

The Tree of Knowledge as the Veil of the Sanctuary

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Presentation at the 42nd Annual Sidney B. Sperry Symposium
Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah
26 October 2013

A shorter version of this paper was previously published as:

Bradshaw, Jeffrey M. "The Tree of Knowledge as the veil of the sanctuary." In *Ascending the Mountain of the Lord: Temple, Praise, and Worship in the Old Testament*, edited by David Rolph Seely, Jeffrey R. Chadwick and Matthew J. Grey. The 42nd Annual Brigham Young University Sidney B. Sperry Symposium (26 October, 2013), 49-65. Provo and Salt Lake City, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University and Deseret Book, 2013.

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Portions of this article were adapted from Jeffrey M. Bradshaw, *Temple Themes in the Book of Moses*, SLC, UT: Eborn Books, 2010, pp. 69-85, 96-101. For this and related readings on this topic, see www.templethemes.net.

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An expanded version of the Sperry book chapter,
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Latter-day Saints have been blessed with not one but four accounts of the beginnings of this earth: Genesis, the book of Moses, the book of Abraham, and the temple. Just as each of the four Gospels emphasize, in addition to their common message, particular themes for specific audience; and just each modern temple embodies a unique vocabulary of symbolism in its sacred architecture, so each account of beginnings serves its unique pedagogical purpose. Each of these four sacred narratives frames the story in unique ways, thus helping us understand, through multiple perspectives adapted to different purposes, the richness of this foundational narrative.

Today, I will speak about the story of Creation and Adam and Eve that is found in Genesis and amplified in the book of Moses. Consistent with the theme of this year’s symposium, “Ascending the Mountain of the Lord,” I will show how the story of the Garden of Eden in Genesis and Moses prepares ancient and modern readers to understand the function and layout of ancient and modern temples. Of great importance in temple architecture is the veil, which has always been designed to admit the entry of qualified seekers while excluding those who are as yet unprepared.

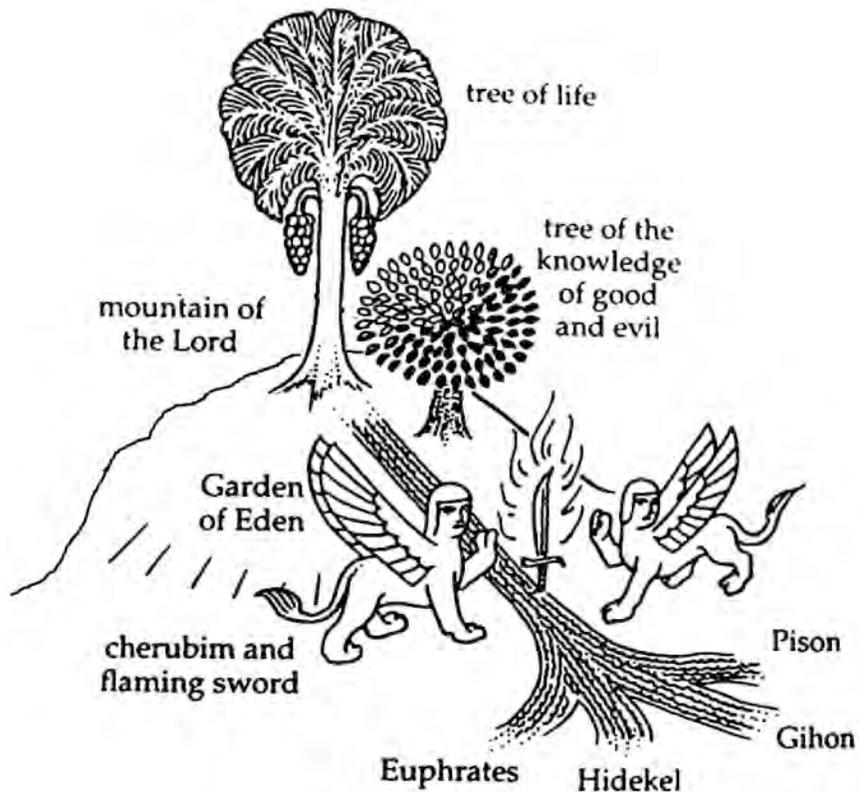


**Intertwined Tree of Life and Tree of Knowledge in the Center of a Mountainous Garden of Eden Setting.
From Lutwin, *How the Devil Deceived Eve* (detail), early fourteenth century.**

One thing that has always perplexed readers of Genesis is the location of the two special trees within the Garden of Eden. Although scripture initially applies the phrase “in the midst” only to the Tree of Life (Genesis 2:9), the Tree of Knowledge is later said by Eve to be located there too (see Genesis 3:3).¹ In the context of these verses, the Hebrew phrase corresponding to “in the midst” literally means “in the center.”² How can *both* trees be in the center?

Elaborate explanations have been attempted to describe how both the Tree of Life and the Tree of Knowledge could share the center of the Garden of Eden.³ For example, it has been suggested that these two trees were in reality different aspects of a single tree, that they shared a common trunk, or that they were somehow intertwined as shown here.

As we consider the story more carefully as a whole, it will become apparent why the confusion about the location of two trees in the Genesis account may well be intentional. First, however, a brief review of the symbolism of the “sacred center” in ancient thought will help clarify the important roles that the Tree of Life and the Tree of Knowledge played “in the midst” of the Garden of Eden. One must consider the entire layout of the Garden of Eden as a sanctuary in order to make sense of the concept of the Tree of Knowledge as the *veil* of the sanctuary.



Michael P. Lyon, 1952-: Topography, Eden and Temple.

The Symbolism of the “Sacred Center”

Michael A. Fishbane describes the Garden of Eden as “an *axis mundi*. From it radiate primal streams to the four quarters It is the navel or *omphalos*,” and the Tree of Life stands at “the center of this center.”⁴ Explaining the choice of a tree to represent the concepts of life, earth, and heaven in ancient cultures, Terje Stordalen writes, “Every green tree would symbolize life, and a large tree—rooted in deep soil and stretching towards the sky—potentially makes a cosmic symbol.”⁵ “In both cases it becomes a ‘symbol of the centre.’”⁶

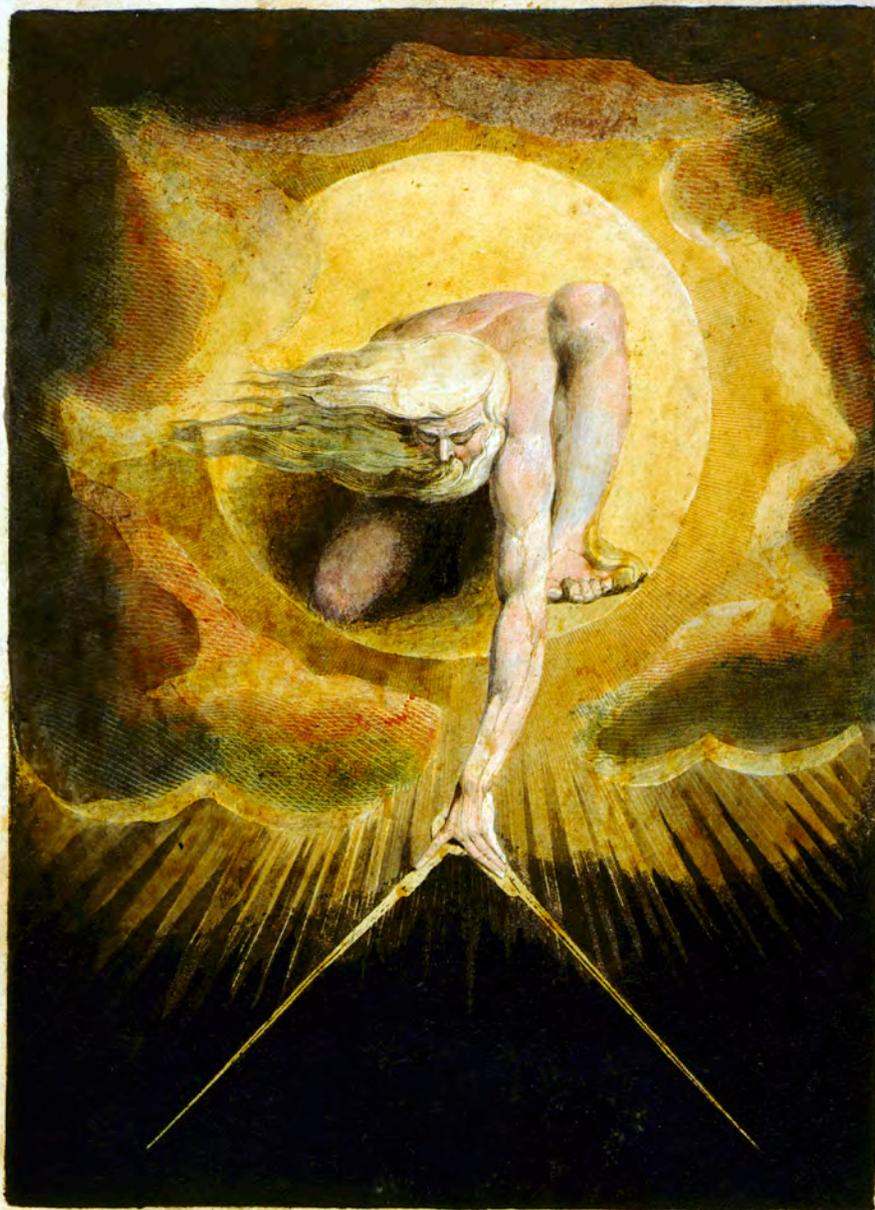
Ezekiel 28:13 places Eden on the mountain of God.⁷ “Eden, as a luxuriant cosmic mountain becomes an archetype or symbol for the earthly temple.”⁸



James J. Tissot: Reconstruction of Jerusalem and Herod's Temple Seen from the East

Described by Isaiah as “the mountain of the Lord’s house” (Isaiah 2:2), the Jerusalem temple can be identified—like Eden—as a symbol of the center.⁹ Israelite traditions asserted that the foundation stone in front of the ark within the Holy of Holies of the temple at Jerusalem “was the first solid material to emerge from the waters of creation [see Psalm 104:7–9], and it was upon this stone that the Deity effected creation.”¹⁰ As a famous passage in the *Midrash Tanhuma* states:

