

4 And Adam and Eve, his wife, called upon the name of the Lord, and they heard the voice of the Lord from the way toward the Garden of Eden, speaking unto them, and they saw him not; for they were shut out from his presence.

repetition: “O hear, O hear, O hear us, O Lord! ...that we may mingle our voices with those bright, shining seraphs around thy throne.”²⁸⁶ Similarly, Abraham, having “rebuilt the altar of Adam” at the command of an angel,²⁸⁷ is reported as having repeatedly raised his voice to God, saying: “El, El, El, El, Iaoel...”²⁸⁸ Accept my prayer.”²⁸⁹ Abraham’s prayer was also in imitation of Adam, who was reported in one account to have supplicated: “May the words of my mouth be acceptable.”²⁹⁰ The threefold repetition in some versions of the story may represent the tradition that it was on the third day when Adam’s urgent and persistent request for additional knowledge from the Lord was at last answered with instruction by an angel. The angel is said to have borne a book that “teaches [those who are wise and God-fearing] how to call upon the angels and make them appear before men, and answer all their questions.”²⁹¹ Likewise, the Prophet Joseph Smith was anxious to teach the Saints the manner by which they could “pray and have [their] prayers answered.”²⁹²

- b** *they heard the voice of the Lord from the way toward the Garden of Eden.* In response to their obedience and prayers, Adam and Eve heard the Lord’s voice calling them back from their place of exile. Later, He gave them additional commandments (and covenants) in order to set their feet back on the way toward the Garden of Eden which is, of course, the path that terminates in “the way of the Tree of Life.”²⁹³

In a passage from the *Midrash Tehillim*,²⁹⁴ the Hebrew term *teshuvah*, which denotes “return” but scripturally means “repentance” or “conversion,” is used to describe the way back to the Garden, signifying “the movement that brings every thing and every being back to its supernal origin,” the “return to the celestial abode.”²⁹⁵ The spiritual movement of turning away from the world and back toward mankind’s heavenly origins is mirrored in the layout of ordinance rooms in some modern temples.²⁹⁶

3 Enoch relates that the “first man and his generation dwelt at the gate of the Garden of Eden so that they might gaze at the bright image of the *Shekhinah*.”²⁹⁷ “The entrance to the Garden therefore symbolizes the human possibility of reaching a privileged vantage point from which a higher knowledge may be obtained.”²⁹⁸

- c** *for they were shut out from his presence.* Lacking knowledge of the conditions by which they could receive the blessings of the Atonement, Adam and Eve experienced a temporary state of spiritual death—the “first death, even that same death which is the last death” for the wicked.²⁹⁹

Nibley comments: “They could hear his voice speaking from the Garden, but they saw him not. They were shut out from his presence, but the link was there. This is what the rabbis call the

286 D&C 109:78-79.

287 H. W. Nibley, *Prayer Circle*, p. 57.

288 I.e., Yahweh-El = Jehovah (M. Barker, *Gate*, p. 153; H. W. Nibley, *Prayer Circle*, p. 57).

289 R. Rubinkiewicz, *Apocalypse of Abraham*, 17:13, 20, p. 697.

290 L. Ginzberg, *Legends*, 1:91; cf. Psalm 54:2: “Hear my prayer, O God; give ear to the words of my mouth.”

291 L. Ginzberg, *Legends*, 1:92; cf. S. Savedow, *Reziah*, p. 6. Early Christians, when they gathered to “lift up [their] hearts to heaven,” were reminded that God Himself (with the angels) would be an “onlooker” to their proceedings (J. Cooper, *et al.*, *Testament*, 1:23, p. 71).

292 To Bathsheba W. Smith, *Juvenile Instructor*, 27, 1 June 1892, p. 345, cited in T. G. Madsen, *Joseph Smith*, p. 99. Cf. J. Smith, Jr., *Teachings*, 28 April 1842, p. 226.

293 Moses 4:31.

294 W. G. Braude, *Midrash on Psalms*, 90:12, 2:94.

295 G. B. Eden, *Mystical Architecture*, pp. 16, 17 n. 7.

296 See, e.g., J. E. Talmage, *House of the Lord*, pp. 118-134.

297 P. Alexander, *3 Enoch*, 5:3, p. 259.

298 G. B. Eden, *Mystical Architecture*, p. 18.

299 D&C 29:41.