Isaiah 2:2) or the "mountain of the Lord [*har Yhwh*]" (2:3) that would be "established in the tops of the mountains" in the "last days" (Isaiah 2:2–3; cf. Micah 4:1–3). Moshe Garsiel suggests that in these passages (Isaiah 2:2–3; Micah 4:1–3) the "ancient name of the temple site is hinted at—Mount Moriah (*hr-h-mwryh*—הר המוריה), as it is called in

25. Cf. Matthew 19:26; Mark 10:27; Luke 18:27.

2 Chronicles 3:1 or 'the land of Moriah' . . . in Gen[esis] 22."[26] Notably, the phrase "Mount of the Lord," or "mountain of the Lord," is used in Numbers 10:33 as a reference to Mt. Sinai (Horeb), where Jehovah himself was seen by Moses and the elders of Israel (Exodus 24) and where he literally "caused" Israel "to see" his glory (Deuteronomy 5:24). The temple was the architectural embodiment of Sinai, but it was also the architectural embodiment of Abraham's "Moriah," where he literally placed everything the Lord had given him and everything that the Lord had promised him upon the altar.

Secondly, the narrative's language is ambiguous. Besides the traditional Masoretic reading, "in the mount[ain] of the Lord it shall be seen" (*běhar Yhwh yērā'eh*), the consonantal text (*bhr Yhwh yr'h*),[27] can be read in other ways, including "In the mountain, Jehovah shall be seen [*bāhār Yhwh yērā'eh*]" or "in the mountain, Jehovah shall be provided." This idea is reflected in the other ancient witnesses to the Old Testament (OT) text. The Septuagint (LXX) reads "in the mount, the Lord appeared [*en tō orei kyrios ōphthē*]."[28] or, "was seen," i.e., "was provided." Two LXX manuscripts, the Peshitta, the Targums, and a Vulgate manuscript affix the pronoun "this" to this "mount," thus "in this mountain, Jehovah shall be seen" or "in this mountain, Jehovah shall be provided." The name *Jehovah-jireh* (*Yhwh yir'eh*) means simply "the Lord shall see," "the Lord shall provide," or (re-vowelled as *yērā'eh*) "the Lord shall appear." The wordplay in Genesis 22:14 suggests what—or

26. Moshe Garsiel, *Biblical Names: A Literary Study of Midrashic Derivations and Puns*, trans. Phyllis Hackett (Ramat Gan: Bar Ilan University Press, 1991), 147.

27. I.e., minus the late vowelling of the Masoretes, Jewish scholars working between the 7th and 11th centuries AD who attempted to standardize (i.e., "fix" [< *māsōrâ* = "bond"]) the pronunciation of the Hebrew Bible.

28. The Greek LXX formulates attempts to preserve the idea of the Hebrew wordplay, Abraham "called the name of the place *Kyrios eiden* ["the Lord saw"] in order that they might say today, 'In this mount, the Lord appeared."

whom—the Lord shall *see to* and *provide*: not merely the offering of a ram (an *'ayil* or *'êl*, 22:13), but the offering of himself (an *'ēl*, "God").[29]

Last, and perhaps most important,the act of offering Isaac was "accounted unto Abraham" for "righteousness" and obedience (see Jacob 4:5; cf. Genesis 15:6) because Abraham himself "account[ed] that God was able to raise [Isaac] up, even from the dead, from whence he also he received him in a figure" (Hebrews 11:19). In other words, Abraham not only "saw" that the Lord would "provide" himself a lamb (i.e., provide himself as the Lamb) but also that the Lamb would be resurrected and bring about the resurrection of the dead, thus "providing" (or preparing) a way for the fulfillment of all of the Lord's promises. Abraham "saw" that *even if he were to offer Isaac*, the Lord would still faithfully fulfill his promise of posterity as numberless as the stars of heaven or the sands of the sea.

Later narratives about David's theophany and the arrested slaughter of Jerusalem at the threshing floor of Araunah/Ornan (2 Samuel 24 and its parallel in 1 Chronicles 21) also repeatedly use the verb *rāʾâ* (to "see") to explain the appropriateness of the site of the Jerusalem temple (2 Samuel 24:3, 13, 17, 20; 1 Chronicles 21:15–16, 20–21, 23, 28).[30] In 2 Samuel 24:17 (1 Chronicles 21:16), David "sees" the destroying angel

29. From a phonological standpoint, the "seen" or "provided" ram (*'ayil*/'êl) of Genesis 22:13 evokes the idea of a "divine" offering—a God ('ēl [or 'ĕlōhîm]). Jesus, as Yhwh, would be "provided" as such an offering.