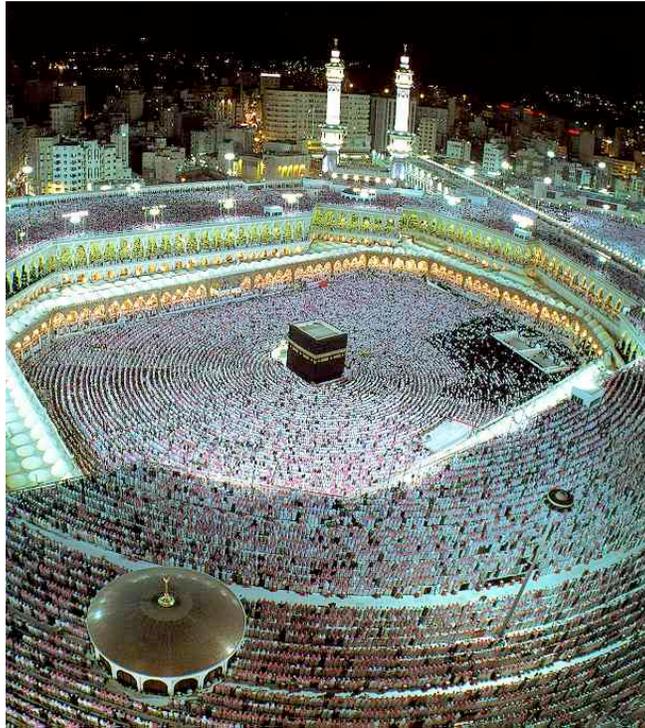
Just as a navel is set in the middle of a person, so the land of Israel is the navel of the world [cf. Ezekiel 38:12; see also Ezekiel 5:5] The land of Israel sits at the center of the world; Jerusalem is in the center of the land of Israel; the sanctuary is in the center of Jerusalem; the Temple building is in the center of the sanctuary; the ark is in the center of the Temple building; and the foundation stone, out of which the world was founded, is before the Temple building.¹¹



William Blake, 1757-1827: *God Creating the Universe*, ca. 1794/1824

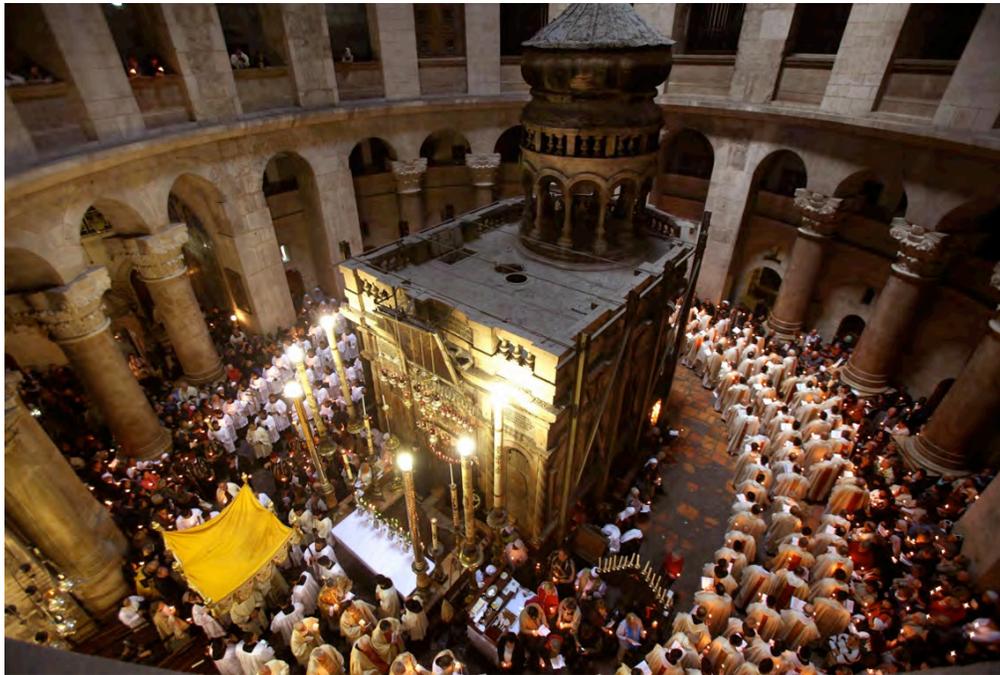
In the symbolism of the sacred center, the circle is generally used to represent heaven, while the square typically signifies earth.¹² The solitary posture of God in this beautiful engraving by William Blake seems to have been prescribed by Milton, who wrote of the moment when the Almighty “took the golden Compasses prepar’d ... to circumscribe This Universe, and all created things: One foot he centred, and the other turn’d Round through the vast profunditie obscure.”¹³

The intersection of the circle and square can be seen, among other things, as depicting the coming together of heaven and earth in both the sacred geometry of the temple and in the soul of the disciple.¹⁴



Masjid al-Haram at Night

For example, this photograph shows the sacred mosque of Mecca during the peak period of *hajj*.¹⁵ As part of the ritual of *tawaf*, *hajj* pilgrims enact the symbolism of the circle and the square as they form concentric rings around the rectangular *Ka'bah*.¹⁶ Islamic tradition says that near this location Adam had been shown the worship place of angels, which was directly above the *Ka'bah* in heaven,¹⁷ and that he was commanded to build a house for God in Mecca where he could, in likeness of the angels, “circumambulate... and offer prayer.”¹⁸



Gali Tibbon, 1973-: *Catholic Clergy Circle the Edicule*, 2009

We see the same symbolism at work in this photograph, which shows Catholic clergy with lighted candles moving in a circle around the rectangular edicule within the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem.¹⁹ This procession echoes the circumambulation on the walls of Jerusalem²⁰ and around the altar of its temple in ancient times.²¹ “In the procession around the altar, some scholars have suggested that tree branches and a citrus fruit (representing the Tree of Life’s branches and fruit) were carried and waved.”²²



Gustave Doré, 1832-1883: *The Empyrean*, 1857

Here we see Doré's famous illustration of the "empyrean heaven."²³ This is a representation of the highest heaven as a realm lighted by the pure fire of God's glory.²⁴ Since, in this instance, the sacred center is located in heaven rather than earth, it is shown as a circle rather than a square. The heavenly throne is, in the words of Lehi, "surrounded with numberless concourses of angels in the attitude of singing and praising their God."²⁵ Hugh Nibley points out: "A concourse is a circle. Of course [numberless] concourses means circles within circles and reminds you of dancing. And what were they doing? Surrounded means 'all around' . . . It was a choral dance."²⁶

The sacred center does not ultimately represent some abstract epitome of goodness, nor merely a ceremonial altar or throne, but rather the presence of God Himself. In ancient prayer circles, the human petitioners on earth who form a ring around the square altar are, as it were, in likeness of the concourses of heavenly hosts who encircle the divine round in the celestial world.



James J. Tissot: *Jesus' High Priestly Prayer*

While the focal point in heaven is clearly the Father, ancient texts tell us that the corresponding figure on earth is the Son. For example, the Gnostic *Acts of John* records that a prayer circle was formed by Jesus' apostles, with the Savior at the center: "So he told us to form a circle, holding one another's hands, and himself stood in the middle."²⁷

When the Savior prays to the Father: "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven,"²⁸ He is to be understood as enjoining something more from us than the mere motions of imitation. Above anything else, such prayer anticipates the complete fulfillment of the Savior's Atonement, whereby not only the hearts and minds of participants in the earthly circle are made one among themselves, but also they are prepared for an imminent (re)union with celestial beings in the divine sphere.

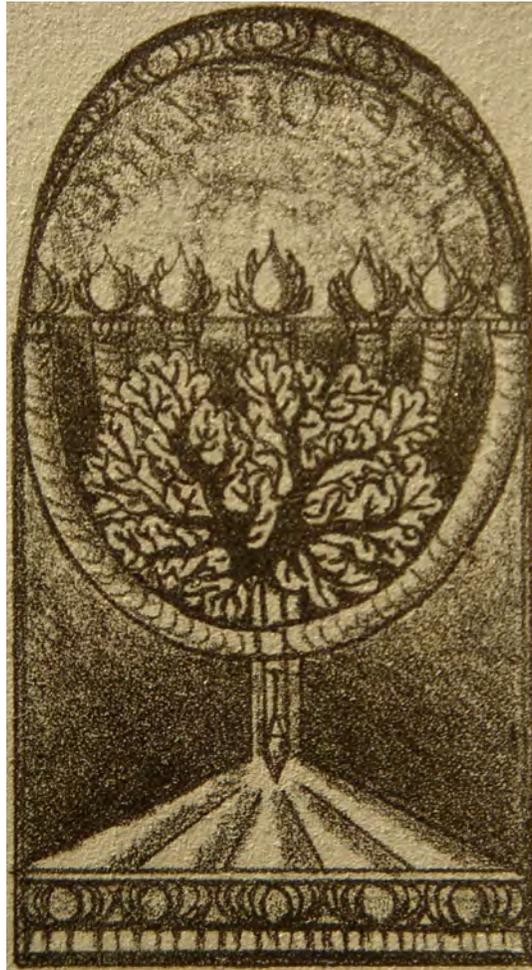


David Lindsley, 1954—: *Behold Your Little Ones*, 1983.

The exact center of the sacred circle is always the *most* holy place, and the degree of holiness decreases in proportion to the distance from that center. For instance, we can see this phenomenon in examples where the Lord himself is portrayed as standing in the center of sacred space. S. Kent Brown observes how at his first appearance to the Nephites Jesus “stood in the midst of them” (3 Nephi 11:8). Brown cites other Book of Mormon passages associating the presence of the Lord “in the midst” to the placement of the temple and its altar.²⁹ He also noted a similar configuration when Jesus blessed the Nephite children:

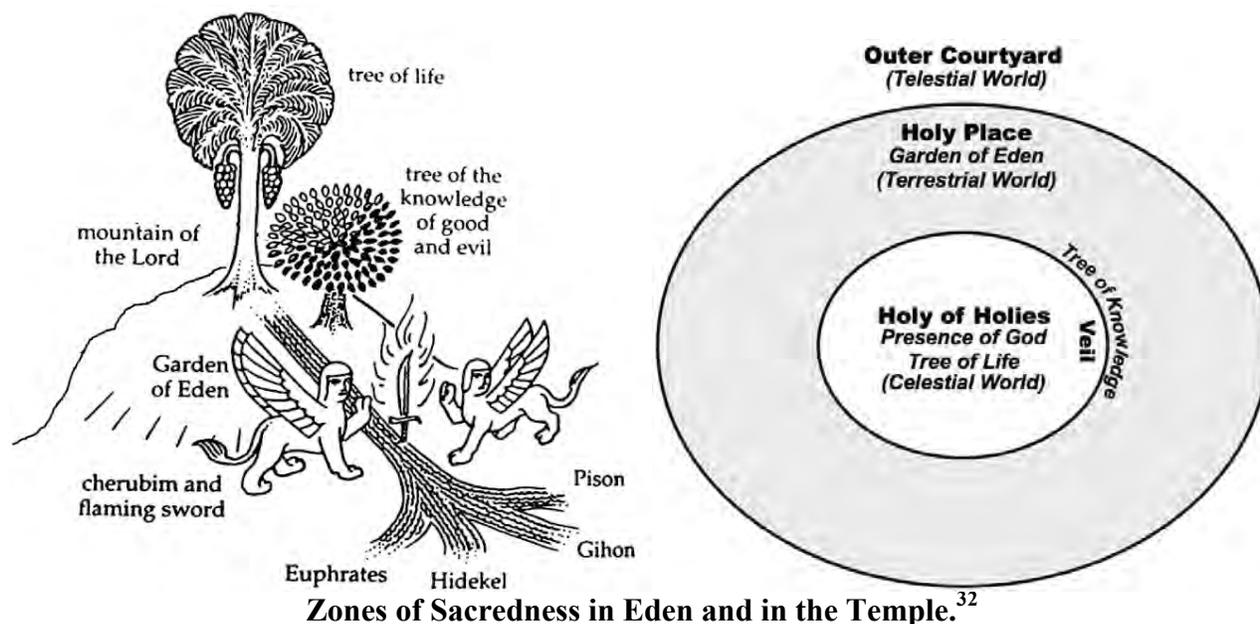
As the most Holy One, [the Savior] was standing “in the midst,” at the sacred center (3 Nephi 17:12–13). The children sat “upon the ground round about him” (3 Nephi 17:12). When the angels “came down,” they “encircled those little ones about.” In their place next to the children, the angels themselves “were encircled about with fire” (3 Nephi 17:24). On the edge stood the adults. And beyond them was ... profane space which stretched away from this holy scene.³⁰

Jesus’ placement of the children so that they immediately surrounded him—their proximity exceeding even that of the encircling angels and accompanying fire—conveyed a powerful visual message about their holiness—namely, that “whosoever ... shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 18:4). Hence, Jesus’ instructions to them: “Behold your little ones” (3 Nephi 17:23).



Dixie L. Majers, 1934–, *Lit Menorah with Tree of Life*, 1985.

Moses' vision of the burning bush brings together three prominent symbols of the sacred center discussed above: the tree, the mountain, and the Lord himself. 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."³¹ 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.



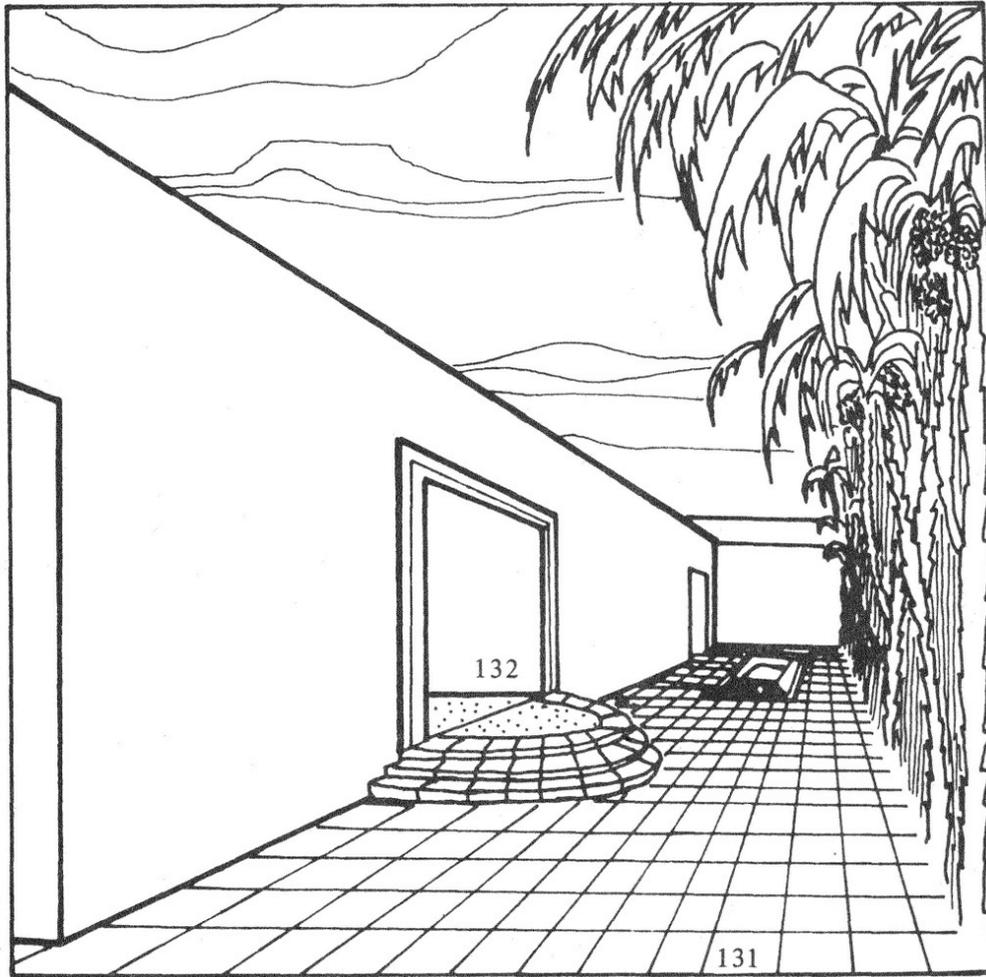
Zones of Sacredness in Eden and in the Temple.³²

The Tree of Knowledge as the Veil of the Sanctuary

Having explored the concept of the sacred center, we return to the question of how both the Tree of Life and the Tree of Knowledge could have *shared* the center of the Garden of Eden. Jewish commentary provides additional intriguing clues.

After describing how the Tree of Life was planted “precisely in the middle of the garden,”³³ the *Zohar* goes on to assert that the Tree of Knowledge of good and evil was “not *precisely* in the middle.”³⁴ Clarifying what this might mean, an interesting Jewish tradition about the placement of the two trees is the idea that the foliage of the Tree of Knowledge hid the Tree of Life from direct view and that “God did not specifically prohibit eating from the Tree of Life because the Tree of Knowledge formed a hedge around it; only after one had partaken of the latter and cleared a path for himself could one come close to the Tree of Life.”³⁵ In other words, although both trees were located, relatively speaking, in the central portion of Eden, one had to “pass through” the Tree of Knowledge that was “not precisely in the middle” before one could see and gain access to the Tree of Life that was “precisely in the middle of the garden.”

The top-down view of the Garden at right clarifies this imagery. Consistent with this Jewish tradition about the placement of the trees and with scholarship that sees the Garden of Eden as a temple prototype,³⁶ Ephrem the Syrian, a fourth-century Christian, called the Tree of Knowledge “the veil for the sanctuary.”³⁷ He pictured Paradise as a great mountain, with the Tree of Knowledge providing a permeable boundary partway up the slopes. The Tree of Knowledge, Ephrem concluded, “acts as a sanctuary curtain [i.e., veil] hiding the Holy of Holies, which is the Tree of Life higher up.”³⁸ In addition to this inner boundary, Jewish, Christian, and Muslim sources sometimes speak of a “wall” surrounding whole of the garden, separating it from the “outer courtyard” of the mortal world.³⁹ Recurring throughout the Old Testament are echoes of such a layout of sacred spaces and the accounts of dire consequences for those who attempt unauthorized entry through the veil into the innermost sanctuary.⁴⁰



André Parrot, 1901-1980: *Court of the Palms at Mari, ca. 1800 BCE*

A parallel to the idea of one or a group of trees hedging a boundary between areas of a sanctuary or palace is shown in Parrot's conjectural reconstruction of the ancient Court of the Palms at Mari. He conjectured that a line of palm trees may have stood in front of the audience chamber.⁴¹



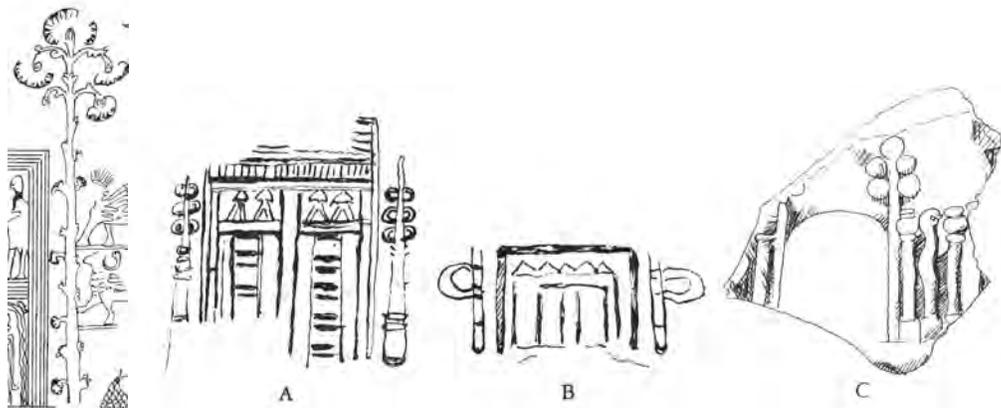
Val Brinkerhoff: *Doors, Palmyra New York Temple*

Though not intentionally designed to serve a gatekeeping function, the line of trees represented symbolically on the doors of the Palmyra New York Temple is a striking image.