30. Baruch A. Levine, "'The Lord Your God Accept You' (2 Samuel 24:23): The Altar Erected by David on the Threshing Floor of Araunah," *Eretz Israel* 24 (1994): 122–29; Zeev Yeivin, "Araunah's Threshing Floor and David's Vision Concerning the Construction of the Temple," *Beit Mikra* 34 (1988–89): 268–288; Menahem Naor, "Halawarnâ the Jebusite: Araunah the King," *Beit Mikra* 34 (1990): 155–61; Isaac Kalimi, "The Land of Moriah, Mount Moriah, and the Site of Solomon's Temple in Biblical Historiography," Harvard Theological Review 83/4 (Oct., 1990): 345–362 Sara Japhet, "From King's Sanctuary to Chosen City," *Judaism*, 46/2 (1997): 132–39.

in theophany, slaughtering Israel on account of David's own sin and is about to destroy Jerusalem. The Lord arrests the slaughter ("It is enough, stay now thine hand") at the future temple site. In the Chronicler's version of the story, David intercedes on behalf of the people: "even I it is that have sinned and done evil indeed; but as for these **sheep**, what have they done? Let thine hand, I pray thee O Lord my God be on me, and upon my father's house" (1 Chronicles 21:17). Jesus, one of David's "father's house," later suffers and dies very near this site both for David's sins and the sins of all humanity (see below).

David is then commanded through Gad the seer to "rear up [set up] an altar unto the Lord in the threshingfloor of Araunah [Ornan][31] the Jebusite" (2 Samuel 24:18; 1 Chronicles 21:18). In the Chronicler's version, Araunah (Ornan) too "saw" the angel (21:20) and thus sells the site to David, who then builds an altar there and offers sacrifice (21:28). The 2 Samuel version indicates that once the altar is built and David offers "burnt offerings and peace offerings" that "the Lord was intreated for the land, and the plague was stayed from Israel" (2 Samuel 24:25). In other words, not only was vicarious sacrifice at this specific site necessary for the slaughter of Israel and Jerusalem to be permanently "arrested," but the temple had to be built at this specific site, hence the "theophany" of the destroying angel indicating where the Lord wanted the temple built.

The Jerusalem temple is later built by Solomon, and the Chronicler specifically connects this threshing floor with the site of Isaac's arrested sacrifice and the building of the temple: "Then Solomon began to build the house of the Lord at Jerusalem **in mount Moriah** (*běhar hammôrîyâ*; see Genesis 22:2), where the Lord **appeared** [*nirʾâ*] unto David his father,

31. In the 2 Samuel 24 version of the story, the Jebusite's name appears as "Araunah"; in the 1 Chronicles 21 version of the story, his name appears as "Ornan" (cf. also 2 Chronicles 3:1). I have included both versions of the name side-by-side throughout this paper to help the reader avoid confusion.

in the place that David had prepared in the threshingfloor of Ornan the Jebusite" (2 Chronicles 3:1). The name "Moriah" occurs only in these two passages.

There is indeed a "figure" in the arrested sacrifice of Isaac and the arrested slaughter of Jerusalem for those who have faith in Christ, many of whom "die in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them far off . . . [are] persuaded of them" (Hebrews 11:13). For those with "eyes to see" (Deuteronomy 29:5), the establishment of the Jerusalem temple at Moriah/Jehovah-jireh is about more than Isaac's arrested sacrifice, the arrested slaughter of Jerusalem, and the vicarious animal sacrifices performed there that memorialized these events—it is to "**look forward** to [God's] Son for redemption" (Alma 13:2; cf. 5:5). Sacrifice itself is a kind of theophany in which one "sees" one's own redemption.