Palm Tree Hedge Near Brawley, California, 2008

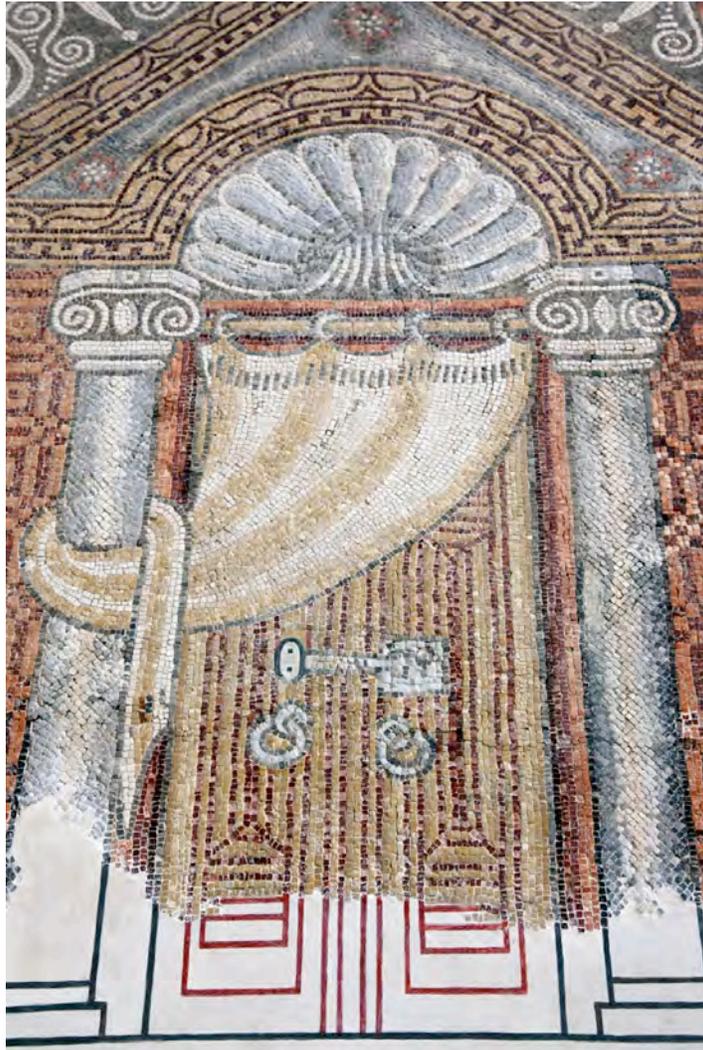
Nature suggests how a hedge formed by the Tree of Knowledge might, with effort, be passable physically while still maintaining an impenetrable view with respect to the hidden Tree of Life.



Left: The rightmost of the two “imaginary” sacred trees that stand on either side of the inner compartment represented at the center of the Investiture Panel. *Right:* Three depictions of stylized “trees” flanking the doors of Mesopotamian temples. A: Cylinder Seal of Tell Billa; B: Cylinder Seal of Tell Agrab; C: Stela of Gudea.⁴²

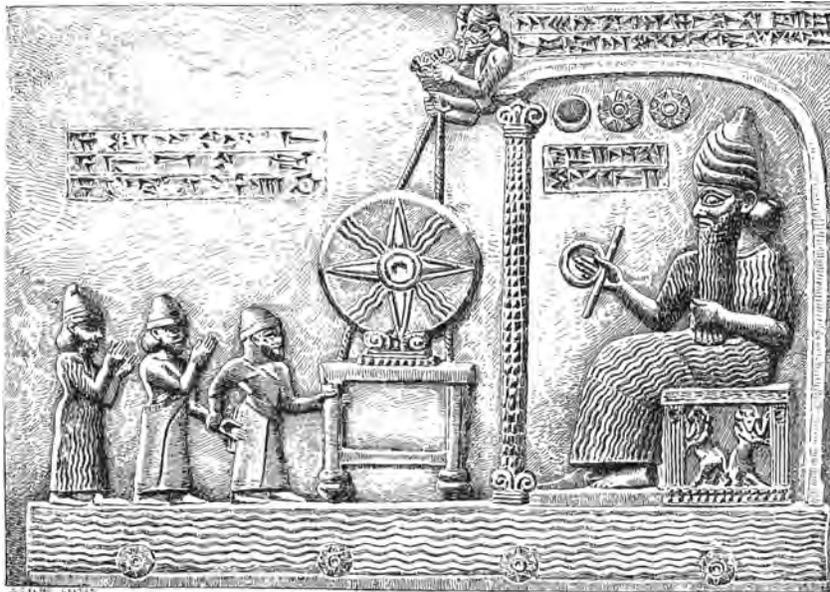
There is abundant evidence from the ancient Near East about the function of sacred trees placed at sanctuary entrances.⁴³ Here they served as symbols of or actual infrastructure for the veil of temple sanctuaries⁴⁴ and to highlight the theme of death and rebirth.⁴⁵

There is evidence that within the architecture of at least some of these temples, a permeable partition was supported by tree-like columns. For example, al-Khalesi concludes that the representation of a secondary tree in the Mari Investiture panel was “meant to symbolize a door-post.”⁴⁶ From archaeological evidence, he conjectures that such posts could have provided supporting infrastructure for a partition made of “ornamented woven material.”⁴⁷ The neo-Hittite temple at ‘Ain Dara provides a parallel to such an arrangement in its screened-off podium shrine located at the far end of its main hall.⁴⁸ From literary sources, this arrangement recalls the *kikkisu*, a woven reed partition that separated the divine and human realms in Mesopotamian flood stories and was ritually used in temples to allow the gods to whisper their secrets to mortals while still remaining hidden to their view.⁴⁹



Temple mosaic from Khirbet Samara⁵⁰

This depiction of Solomon's Temple provides another example. It shows a veil being suspended from two columns whose tree-like appearance is highlighted in some accounts.⁵¹ Moreover, as Jacob Rennaker notes,⁵² each gate in Ezekiel's visionary temple is decorated with palm trees.⁵³



The Sippar Shamash Tablet, from the reign of the Babylonian king Nabu-apla-iddina, ca. 900 bc.⁵⁴ Shamash holds out a staff and what appears to be a solid ring. Note that the column(s) supporting the throne canopy feature a tree-like trunk.

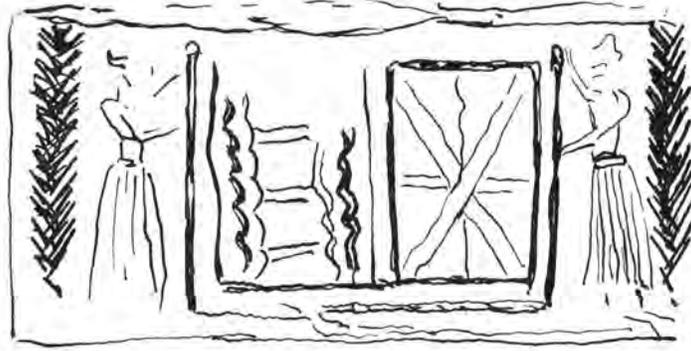


Investiture scene from the Ur-Nammu Stela, ca. 2100 BCE.⁵⁵ The god holds out a staff and a coiled and looped rope. Note that a tree stands immediately in front of the divine throne.

In parallel investiture depictions from early and later Babylonia, the tree(s) or tree-like column(s)⁵⁶ standing immediately in front of the throne of the god demonstrate the strong association between the symbolism of the veil and the flanking arboreal doorposts in ancient Mesopotamia.



A



B

Guardians of the gate with trees rising up immediately behind them.⁵⁷ The central figure at the top is the standing god.

In ancient Mesopotamia, a personification of a tree as a god with the power of human speech “guarded the gate of heaven.”⁵⁸ In a variation on the same theme, Barrelet describes evidence that gatepost guardians sometimes may have been represented in human form:⁵⁹

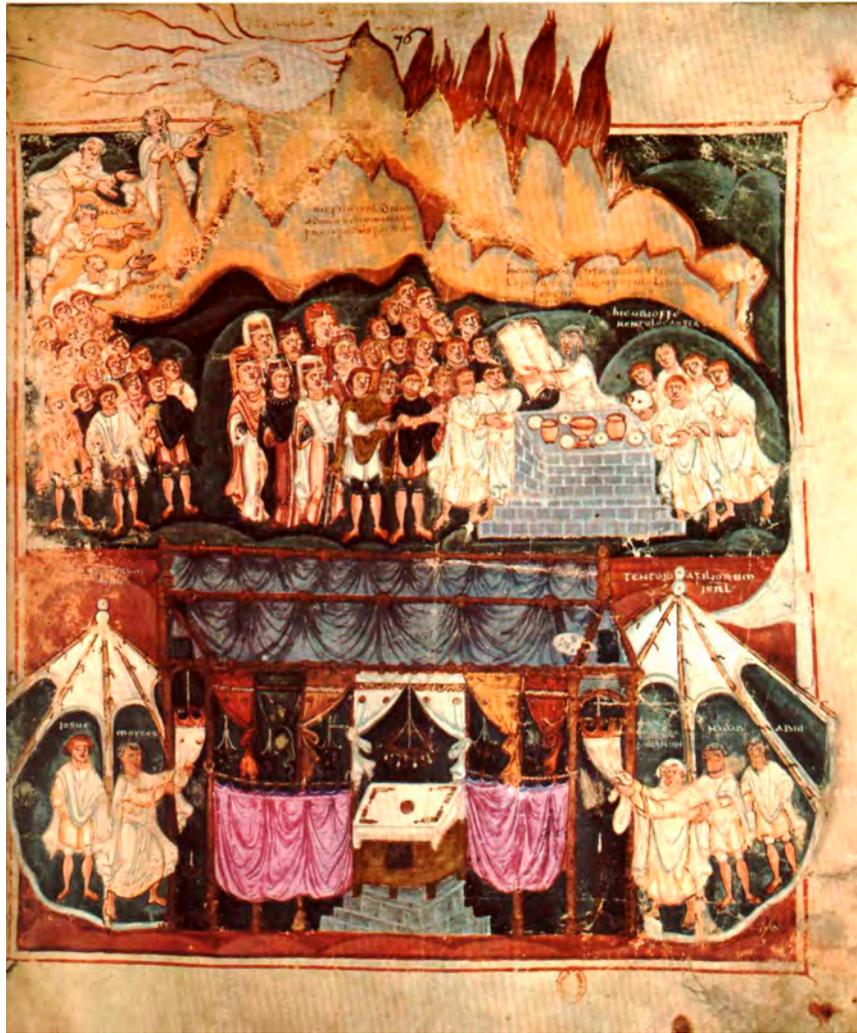
E. D. van Buren, in a ... study on “Guardians of the Gate,” observes that certain of these guardians are frequently shown between the gate they are commissioned to guard and the trees that rise up immediately behind them. This provides additional proof that the “gate” of the divine dwelling is flanked by posts, or by artificial trees that stand there.

Note the god standing on the stairway of a raised platform behind the two guardians. He awaits the approach of the qualified candidate into His presence.

Temple	Eden	Ark	Sinai
Holy of Holies	Summit/Heights - God-Tree of Life - The Victorious	Upper Deck - Deity - Noah	Summit/Heights - The Glorious One - Moses
Veil	Tree of Knowledge		
Holy Place	Slopes - Adam and Eve - The Righteous	Middle Part - Birds	Halfway Up - Aaron Round About - Priests
Outer Courtyard	Lower Slopes - Animals - Penitent Sinners	Lower Part - Animals	Below - People

Ephrem the Syrian’s Conception of Eden, the Ark, and Sinai.

Returning to Ephrem the Syrian’s conception of Eden, we note that he cited parallels with the division of the animals on Noah’s Ark and the demarcations on Sinai separating Moses, Aaron, the priests, and the people, as shown in this figure.⁶⁰ According to this way of thinking, movement inward toward the sacred center was symbolically equivalent to moving upward toward the top of the sacred mountain. Recall that on Sinai, Israel was gathered in three groups: “the masses at the foot of the mountain, where they viewed God’s ‘Presence’ from afar; the Seventy part way up; and Moses at the very top, where he entered directly into God’s Presence.”⁶¹ Likewise, Ephrem described the “lower, second, and third stories”⁶² of the temple-like ark (see Genesis 6:16) so as to highlight the righteousness of Noah and to distinguish him from the animals and the birds.⁶³ Finally, as explained previously, Ephrem pictured Eden as a great mountain, with the Tree of Knowledge providing a boundary partway up the slopes.



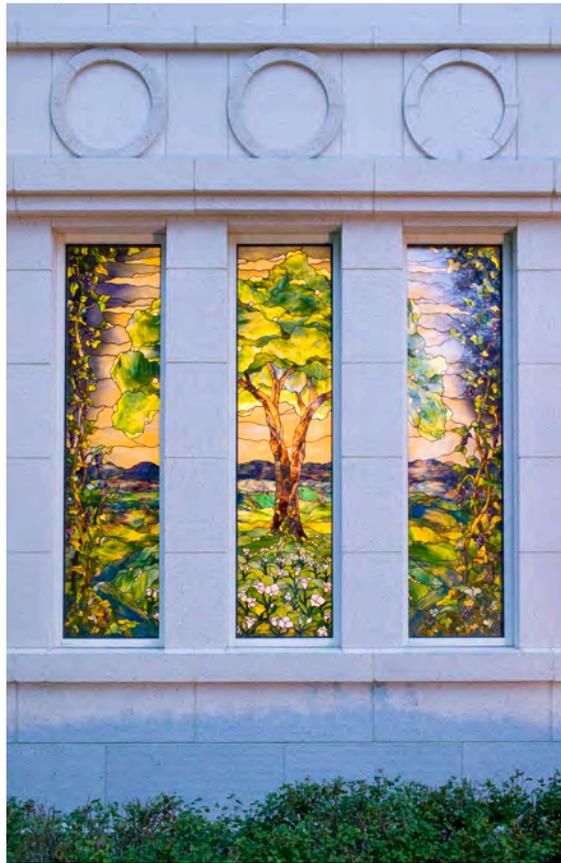
Mount Sinai and the Tabernacle, Tours Pentateuch, ca. 600

The same three divisions appear in an illustration from the *Tours Pentateuch*. The ostensible subject of this illustration is Moses and his people on Sinai, though the details clearly indicate the performance of Christian rather than Jewish worship⁶⁴ as well as parallels to pseudepigraphic Adam and Eve traditions.⁶⁵ Moses, in the top register, “accompanied by Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, approaches the Lord, whose head appears in a cloud at the top of Mount Sinai.”⁶⁶ Within the cave in the middle scene, is a gathering of Christians who, like ancient Israel, renew their covenants under the direction of Moses.⁶⁷ At the bottom, is a Christianized version of the Tabernacle.⁶⁸ Here, the ancient leaders of Israel part an outer veil, earnestly inviting all those outside the covenant to enter in and begin their ascent of the sacred mountain of the Lord.



Diane Aposhian-Moffat, 1958-: *Lehi's Vision of Tree of Life*, 2002

Also consistent with the idea of a three-part layout of the Garden of Eden is evidence cited by Barker that, in the first temple, a Tree of Life was symbolized *within* the Holy of Holies.⁶⁹ By way of contrast, most depictions of Jewish temple architecture show a menorah as being *outside* the veil. Barker concludes that the Menorah (or perhaps a second, different, representation in arboreal form?) was both removed from the temple and diminished in stature in later Jewish literature as the result of a “very ancient feud” concerning its significance.⁷⁰ Mandaean scripture describes a Tree of Life within the *heavenly* sanctuary as follows: “They... lifted the great veil of safety upward before him, introduced him, and showed him that Vine,” meaning the Tree of Life.⁷¹



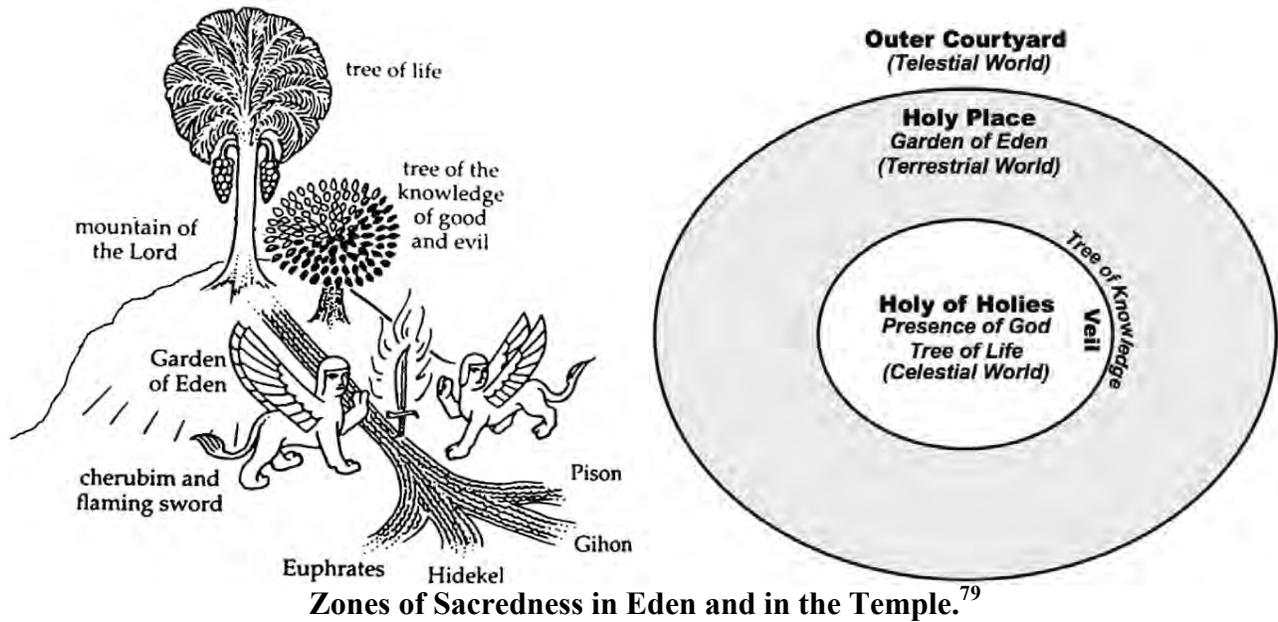
Val Brinkerhoff: *Tree of Life*, Winter Quarters Nebraska Temple

In this connection, note that although the trees of Eden have been associated with the Garden Room of LDS temples since the time of Nauvoo,⁷² representations relating to the eschatological Tree of Life are centered on the Celestial Room. For example, the Celestial Room of the Salt Lake Temple is “richly embellished with clusters of fruits and flowers.”⁷³ The Celestial Room of the Palmyra New York Temple features a large stained-glass window depicting a Tree of Life with “twelve bright multifaceted crystal fruits.”⁷⁴ The stained glass Tree of Life shown here is from the Winter Quarters Nebraska Temple.



Juan Bautista Villalpando, 1594-1605: *Holy of Holies*

Recall also that the Holy of Holies in Solomon's temple contained not only one but many palm trees and pillars which Stordalen says can be seen as representing "a kind of stylized forest."⁷⁵ The angels on the walls may have represented God's heavenly council,⁷⁶ or perhaps more generally the promise to the saints of communion with the "general assembly and church of the Firstborn,"⁷⁷ whose presence in heaven is mirrored on earth by those who have attained "angelic" status through being brought into the presence of the Lord.⁷⁸



That a difference in splendor between the two trees of Eden paralleled their separate locations is affirmed by a Gnostic text that describes the “color” of the Tree of Life as being “like the sun” and the “glory” of the Tree of Knowledge being “like the moon.”⁸⁰ Describing a similar concept, an Armenian Christian text asserts that “the Tree of [Knowledge of] Good and Evil is the knowledge of material things”—referring to the kind of knowledge that was made available to Adam and Eve through the experience of mortality—“and that the Tree of Life is the knowledge of divine things, which were not profitable to the simple understanding of Adam”—at least not until after he had successfully passed through his period of probation.⁸¹

Careful analysis of the narrative features of the Genesis account provides support for these perspectives about the nature of Adam and Eve’s actions. The dramatic irony of the story is heightened by the fact that while the reader is informed about *both* trees (see Moses 3:9), Adam and Eve are only specifically told about the Tree of Knowledge (see Moses 3:16–17). As we will see below, the subtle conflation of the location of two trees in the sacred center of the Garden of Eden prepares readers for the confusion that later ensues in the dialogue with the serpent, and sets the stage for the transgression of Adam and Eve. Given his knowledge of *both* trees, Satan is enabled to exploit their ignorance to his advantage.



Giuliano Bugiardini, 1475–1554: *Adam, Eve* (detail), c. 1510.

A “Temple” Setting for the Transgression of Adam and Eve

At the moment of temptation, Satan deliberately tries to confuse Eve. The Devil knows that there are two trees in the midst of the garden, but only the Tree of Knowledge is visible to Eve (see Moses 4:9) since, according to Ephrem, the Tree of Life is hidden behind it.⁸² To add to the confusion, Satan “made the two trees seem identical: the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil would open her eyes, and she would be like God, knowing both good and evil. Almost the same was true of the Tree of Life, for Wisdom opened the eyes of those who ate her fruit, and as they became wise, they became divine.”⁸³

Another theme of confusion stems from Satan’s efforts to mask his identity. The painting shown here portrays the tempter in the dual guise of a serpent and a woman whose hair and facial features exactly mirror those of Eve. This common form of medieval portrayal was not intended to assert that the woman was devilish, but rather to depict the Devil as trying to allay Eve’s fears, deceptively appealing to her by appearing in a form that resembled her own.⁸⁴ Though Satan is not said in scripture to have appeared to Eve as a woman, he did try to deceive her when he represented himself as a serpent, as will be explained now.



Moses and the Brazen Serpent (detail), c. 1866.