"They Saw God, and Did Eat and Drink": Theophany and Sacrifice on Mount Sinai

After Moses led Israel out of Egypt and into the wilderness, Israel experienced the Lord's "presence." Exodus 24 describes a theophany unlike any other in the OT, given the number of persons involved and the clarity with which Jehovah, the God of Israel, is seen:

> Then went up Moses, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel: **And they saw** [*wayyirʾû*] the God of Israel: and there was under his feet as it were a paved work of sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in his clearness. And upon the nobles of children of Israel he laid not his hand: also **they saw** [saw-in-vision, *wayyeḥĕzû*] God, and did eat and drink" (Exodus 24:9–12).

Why did the Lord *not* lay his hand upon them? According to 24:5–8, sacrifices preceded this theophany, and atoning

blood was sprinkled upon the people. The participants in the theophany also participated in a sacramental meal. The slaughter or death, often feared by those who "see" God, was "arrested"[32]—a result of "atonement" (cf. Isaiah 6:7; Moses 1:18).

Exodus 20:18 suggests that the remainder of Israel saw the Lord, or the visible signs of his presence, at some remove. Deuteronomy 5:24 indicates that the Lord "caused them to see" his glory, but Israel "hardened their hearts and could not endure his presence" (D&C 84:24), two consistent aspects of their behavior in the wilderness commemorated and warned against in Israel's temple hymns (see Psalm 95; especially vv. 8–11).

The Sinai-Horeb experience and the Lord's "face" or "presence" retained tremendous ritual significance, the temple becoming "the architectural realization and the ritual enlargement of the Sinai experience."[33] According to Exodus 23:17 and Deuteronomy 16:16, every Israelite male was to come to the temple three times in a year. The consonantal formula (*lrʾwt ʾt-pny Yhwh*) usually translated "appear before the Lord" because of the Masoretic vowelling (*lērāʾôt ʾet pĕnê Yhwh*), could also be rendered "see the Lord's face"[34] (*lirʾôt ʾet pĕnê Yhwh*) in most instances.[35] In either case, Israel was to go to the tem-

32. See Genesis 32:30; Deuteronomy 5:25; Judges 6:22–23; Isaiah 6:1–7.

33. See Lundquist, "What is a Temple?," 85; See also Donald W. Parry, "Sinai as Sanctuary and Mountain of God," in *By Study and Also By Faith: Essays in Honor of Hugh Nibley on the Occasion of His Eightieth Birthday*, ed. John M. Lundquist and Stephen D. Ricks (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book and FARMS,1990), 1:482–500.

34. See E. Jan Wilson, "The Biblical Term *lirʾot ʿet penei yhwh* in the Light of Akkadian Cultic Material," *Akkadica* 93 (Mei-Augustus, 1995): 21–25. Although the Akkadian evidence that Wilson cites for this reading is not unproblematic (see Klaas R. Veenhof, "'Seeing the Face of God': The Use of Akkadian Parallels,'" Akkadica 94–95 [1995]: 33-37), the plausibility of his reading, given the unvowelled character of pre-Masoretic texts, stands. Biblical texts attest the "seeing" of God's face (e.g., Genesis 32:30; 33:10; Exodus 33:11; Numbers 14:14; Job 33:26; 1 Corinthians 13:12; cf. Deuteronomy 5:4; Judges 6:22).

35. See, e.g., Exodus 23:15; 23:17; 34:20, 23; Deuteronomy 16:16; 31:11; Isaiah 1:12; Psalm 42:3; 1 Samuel 1:22.

ple to "see" or "be seen by" the Lord, and Leviticus 9:3–4 specifically instructs Israel that sacrifices are to be offered at the temple "[because] today the Lord **will appear** [*nir'â*] unto you. (Leviticus 9:3–4).

Gethsemane and Golgotha: The "Mount(s)" Where Jehovah Was "Provided"

In a real sense, Jesus's entire life can be said to constitute his atoning sacrifice (see Mosiah 3:5–7). The "anguish" that Jesus Christ suffered "for the wickedness and abominations of his people," which was "so great" that "blood c[ame] from every pore" (3:7), he suffered in "Gethsemane,"[36] a "garden" near the Wadi Kidron[37] that separates the Mount of Olives from the Temple Mount, evidently on the slope of the former.[38]