Of great importance in understanding the story of the transgression of Adam and Eve is the fact that the serpent is a frequently used representation of the Messiah and his life-giving power, as shown, for example, in this depiction of Moses holding up the brazen serpent on a wooden pole, evoking again the imagery of a tree.⁸⁵ Moreover, with specific relevance to the symbolism of the sacred *location* where he appeared to Eve in the Garden of Eden, evidence suggests that the form of the seraphim, whose function it was to guard the divine throne at the sacred center of the heavenly temple, was that of a fiery winged serpent.⁸⁶ This idea gives new meaning to the statement of Nephi that the “being who beguiled our first parents . . . transformeth himself nigh unto an angel of light” (2 Nephi 9:9). When Satan appeared to Eve, standing beside the Tree of Knowledge, in his false glory in the form of a serpent, he was representing himself as a seraph, a guardian of the throne of God.

In the context of the temptation of Eve, Richard D. Draper, S. Kent Brown, and Michael D. Rhodes conclude that Satan “has effectively come as the Messiah, offering a promise that only the Messiah can offer, for it is the Messiah who will control the powers of life and death and can promise life, not Satan.”⁸⁷ Not only has the Devil come in guise of the Holy One, he seems to have deliberately appeared, without authorization, at a particularly sacred place in the Garden.⁸⁸ If it is true, as Ephrem the Syrian believed, that the Tree of Knowledge was a figure for “the veil for the sanctuary,”⁸⁹ then Satan positioned himself, in the extreme of sacrilegious effrontery, as the very “keeper of the gate” (2 Nephi 9:41). Thus, in the apt words of Catherine Thomas, Eve was induced to take the fruit “from the wrong hand, having listened to the wrong voice.”⁹⁰



God Dressing Adam and Eve, San Marco Cupola, Venice, Italy, 13th century

This raises a question: since the knowledge imparted by the transgression of Adam and Eve was good, helping them become more like God (see Moses 4:28), why did Satan encourage — rather than prevent — their eating of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge? Surprisingly, the scriptural story makes it evident that their transgression must have been as much an important part of the Devil’s strategy as it was a central feature of the Father’s plan. In this one respect — the desire to have Adam and Eve partake of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge — the programs of God and Satan seem to have had something in common.

However, the difference in intention between God and Satan became apparent when it was time for Adam and Eve to take the *next* step.⁹¹ In this regard, the scriptures seem to suggest that the adversary wanted Adam and Eve to eat of the fruit of the Tree of Life *directly after* they partook of the Tree of Knowledge — a danger that moved God to take immediate preventive action by the placement of the cherubim and the flaming sword to guard “the way of the Tree of Life” (see Moses 4:28–31; Alma 12:23, 42:2–3). For had Adam and Eve eaten of the fruit of the Tree of Life at that time, Alma tells us that “there would have been no death” and no “space granted unto man in which he might repent”—in other words, no “probationary state” to prepare for a final judgment and resurrection (see Alma 12:23–24).

The Father did intend—eventually—for Adam and Eve to partake of the Tree of Life, but not until they had learned through mortal experience to distinguish good from evil.⁹²



*Moses Receiving the Law Before the Burning Bush, St. Catherine's Monastery, ca. 1050–1100*⁹³

The Forbidden Fruit as a Form of Knowledge

Whether speaking of the heavenly temple or of its earthly models, the theme of access to revealed knowledge is inseparably connected with the passage through the veil. Such knowledge includes the restoration of things from the former world that must be brought to “remembrance” (John 14:26) because they have been forgotten on earth.

With respect to the heavenly temple, scripture and tradition amply attest of how knowledge of eternity is available to those who are permitted to enter within the divine veil.⁹⁴ For example, Jewish and Christian accounts speak of a blueprint of eternity that is worked out in advance and shown on the inside of that veil to prophetic figures as part of their heavenly ascent.⁹⁵ In a similar vein, Islamic tradition speaks of a “white cloth from Paradise” upon which Adam saw the fate of his posterity.⁹⁶



Facsimile 2, Book of Abraham

Nibley gives the “great round” of the hypocephalus in Facsimile 2 of the Book of Abraham as an Egyptian attempt to capture the essence of such pictures of eternity. He shows how similar concepts also have appeared in the literature of other ancient cultures.⁹⁷

On the other hand, with respect to *earthly* temples, a conventional answer to the question of what kind of knowledge the Tree of Knowledge provided is supplied by Psalm 19:8 where, in similar terms to the description of the forbidden fruit in Genesis 3:6 (“pleasant to the sight, good for food and to be desired to make one wise”), God’s law is described as “making wise the simple, rejoicing the heart and enlightening the eyes.”⁹⁸ Gordon J. Wenham observes, “The law was of course kept in the Holy of Holies [of the temple]: the decalogue inside the ark and the book of the law beside it (see Exodus 25:16, Deuteronomy 31:26). Furthermore, Israel knew that touching the ark or even seeing it uncovered brought death, just as eating from the Tree of Knowledge did (see Numbers 4:20, 2 Samuel 6:7).”⁹⁹



William Bell Scott, 1811–90: *The Rending of the Veil*, 1867–68.

However, given explicit admissions in Jewish tradition about elements of the first temple that were later lost, plausibly including things that were once contained in the temple ark, it is not impossible that the knowledge in question may have included something more than the Ten Commandments and the Torah as we now know them.¹⁰⁰ Having carefully scrutinized the evidence, Margaret Barker concluded that the lost items were “all associated with the high priesthood.”¹⁰¹ Also probing the significance of the lost furniture “list of the schoolmen,” Nibley, like Barker, specifically connected the missing “five things” to lost ordinances of the high priesthood.¹⁰² By piecing together the ancient sources, it may be surmised that the knowledge revealed to those made wise through entering in to the innermost sanctuary of the First Temple, the Temple of Solomon, included an understanding of premortal life, the order of creation, and the eternal covenant¹⁰³ and that it “provided a clue to the pattern and future destiny of the universe”¹⁰⁴ that “gave power over creation” when used in righteousness.¹⁰⁵ Thus the rending of the veil at the death of Christ symbolized not only renewed access to the divine presence in heaven but also the knowledge revealed in earthly temples that makes such access possible.¹⁰⁶



Brian Kershisnik, 1962-: *Holy Woman*, 2001

Consistent with this general idea about the nature of the forbidden fruit, Islamic traditions insist that the reason Satan was condemned after the Fall was because he had claimed that he would reveal a knowledge of certain things to Adam and Eve. In deceptive counterpoint to God's authentic teachings to Adam about a series of sacred names that he was to use to prove his worthiness before the angels,¹⁰⁷ Satan is portrayed in one Islamic account as recruiting his accomplice, the "fair and prudent" serpent, by promising that he would reveal to it "three mysterious words" which would "preserve [it] from sickness, age, and death."¹⁰⁸ Having by this means won over the serpent, Satan then directly equates the effect of knowing these words with the eating of the forbidden fruit by promising the same protection from death to Eve if she will but partake.¹⁰⁹

The fifteenth-century *Adamgirk* asks, "If a good secret [or mystery]¹¹⁰ was in [the evil fruit], why did [God] say not to draw near?"¹¹¹ and then answers its own question implicitly. Simply put, the gift by which Adam and Eve would "become divine,"¹¹² and for which the Tree of Knowledge constituted a part of the approach, was, as yet, "an unattainable thing [t]hat was *not in its time*."¹¹³ Though God intended Adam and Eve to advance in knowledge, it seems that the condemnation of Satan came because he had acted deceptively and without authorization, in the realization that introducing the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge to Adam and Eve under circumstances of disobedience and unpreparedness would bring the consequences of the Fall upon them, putting them in a position of mortal danger.¹¹⁴ Moreover, as was mentioned previously, it is clear that if Satan could have also induced Adam and Eve to partake of the Tree of Life at that time, there would have been even more serious consequences.

There is no question that the knowledge itself was good. However, some kinds of knowledge are reserved to be revealed by the Father himself "in his own time, and in his own way, and according to his own will" (D&C 88:68). As the Prophet Joseph Smith taught:

That which is wrong under one circumstance, may be, and often is, right under another

A parent may whip a child, and justly, too, because he stole an apple; whereas if the child had asked for the apple, and the parent had given it, the child would have eaten it with a better appetite; there would have been no stripes; all the pleasure of the apple would have been secured, all the misery of stealing lost.

This principle will justly apply to all of God's dealings with His children. Everything that God gives us is lawful and right; and it is proper that we should enjoy His gifts and blessings whenever and wherever He is disposed to bestow; but if we should seize upon those same blessings and enjoyments without law, without revelation, without commandment, those blessings and enjoyments would prove cursings and vexations.¹¹⁵

By way of analogy to the situation of Adam and Eve and its setting in the temple-like layout of the Garden of Eden, recall that service in Israelite temples under conditions of worthiness was intended to sanctify the participants. However, as taught in Levitical laws of purity, doing the same "while defiled by sin, was to court unnecessary danger, perhaps even death."¹¹⁶

Hugh Nibley succinctly summed up the situation: "Satan disobeyed orders when he revealed certain secrets to Adam and Eve, not because they were not known and done in other worlds, but because he was not authorized in that time and place to convey them."¹¹⁷ Although Satan had "given the fruit to Adam and Eve, it was not his prerogative to do so—regardless of what had been done in other worlds. (When the time comes for such fruit, it will be given us legitimately.)"¹¹⁸



William Blake, 1757-1827: *The Clothing of Adam and Eve*, 1803

Concluding Thoughts

Jewish and Christian teachings that the Tree of Knowledge symbolized the veil of the Garden of Eden sanctuary not only provide a coherent explanation for some puzzling aspects of the story of Adam and Eve, but are also consistent with an interpretive approach that attempts to comprehend how its story plot fits within larger metaplots throughout the Pentateuch—and sometimes even further afield. For example, we have already discussed how Ephrem related the three divisions of the temple-like layout of the Garden of Eden to the three levels of Noah’s ark and the three groups of Israelites at Mount Sinai. Recurring throughout the Old Testament and ancient Near East traditions are allusions to the layout of sacred spaces — as well as accounts of serious consequences for those who attempt unauthorized entry through the veil into the innermost sanctuary.¹¹⁹

This general thesis is useful as far as it goes. For example, in the stories of the transgressions of Adam and Eve, of the “sons of God” who married the “daughters of men,” and of the builders of the Tower of Babel, we cannot fail to observe the common story thread concerning a God who places strict boundaries between the human and the divine. However, we must not forget a significant and opposite theme in Genesis 1–11 — namely, that within some of these same chapters God is also portrayed as having sought to *erase* the divine-human boundary for a righteous few, drawing them into his very presence.¹²⁰ The prime examples of this motif are, of course, Enoch and Noah, of whom it was explicitly said that they “walked with God.”¹²¹ Happily, Latter-day Saints know that they can add the names of Adam and Eve to the exceptional list containing these two shining examples of righteousness. The book of Moses avers that our first parents eventually had “all things ... confirmed unto [them] by an holy ordinance” (Moses 5:59). From the story of Adam and Eve and their family found in modern revelation and latter-day temples, we know that the story of the Fall “is not an account of [transgression] alone but the beginning of a drama about becoming a being who fully reflects God’s very own image. *Genesis is not only about the origins of [opposition in the world]; it is also about the foundations of human perfection.* The work that God has begun in creation he will bring to completion.”¹²²

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Endnotes

- 1 For a brief survey on the question of one or two trees, and related textual irregularities that point to a theme of deliberate confusion consistent with the thesis of this chapter, see T. N. D. Mettinger, Eden, 5-11.
- 2 See, e.g., Meir Zlotowitz and Nosson Scherman, *Bereishis / Genesis: A New Translation with a Commentary Anthologized from Talmudic, Midrashic and Rabbinic Sources* (Brooklyn: Mesorah, 1986), 96, #398; Daniel C. Matt, *The Zohar, Pritzker Edition* (Stanford: Stanford University, 2004), Be-Reshit 1:35a, 220. The *Zohar* asserts: "The Tree of Life is precisely in the middle of the Garden, conveying all waters of creation, branching below ... by paths in every direction."
- 3 See diverse examples in M. Zlotowitz *et al.*, Bereishis, 96.
- 4 M. A. Fishbane, Sacred Center, 9.
- 5 Often symbolized as a cosmic tree, the temple also "originates in the underworld, stands on the earth as a 'meeting place,' and yet towers (architecturally) into the heavens and gives access to the heavens through its ritual." J. M. Lundquist, Fundamentals, 675.
- 6 T. Stordalen, Echoes, 288-289.
- 7 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.
- 8 *Ibid.*, 199.
- 9 "The three most important cosmic mountains in the Bible are Eden, Sinai and Zion." *Ibid.*, 192. "The identification of the temple in Jerusalem with Eden is as old as the Bible itself." *Ibid.*, 203.

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- 10 J. M. Lundquist, Meeting Place, 7.
- 11 J. T. Townsend, Tanhuma, Qedoshim 7:10, Leviticus 19:23ff, Part 1, 2:309-310.
- 12 See, e.g., J. M. Bradshaw, God's Image 1, pp. 571-574.
- 13 J. Milton, Paradise Lost, 7:224-228, p. 145; compare Blake's Urizen (1794), where he: "... formed golden compasses/ And began to explore the Abyss" (W. Blake, Illuminated, 7:8, p. 428); Chesterton called the figure "a monstrously muscular old man, with hair and beard like a snowstorm, but with limbs like young trees" (G. K. Chesterton, William Blake, p. 55).
- 14 J. M. Lundquist, Fundamentals, pp. 666-671; cf. Matthew 6:10.
- 15 = Arabic "pilgrimage." See R. C. Martin, Encyclopedia, 2:529-533; G. D. Newby, Encyclopedia, pp. 71-72.
- 16 = Arabic "cube."
- 17 G. Weil, Legends, p. 83.
- 18 S. A. Ashraf, Inner, p. 125.
- 19 For more on related themes, see, e.g., F. M. Huchel, Cosmic; F. M. Huchel, Cosmic (Book); N. Isar, Dance of Adam; H. W. Nibley, Circle; H. W. Nibley, Prayer Circle.
- 20 Psalm 48:13f.
- 21 S. Mowinckel, Psalms, 1:181, 187.
- 22 D. J. Larsen, 2 June 2010. See W. O. E. Oesterley, Early Hebrew, pp. 132, 141-142.
- 23 Greek *empyros* (fiery); derived from *pyr* (fire)—and not to be confused with the unrelated term "imperial." See, e.g., R. Giorgi, Anges, pp. 63-65.
- 24 See M. Barker, Holy of Holies, p. 185.
- 25 1 Nephi 1:8.
- 26 H. W. Nibley, Teachings of the PGP, 17, p. 211. See also B. R. Bickmore, Restoring, pp. 304-306; F. M. Huchel, Cosmic (Book); N. Isar, Dance of Adam.
- 27 E. Hennecke *et al.*, NT Apocrypha, Acts of John, 94, p. 227.
- 28 Matthew 6:10.
- 29 E.g., 2 Nephi 22:6; 3 Nephi 11:8, 21:17-18; cf. Isaiah 12:6; Jeremiah 14:9; Hosea 11:9; Joel 2:27; Micah 5:13-14; Moses 7:69; Zechariah 3:5, 15, 17. S. K. Brown, Voices, 150-151.
- 30 *Ibid.*, 147-148.
- 31 N. Wyatt, Space, 169. 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 this topic see Jeffrey M. Bradshaw, *In God's Image and Likeness 1: Ancient and Modern Perspectives on the Book of Moses*, (Salt Lake City: Eborn, 2010), 755nE-212.
- 32 Compare G. A. Anderson, Perfection, p. 57 Figure 5.
- 33 Matt, *Zohar*, Be-Reshit 1:35a, 220.
- 34 Matt, *Zohar*, Be-Reshit 1:35a, 220n921. Matt's note is a clarification of the meaning of the phrase in context. His translation of the text itself simply says "It is not in the middle."
- 35 M. Zlotowitz *et al.*, Bereishis, 101, cf. 96; see also L. Ginzberg, Legends, 1:70, 5:91 n. 50.

36 See, e.g., Gordon J. Wenham, “Sanctuary Symbolism in the Garden of Eden Story,” in *I Studied Inscriptions from before the Flood: Ancient Near Eastern, Literary, and Linguistic Approaches to Genesis 1–11*, ed. Richard S. Hess and David Toshio Tsumura (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1994), 399; Bradshaw, *In God’s Image 1*, 146–49.

37 Ephrem the Syrian, *Paradise*, 3:5, 92. Note that the phrase “in the midst” was also used to describe the location of the heavenly veil (translated in the KJV as “firmament”) in the Creation account (Genesis 1:6). See L. Ginzberg, *Legends*, 1:51-52: “On the second day [of Creation], I shall put a division between the terrestrial waters and the heavenly waters; so will he [Moses] hang up a veil in the Tabernacle to divide the Holy Place and the Most Holy.”

38 Brock in Ephrem the Syrian, *Paradise*, 52. See J. M. Bradshaw *et al.*, *Investiture Panel*, 23-25 for examples of how tree-like posts or columns holding up woven screens or partitions performed a similar function in ancient temples.

39 E.g., G. A. Anderson *et al.*, *Synopsis*, 19:1a-19:1d, 56E-57E.

40 See J. M. Bradshaw, *Moses Temple Themes*, pp. 77-87, 119-124.

41 Reproduced from Y. M. al-Khalesi, *Palms*, p. 10. Note that al-Khalesi rejects this particular reconstruction for Mari. If Parrot is wrong, the figure at least illustrates how such a layout might have been conceived in the ancient world.

42 Images from M.-T. Barrelet, *Peinture*, p. 12.

43 As a potential Egyptian analogue to this idea that might be further investigated, consider the funerary papyrus of Nakht (ca. 1350 BC), where the deceased, led by Anubis, approaches a tree that stands before the “false door,” representing the entrance to the “Other World.” To reach that door, they must in fact pass by that tree, a symbol that is frequently associated, like the door itself, with the “horizon,” the meeting place between heaven and earth (J. M. Bradshaw, *Moses Temple Themes*, p. 116 figure 8-9). A subsequent scene of afterlife paradise from the same text prominently displays an instance of the same type of tree beside a single palm tree standing immediately in front of the entrance of the home of Nakht and his wife in the hereafter (J. H. Taylor, *Perfect Afterlife*, pp. 250-251 figure 128).

44 See J. M. Bradshaw, *Moses Temple Themes*, pp. 77-87.

45 See *ibid.*, pp. 109-126.

46 Y. M. al-Khalesi, *Palms*, p. 18; cf. M.-T. Barrelet, *Peinture*, pp. 26-27; M. Giovino, *Assyrian Sacred Tree*, pp. 195-196. See also T. D. Alexander, *From Eden*, p. 22 n. 20.

47 Y. M. al-Khalesi, *Palms*, p. 18; cf. M.-T. Barrelet, *Peinture*, pp. 26-27; M. Giovino, *Assyrian Sacred Tree*, pp. 195-196.

48 J. Monson, *New 'Ain Dara Temple*.

49 H. W. Nibley, *Lehi 1988*, p. 362.

50 Image from W. J. Hamblin, *Temple Mosaic*.

51 See T. D. Alexander, *From Eden*, p. 22 n. 20 for a discussion of the treelike appearance of the columns in Solomon’s temple. For an example of such a tree placed before the door to the “other world” in Egyptian literature, see R. O. Faulkner *et al.*, *Book of the Dead*, pp. 8, 9, 112-113.

52 J. Rennaker, *Up, Up*, p. 21.

53 Ezekiel 40:16, 22, 26, 31, 34.

54 Image from M. Giovino, *Assyrian Sacred Tree*, Plate 77. See also *ibid.*, p. 178.

55 Image from J. V. Canby, *Ur-Nammu*, Plate 33.

56 Giovino (M. Giovino, *Assyrian Sacred Tree*, p. 178) cites the arguments of Perrot and Chipiez that:

... the column(s) supporting the canopy were made of wood and covered in a casing of bronze embossed with palm trunk imbrications. The bronze covering would have protected the wooden posts, and the imitation of palm tree bark would have been both decorative and appropriate in a temple setting. The voluted base and capital, according to Perrot and Chipiez, must also have been wrought in metal. Their interpretation provides an alternate reconstruction to Place's idea that bronze palm trees stood on either side of the entrance to the Sin temple at Khorsabad.

57 Image from M.-T. Barrelet, *Peinture*, p. 27 figure 11.

58 S. Dalley, *Mesopotamian Gardens*, p. 2.

59 M.-T. Barrelet, *Peinture*, p. 26-27.

60 See Ephrem the Syrian, *Paradise*, 2:9-13, 88-89, 3:1-5, 90-92.

61 J. E. Seach, *Ancient Texts* 1995, 660, see also 568-77, 661, 807-09.

62 For more on the symbolism of the temple in the ark, see J. M. Bradshaw *et al.*, *God's Image* 2, pp. 210-221; J. M. Bradshaw, *Ark and Tent*.