Of the gospel writers, Luke describes Jesus's suffering in Gethsemane in the greatest detail, incorporating important details that the other evangelists leave out. He notes not only that the Savior's sweat was "great drops of blood falling to the ground," also that in the midst of his indescribable "agony," that there was a theophany: the angel that "appeared" (*ōphthē*)[39] to him from heaven and "strengthened" (*enischyōn*) him (Luke 22:41–44). In LXX Genesis 12:7, 17:1 and in the Genesis Apocryphon (1QapGen 22:27) this form of the verb is used of God appearing to Abraham. The Savior, in performing the greatest act of faith in cosmic history, was strengthened just as he (as Jehovah) had strengthened the faithful[40] and had

36. Gethsemane = literally, "oil press"; see Matthew 26:39; Mark 14:32.

37. Cf. John 18:1.

38. See especially Luke 22:39.

39. As *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (p. 719) notes, this verb form is used mostly of beings who make their appearance in a transcendent manner, almost always w. dat[ive] of the pers[on] to whom they appear."

40. The Lord's (Jehovah's) "strengthening" his people is a prominent theme in scripture. Genesis 49:24 speaks of "the arms of [Joseph's] hands [being] made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob," while Hebrews 11 states that

"made [many] strong even unto the sitting down in the place which [he has] prepared in the mansions of [the] Father" (Ether 12:37).

Here we consider again the basic meaning of the place name of Isaac's arrested sacrifice, *Jehovah-jireh*, "The Lord shall see." Merrill J. Bateman, commenting on Abinadi's exegesis of Isaiah 53 (Mosiah 14–15), suggests that Isaiah's phrase "he shall see his seed [*yirʾeh zeraʿ*]"[41] denotes Jesus's "seeing" the numberless souls for whom he suffered, spirits whom he "saw" or somehow "experienced" in Gethsemane.[42] Like his use of *yirʾeh* ("he shall see") Isaiah's use of *zeraʿ* ("seed") recalls the Abraham-Isaac stories. It was in Isaac that Abraham's "seed" would be called (Genesis 21:12), and in Gethsemane,

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Sarah "received strength to conceive" Isaac (11:11) and takes note of those who "out of weakness were made strong," i.e., by the Lord (11:34). See also Judges 16:28; Psalm 41:3; Daniel 10:18–19; Zechariah 10:6, 12; 1 Nephi 1:20; 2 Nephi 3:21; Mosiah 23:2; 24:15; Alma 2:18; 28; 36:23; 3 Nephi 4:10; Moses 1:20–21.

41. Mosiah 5:7; D&C 76:2.

42. Merrill J. Bateman ("The Power to Heal from Within," *Ensign*, May 1995, 14) stated, "In the garden and on the cross, **Jesus saw each of us** and not only bore our sins, but also experienced our deepest feelings so that he would know how to comfort and strengthen us." Elder Bateman ("A Peculiar Treasure," in *Speeches* [Brigham Young University] [Provo, UT: Brigham Young University, 1996], 5–11) shared this additional insight: "For many years I envisioned the Garden of Gethsemane and the cross as places where an infinite mass of sin and pain were heaped upon the Savior. Thanks to Alma and Abinadi, it is no longer an infinite mass but an infinite stream of people with whom **the Savior became intimately acquainted** as he suffered our sins, pains, and afflictions. I testify that **he knows each of us**, is concerned about our progress, and has the infinite capacity not only to heal our wounds but also to lift us up to the Father as sanctified sons and daughters. " Elder Bateman ("One by One," *Brigham Young Magazine* [Provo, UT: Brigham Young University, Spring 1998], 4–5) further observed: "There were many years in which I believed that the atoning process involved an infinite mass of sin being heaped upon the Savior. As I have become more familiar with the scriptures, **my view of the Atonement has expanded**. The Atonement involved more than an infinite mass of sin; **it entailed an infinite stream of individuals with their specific needs**. Alma records that Jesus took upon himself the pains, afflictions, temptations, and sicknesses of his people. In addition, **he experienced their weaknesses so that he would know how to help them** (see Alma 7:11–12)."

Jesus "took on him the seed of Abraham" (Hebrews 2:16) in a very personal way, taking upon him their pains, sicknesses, and sins. He "saw" the "seed" for whom he was the substitute "ram" or "lamb" and what would be required for their "succor" (Alma 7:11–13), i.e., what would be needed to make them "even as" he is.[43] In a sense, this was the *other* "theophany" that Jesus saw in Gethsemane: his "seed" as they were, are, and will be.[44] And perhaps his seed "saw" him.

What Jesus suffered after Gethsemane was anything but an anticlimax. This is suggested not only by the detailed narratives of the gospel writers who describe the spitting, buffeting, and other physical and verbal abuse that Jesus endured, but also by scriptural texts that indicate that his suffering on the cross was "seen" hundreds and even thousands of years beforehand. Enoch, who had seen Jehovah "weep" at humanity's wickedness and had himself mourned, rejoiced at seeing Savior "lifted up," knowing the blessings that this would mean for himself and for Zion: "And behold, Enoch **saw** the day of the coming of the Son of Man, even in the flesh; and **his soul rejoiced**, saying: The Righteous is lifted up, and **the Lamb is slain** from the foundation of the world; and through faith I am in the bosom of the Father, and behold, Zion is with me" (Moses 7:47).

Nephi too, on "an exceedingly high mountain," was privileged to "see" the same event: "And I looked and beheld the Lamb of God, that he was taken by the people; yea, the … everlasting God judged of the world; and I saw and bear record. And I, Nephi, saw that he was lifted up upon the cross and slain for the sins of the world" (1 Nephi 11:32–33). When Pilate declares to the crowd "Behold the man" (John 19:5), he presents Jesus as a spectacle, and those who witness his crucifixion thereafter witness with their own eyes what many had already seen with eyes of faith.

43. 3 Nephi 27:27; John 17:1–26.

44. Cf. Psalm 82:6; Jacob 4:12–13.

The language in the accounts of Enoch's and Nephi's visions is similar to John 8:56–58, thus echoing Genesis 22 and Abraham's sacrifice of will as well as the true atoning sacrifice that he foresaw with an eye of faith. And just as Jesus appeared in theophany at first as the pre-mortal Jehovah[45] and then as the transfigured[46] and later crucified Christ, he would also appear as the resurrected Lord to whom all "power [authority] in heaven and earth" is given (Matthew 28:18), first at Jerusalem and then to sheep of other folds.

Theophany at the Temple in Bountiful

In prefacing his account of Jesus's ministry among "the Nephites and those who had been called Lamanites," Mormon emphasizes that "He [Jesus] did truly manifest himself unto them—**Showing his body unto them**, and ministering unto them." (3 Nephi 10:18–19). The specific praxis of (i.e., how one implements)[47] the Lord's eternal law of sacrifice was changed at that time as he himself makes clear: "And ye shall offer up unto me no more the shedding of blood; yea, your sacrifices and your burnt offerings shall be done away, for I will accept none of your sacrifices and your burnt offerings" (3 Nephi 9:19). The sacramental overtones evident in this injunction are clearer in what follows: "[But] ye shall offer for a sacrifice unto me a broken heart and a contrite spirit. And whoso cometh unto me with a broken heart and a contrite spirit, him will I baptize with fire and with the Holy Ghost (3 Nephi 9:20).

45. E.g., Genesis 12:7; 17:1; 18:1; 26:2, 12; Exodus 3:2, 16; 1 Kings 3:5; 9:2; 11:9; Ether 3:13.

46. Matthew 17:2; Mark 9:2.

47. See, e.g., Dana M. Pike, "3 Nephi 9:19–20: The Offering of a Broken Heart," in *Third Nephi: An Incomparable Scripture*, ed. Andrew C. Skinner and Gaye Strathearn (Salt Lake City, UT: Neal A. Maxwell Institute and Deseret Book, 2012), 35–56.

The sacrifice that involved the "contrite" or "broken heart" (see Psalm 51:17)[48] was then key not only to the Lord's "acceptance" of the individual worshiper but also to the collective repentance and the gathering of Israel (see especially 3 Nephi 10:6). As the "faith" in the hearts of the Nephite and Lamanite survivors (Ether 12:7) began to be "sufficient" (3 Nephi 17:8) and they "c[a]me unto [Jesus] with a broken heart and a contrite spirit" (12:19 and with "full purpose of heart (12:24; cf. 10:6), the Savior began to heal them by first appearing to them at "the temple which was in the land Bountiful" (3 Nephi 11:1).

When Jesus appears to the Nephites, the voice of God the Father introduces him three times, but only the third time do they "open their ears to hear it" (3 Nephi 11:5). Once they have "ears to hear,"[49] they are prepared for theophany:

> And behold, **they saw a Man descending out of heaven**; and he was clothed in a white robe; and he came down and stood in the midst of them; and **the eyes of the whole multitude were turned upon him**, and they durst not open their mouths, even one to another, and wist not what it meant, for **they thought it was an angel that had appeared unto them** (3 Nephi 11:8).