63 As an analogue to this idea, consider that the *Animal Apocalypse* in 1 Enoch 85-89 was written in a code that represents key individuals (and their righteous and wicked descendants) as "animals" of different colors. G. W. E. Nickelsburg, 1 Enoch 1, 85-89, 364-367. Some "animals" (notably Noah and Moses) are eventually transformed into "men," which, according to M. Barker, *Hidden*, 45, represents the acquiring of angelic status after having been taught a "mystery" (see 1 Enoch 89:1). With regard to birds, note that the angel Yahoel is described as both man and bird in, e.g., the *Apocalypse of Abraham*. A. A. Orlov, *Angelology*

64 D. H. Verkerk, *Pentateuch*, pp. 90-98.

65 A. S.-M. Ri, *Commentaire de la Caverne*, pp. 254-255, 205-206. See E. A. W. Budge, *Cave*, pp. 88, 90.

66 D. H. Verkerk, *Pentateuch*, p. 90. See Exodus 24:9-18.

67 *Ibid.*, p. 90. See Exodus 24:4-8. This eucharistic scene takes place in the presence of presbyters [elders], deacons, "the canonical widows, and subdeacons and deaconesses and readers [and] those who have gifts" (J. Cooper *et al.*, *Testament*, 1:23, p. 70; cf. D. H. Verkerk, *Pentateuch*, pp. 90-97).

68 D. H. Verkerk, *Pentateuch*, p. 98.

69 E.g., M. Barker, *Hidden*, pp. 6-7; M. Barker, *Christmas*, pp. 85-86, 140. See J. M. Bradshaw, *God's Image* 1, pp. 366-367 about the possibility that the story of the Garden of Eden included a separate "Tree of Life" on each side of the veil. See also R. Murray, *Symbols*, pp. 115-116, 320-324. Widengren notes "the many allusions to the trees growing within the area of the sanctuary" and shows how the sceptre of the king represents a branch cut from one of the trees of Eden, recalling also the miraculously verdant rod of Aaron that was kept in the Ark of the Covenant (G. Widengren, *King and Tree of Life*, pp. 36-41; cf. J. M. Bradshaw, *God's Image* 1, pp. 658, 748-750; J. M. Bradshaw, *Ezekiel Mural*, p. 29). Allusions in the Old Testament to the messiah as a "branch" are explored in G. Widengren, *King and Tree of Life*, pp. 49-58.

Upending the scholarly consensus that has always seen the menorah as arboreal in form, Rachel Hachili's exhaustive survey of evidence from art, architecture, and contemporary texts concluded that it was, instead, "a unique form with its inherent symbolism of light, ... not expressing vegetal or plant life" (R. Hachlili, *Menorah*, p. 39). She also concludes that its original form in Solomon's temple was a "lampstand with a flaring base decorated on its upper section with a floral capital topped by a single bowl or lamp, as was common throughout the Ancient Near East" rather than the "seven-armed" version "inspired by the text of Exodus [25:31-32, 37:17-18]" (*ibid.*, p. 34). Hershel Shanks, following Carol Meyers, concurs with the idea that the lampstands in Solomon's temple had only a single bowl, while observing that "a number of these bowls with pinches for seven wicks have been found" (H. Shanks, *Jerusalem*, p. 55, see photograph on p. 54). Could it be that the

imagery of the seven-armed candlestick in the Holy of Holies, corresponding to the Tree of Life and associated with royal investiture (e.g., G. Widengren, *King and Tree of Life*, pp. 62-67), could have been later transferred to the single-branched lampstand that was originally found in the Holy Place? In any case, it seems clear that the author or final redactor of Exodus, as well as the author of Revelation 1:12-14, both had a flaming seven-armed menorah in mind when they penned their books. Providing evidence for an arboreal lamp in pre-exilic times, Goodenough has found a possible Palestinian prototype of the seven-armed tree form from the thirteenth century BCE, as well similar forms on objects from Susa and Khafaje dating to the fourth millennium BCE (E. R. Goodenough, *Method*, p. 73 and figures 3, 4, and 6).

70 M. Barker, *Older*, p. 221, see pp. 221-232.

71 M. Lidzbarski, *Ginza*, GL 1:1, p. 429:3-20; cf. E. S. Drower, *Prayerbook*, 49, pp. 45-46.

72 D. F. Colvin, *Nauvoo Temple*, p. 220; S. B. Kimball, *Heber C. Kimball*, p. 117 M. McBride, *Nauvoo Temple*, pp. 264-265.

73 J. E. Talmage, *House of the Lord*, p. 134.

74 G. E. Hansen, Jr. *et al.*, *Sacred Walls*.

75 T. Stordalen, *Echoes*, p. 122.

76 M. B. Brown, *Gate*, p. 113.

77 D&C 107:19.

78 The placement of statues of gods and kings in the sanctuary was not uncommon in non-Israelite temples. For example, the inner sanctuary of the Court of the Palms at Mari was presumed to have contained statues of the king and other deities (Y. M. al-Khalesi, *Palms*, p. 40).

79 Compare G. A. Anderson, *Perfection*, p. 57 Figure 5.

80 H.-G. Bethge *et al.*, *Origin*, 110:14, 20, p. 179. Compare B. C. Hafen, *Disciple's Journey*.

81 Shelemon, *Book of the Bee*, 15, p. 21. See also J. E. Seach, *Ancient Texts* 1995, pp. 568-577, 660-661.

82 T. N. D. Mettinger, *Eden*, 34-41.

83 M. Barker, *Wisdom*, 2

84 J. O'Reilly, *Iconography*, 168.

85 Numbers 21:8-9; John 3:14-15; 2 Nephi 25:20; Alma 33:19; Helaman 8:14-15. See also J. M. Bradshaw, *God's Image 1*, 247-248. Consistent with the idea of serpents as Seraphim guarding the celestial throne is the fact that the serpent was "put . . . upon a pole." This imagery evokes the function of guardians positioned at temple gateposts in ancient Mesopotamia who were responsible for the introduction of worshippers to the presence of the god. Bradshaw, *Investiture Panel*, 20-25.

86 James H. Charlesworth, *The Good and Evil Serpent: How a Universal Symbol Became Christianized* (New Haven: Yale, 2010), 444-45, see also 30, 87, 220, 258, 332, 426. See especially K. Joines, "Winged serpents in Isaiah's inaugural vision." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 86, no. 4 (1967): 410-15, cited in Charlesworth, *Good and Evil Serpent*, 444.

87 R. D. Draper *et al.*, *Commentary*, 43; see John 5:25-26; 2 Nephi 9:3-26.

88 *Ibid.*, 42, 150-151.

89 Ephrem the Syrian, *Paradise*, 3:5, 92.

90 M. C. Thomas, *Women*, 53.

91 Cf. T. Stordalen, *Echoes*, 231.

92 B. C. Hafen, *Broken*, 30.

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- 93 Image in the public domain. Detail of icon in The Holy Monastery of Saint Catherine, Sinai, Egypt. From Holy Moses at the Getty, Holy.
- 94 See, e.g., H. W. Nibley, Teachings of the PGP, 10, 117.
- 95 For various examples, see, J. M. Bradshaw, God's Image 1, Moses 1:27b, 62-63.
- 96 M. i. A. A. al-Kisa'i, Tales, 82.
- 97 See H. W. Nibley *et al.*, One Eternal Round, 188-585.
- 98 Wenham's translation, as given in G. J. Wenham, Sanctuary Symbolism, 403.
- 99 *Ibid.*, 403.
- 100 See, e.g., J. M. Bradshaw, God's Image 1, 516-518, 658-660, 665-669, 679-681; J. M. Bradshaw, Ezekiel Mural
- 101 M. Barker, Hidden, 6-7.
- 102 H. W. Nibley, Return, 54; see D&C 84:19-26; JST, Exodus 34:1-2.
- 103 M. Barker, Older, 82.
- 104 A. E. Harvey, Companion 2004, 533.
- 105 M. Barker, Older, 82; cf. JST, Genesis 14:30-31.
- 106 Matthew 27:51; Mark 15:38. In this connection, Nibley writes: "The *Gospel of Philip* depicts the rending of the veil not as the abolition of the temple ordinances, as the church fathers fondly supposed, but of the opening of those ordinances to all the righteous of Israel, 'in order that we might enter into . . . the truth of it.' 'The priesthood can still go within the veil with the high priest (i.e., the Lord).' We are allowed to see what is behind the veil, and "we enter into it in our weakness, through signs and tokens which the world despises.' See W. W. Isenberg, Philip, 85:1-20, 159." H. W. Nibley, Message 2005, 444.
- 107 See J. M. Bradshaw, God's Image 1, 177-179 n. 3:19b.
- 108 G. Weil, Legends, 26.
- 109 *Ibid.*, 30.
- 110 M. E. Stone, Adamgirk, 53 n. 108 and 1:3:70, 101.
- 111 *Ibid.*, 3:2:5, 53.
- 112 *Ibid.*, 1:3:71, 101. Note, however, that, according to the conception of this incident described in this chapter, this promise actually would reach its complete fulfillment through taking of the Tree of Life, not merely of the Tree of Knowledge alone as deceptively asserted here by Satan.
- 113 *Ibid.*, 1:3:27, 96; emphasis added.
- 114 See J. M. Bradshaw *et al.*, Mormonism's Satan, 20-21.
- 115 J. Smith, Jr., Documentary History, 11 April 1842, 5:135. Though Satan seems to have been aware of what had been done in *other* worlds, Moses 4:6 states that he "knew not the mind of God" with respect to *this* one. For more on this topic, see Bradshaw and Head, *Mormonism's Satan*, 44-45n89.
- 116 G. A. Anderson, Perfection, 129.
- 117 H. W. Nibley, Return, 63.
- 118 H. W. Nibley, Gifts, 92.
- 119 See examples in J. M. Bradshaw, Moses Temple Themes, 123.
- 120 For a discussion of how the theme of the "two ways" structures chapters 5-8 of the Book of Moses, see J. M. Bradshaw, God's Image 1, 342-351.

121 See Genesis 5:24; 6:9. For more on this topic, see Jeffrey M. Bradshaw and David J. Larsen, *In God's Image and Likeness 2: Enoch, Noah, and the Tower of Babel*, Provo, UT: The Interpreter Foundation, in press.

122 G. A. Anderson, *Perfection*, 8; emphasis in original; see also Moses 1:39.