Additional, sacred confirmation of Jesus's identity comes by way of personal invitation (11:14–15). The theophany at the temple in Bountiful not only involved "a multitude" of "two thousand and five hundred souls" (3 Nephi 17:25) seeing and hearing the Lord, but also their experiencing him by *feeling*

48. Besides Psalm 51:17, several other OT passages indicate that animal sacrifice *per se* was never the end that the Lord had in view: 1 Samuel 15:22; Isaiah 1:11–17; Amos 5:21–24; Hosea 6:6 (cf. Matt 9:3; 12:27). Ritual sacrifice divorced from obedience, mercy, and care for society's weakest (e.g., the widow and the orphan) was, in the Lord's view, unethical in the extreme.

49. Deuteronomy 29:4; Matthew 11:15; 13:9, 43; Mark 4:9, 23; 76; Luke 8:8; 14:35; cf. Isaiah 6:9–10; Ezekiel 12:2.

("and [they] did feel") the sure signs (the "surety," 11:14–15) of an earlier sacrifice—his atoning sacrifice on their behalf.

As John W. Welch has noted, the subsequent institution of the sacrament is done "in remembrance not of the broken body or of the suffering of the Lord, but of the unforgettably glorified body"[50] with which Jesus appeared to them: "And this shall ye do in remembrance of **my body**, **which I have shown unto you** [i.e., my body, which I have caused you to see]. And it shall be a testimony unto the Father that ye do always remember me. And if ye do always remember me ye shall have my Spirit to be with you" (3 Nephi 18:7). The sacrament was instituted among the Nephites in remembrance of Jesus's atoning sacrifice, *but also his theophany at the temple*, a theophany that fit the pattern of Jesus's pre-mortal ministration to the brother of Jared and his "flesh and blood" ministry among his people (Ether 3:16–18; John 1:14).

"Sacrifice Brings Forth the Blessings of Heaven": Sacrifice, Theophany, and the Latter-day Temple

The foundations of the Latter-day Saint temple are also grounded in theophany and sacrifice. As noted above, the Lord's revelations to the Prophet Joseph Smith regarding the latter-day temple begin in late 1830 with the promise of a temple theophany: "wherefore, gird up your loins and I will suddenly come to my temple" (D&C 38:6).[51] Subsequent revelations in 1831 reiterate this promise (see D&C 42:36; 133:2; cf. 31:8). At the same time, the prophet learned that the time prior

50. John W. Welch, "Seeing 3 Nephi as the Holy of Holies of the Book of Mormon," in *Third Nephi: An Incomparable Scripture*, ed. Andrew C. Skinner and Gaye Strathearn (Provo, UT: Neal A. Maxwell Institute and Deseret Book, 2012), 21.

51. The revelation uses the language of Malachi 3:1, a text given to the Nephites by Jesus when he "came suddenly" to their temple in Bountiful (see 3 Nephi 24:1).

to the Lord's Second Coming was "a **day of sacrifice** and a day for the tithing of my people" (D&C 64:23).

A September 1832 revelation on the temple envisioned latter-day "sons of Moses" and "sons of Aaron" offering "an acceptable offering and sacrifice in the house of the Lord which house shall be built unto the Lord in this generation" (D&C 84:31). The temple spoken of was to be built in Independence, Jackson County, Missouri, a site later identified by Brigham Young with the Garden of Eden, the first "temple."[52]

Although the commanded temple in Independence did not materialize, revelations and commandments on the temple kept coming to the Prophet. In an August 1833 revelation, the Lord declared that those "who know their hearts are honest, and are broken, and their spirits are contrite, and are willing to observe their covenants by sacrifice—yea, every sacrifice which I the Lord, shall command—they are accepted of me" (D&C 97:8). The Lord's words have indirect reference to Abraham, who did observe every sacrifice which the Lord commanded. The sacrifice the Lord was commanding that would enable them to become like Abraham was (and is) the building of the temple:

> Behold, this is the tithing and **the sacrifice** which I, the Lord, require at their hands, **that there may be a house built unto me for the salvation of Zion** … And in as much as my people build a house unto me in the name of the Lord and do not suffer any unclean thing to come into it, that it be not defiled, my glory shall rest upon it; yea, and **my presence shall be there for I will**

52. Brigham Young: "You have been both to Jerusalem and Zion, and seen both. I have not seen either, for I have never been in Jackson County. Now it is a pleasant thing to think of and to know where the Garden of Eden was. Did you ever think of it? I do not think many do, for in Jackson County was the Garden of Eden. Joseph has declared this, and I am as much bound to believe that as to believe that Joseph was a prophet of God" (Journal History, March 15, 1857).

come into it and all the pure in heart that shall come into it shall see God (D&C 97:12, 15–16).

As the Prophet Joseph Smith and the saints learned, the building of a temple was itself a sacrifice that created the appropriate conditions necessary for *ongoing* theophanies (D&C 110:7) to restore priesthood keys, as on the "Mount of Transfiguration" (Matthew 17:1–13; Mark 9:2–10). D&C 110 records that the building of the Kirtland temple was finally answered with the theophany promised in D&C 36:8. It was a theophany like the one experienced by the elders of Israel at Mount Sinai: "The veil was taken from our minds, and the eyes of our understanding were opened. We **saw** the Lord standing upon the breastwork of the pulpit, before us; and under his feet was a paved work of pure gold, in color like amber" (D&C 110:1–2). The "paved work of pure gold . . . like amber" under the Savior's feet recalls the "paved work of a sapphire stone" under the feet of the God of Israel at the theophany in Exodus 24:10. The visions and blessings of old had indeed returned.

The appearance of the Savior indicated that the Saints' sacrifices had been accepted (D&C 110:7) and the "law" on which the blessings of such a theophany were predicated had been obeyed (D&C 130:20–21). The Kirtland theophanies, however, were but a prelude to something greater that God already "provided" (see Hebrews 11:40), namely vicarious ordinance work for the dead (D&C 128:15, 18) that would provide a "welding link" back to those who had been made fit for heaven (i.e., "initiated" *teleiōthōsin*, Hebrews 11:40) through sacrificial "sufferings" (JST Hebrews 11:40). Vicarious ordinance work for the dead, including the performance of sealing ordinances, constitutes the Latter-day equivalent of the "sacrifices of righteousness"[53] offered at the Jerusalem temple—sacrifices that prepare not only our kindred dead but also prepare *us* to "see" the God

53. Deuteronomy 33:19; Psalm 4:5; Isaiah 51:19.

who promises to "unveil his face unto" all the pure in heart "in his own time, and in his own way, and according to his own will" (D&C 88:68; 97:16).

Conclusion: To "See" the Lord is to Partake of His Atoning Sacrifice

On a mountain temple, Moses, who learned that fallen man was nothing, also learned that he was able to "behold" God because God's glory had come upon him, i.e., he was transfigured (Moses 1:2, 11) and "cleansed" (cf. 3 Nephi 28:37). Isaiah, similarly overwhelmed by feelings of inadequacy as "a man of unclean lips in the midst of a people of unclean lips" (Isaiah 6:5), had his iniquity "purged" (*tĕkuppār*, atoned) so that he could be in the Lord's presence (in the temple!) and participate in the divine council (Isaiah 6:7–8). For both prophets, not the blood of a sacrificial animal but rather of the Lord himself enabled them to remain in his presence: the Lord would "provide" himself in the mountain.

If our eyes could be "opened" like Adam's and Eve's (Moses 5:10–11), and if we could "see" with "purer eyes" (D&C 131:7) like Abraham, we would better appreciate that the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ is not only at the heart of the temple—both in its concept and in its ordinances—but that the temple *is* the Savior's Atonement. That Atonement is gradually but surely exerting its intended effect upon the family of Adam and Eve through the temple (see Jacob 5:75). May the Lord "open [our] eyes" that we "may see"[54] our promised redemption and "rejoice" with Adam and Eve, Enoch, Abraham,

54. Notably, Elisha's prayer "open his eyes **that he may see** [*wĕ-yir'eh*]" (2 Kings 6:17) includes the word *yir'eh*, recalling the Genesis 22 story, Abraham's ability to "see" and the Lord's "providing."

Sarah, our kindred dead, and all saints of ages past (cf. D&C 138:11–19).[55]

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