

WHAT DID JOSEPH SMITH KNOW ABOUT MODERN TEMPLE ORDINANCES BY 1836?

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Joseph Smith taught that the origins of modern temple ordinances go back beyond the foundation of the world. For example in 1835, as the Saints prepared to receive the ordinances that would be available to them in the Kirtland Temple, the Prophet stated:¹

The order of the house of God has been, and ever will be, the same, even after Christ comes; and after the termination of the thousand years it will be the same; and we shall finally enter into the celestial kingdom of God, and enjoy it forever.

Matthew B. Brown, whose memory we honor in this volume, was one who accepted the teaching of Joseph Smith that the LDS temple ordinances are of ancient origin. In his final years, Matt focused much of his attention on outlining the events that prepared the way for the restoration of authentic temple ordinances.

Even for believers, the claim that rites known anciently have been restored through revelation raises complex questions because we know that revelation almost never occurs in a vacuum. Rather, it comes most often through reflection on the impressions of immediate experience, confirmed or elaborated through subsequent study and prayer.²

It appears that the Prophet learned much about temple ordinances through personal experiences with heavenly beings and revelations associated with his inspired translation of scripture. His revelations contain many unmistakable references to significant components of priesthood and temple doctrines, authority, and ordinances. Many of these date to the early 1830s, a decade or more before the Prophet began bestowing temple blessings on the Saints in Nauvoo. And given Joseph Smith's reluctance to share the details of sacred events and doctrines publicly,³ it is certainly possible he received specific knowledge about some temple matters even earlier than can now be documented. These matters include: (1) the narrative backbone, clothing, and covenants of the modern LDS temple endowment; (2) the sequence of blessings of the oath and covenant of the priesthood, including ordinances received after the endowment; and (3) priesthood keys symbolized in words, signs, and tokens.

1. Endowment Narrative, Clothing, and Covenants

Scripture teaches that the greatest blessing one can receive is to enter into the presence of God, knowing Him, receiving all that He has, and becoming His son or daughter in the fullest sense of the word.⁴ Note that individuals can enter the presence of God in one of two ways:

1. *in actuality*, through a heavenly ascent or other divine encounter. In such an experience, individuals may be transfigured temporarily in order to receive a vision of eternity, take part in heavenly worship, participate in divine ordinances, or have conferred upon them specific blessings that are made sure by the voice of God Himself.⁵ In addition, disciples of Jesus Christ look forward to an ultimate consummation of their aspirations by coming into the presence of the Father after death, there receiving the blessing of a permanent, glorious resurrection;
2. *ritually*, through the ordinances of the Melchizedek Priesthood found in the temple. For example, the LDS temple endowment depicts a figurative journey that brings the worshipper step by step into the presence of God.⁶

Significantly, the sequence of events described in accounts of heavenly ascent often resembles the same general pattern symbolized in temple ritual, so that reading scriptural accounts of heavenly ascent can help us make sense of temple ritual, and experiencing temple ritual can help us understand how to prepare for an eventual entrance into the presence of God.⁷ No doubt the allusions to priesthood ordinances often found within scriptural accounts of heavenly ascent are meant to serve a teaching purpose for attentive scripture readers. In brief, heavenly ascent can be understood as the “completion or fulfillment” of the “types and images” of temple ritual.⁸

By 1830, Joseph Smith would have been familiar with many accounts of those who had actually encountered God face to face. Indeed, in his First Vision, he had experienced a visit of the Father and the Son while still a boy.⁹ In translating the Book of Mormon, Joseph Smith learned from accounts of other prophets who had seen the Lord, including the story of how the heavenly veil was removed for the brother of Jared so that he could personally come to know the premortal Jesus Christ.¹⁰

From the point of view of temple ritual, in contrast to heavenly ascent, the most significant early tutoring that Joseph Smith received likely came in 1830 and 1831 with his translation of the early chapters of Genesis,

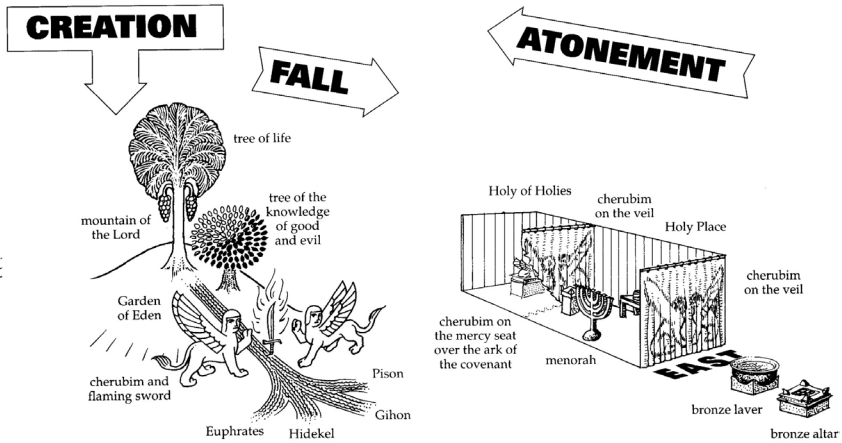


Figure 1. Michael P. Lyon, 1952-: *Sacred Topography of Eden and the Temple*

canonized in LDS scripture as the book of Moses. The book of Moses makes significant additions to the Bible account that throw additional light on priesthood as well as on temple doctrines and ordinances. Significantly, these additions, mainly dealing with events that occurred after the Fall, also illustrate the same covenants introduced to the Saints more than a decade later in the Nauvoo Temple endowment.¹¹ Following a prologue in chapter 1 of Moses that relates his heavenly ascent, the remainder of the book of Moses provided the central narrative backbone and covenants of the Nauvoo Temple endowment — an outline of the path whereby the Saints could come into the presence of God ritually.

Parallels in the layout of the Garden of Eden and Israelite temples. The LDS temple endowment narrative begins with an explicit recital of the events of Creation,¹² a near universal feature of temple rites in the ancient Near East.¹³ The endowment continues with an account of the Fall of Adam and Eve and concludes with the story of their upward journey back to the presence of the Father.¹⁴

To appreciate how the stories told in the book of Moses relate to the temple, one must first understand how the layout of the Garden of Eden parallels that of Israelite temples (see Figure 1).¹⁵ Each major feature of the Garden (e.g., the river, the cherubim, the Tree of Knowledge, the Tree of Life) corresponds to a similar symbol in the Israelite temple (e.g., the bronze laver, the cherubim, the veil,¹⁶ the menorah¹⁷).

Moreover, the course taken by the high priest through the temple can be seen as symbolizing the journey of the Fall of Adam and Eve in reverse. In other words, just as the route of Adam and Eve's departure from Eden led them *eastward* past the cherubim with the



Figure 2. *God Dressing Adam and Eve.* Detail of the Creation Cupola, Cathedral of San Marco, Venice, thirteenth century

flaming swords and out of the sacred garden into the mortal world, so in ancient times the high priest would return *westward* from the mortal world — past the consuming fire, the cleansing water, and the woven images of cherubim on the temple veils — and, finally, back into the presence of God.¹⁸ Likewise, in both the book of Moses and the modern LDS temple endowment, the posterity of Adam and Eve trace the footsteps of their first parents — first as they are sent away from Eden, and later in their subsequent journey of return and reunion.¹⁹

Temple clothing. As he translated the Bible in 1830-1833, Joseph Smith would have come across descriptions of temple clothing.²⁰ For instance, he would have been familiar with the story of the fig leaf apron and the coats of skins in the account of Adam and Eve²¹ and the robes of the temple priests in the book of Exodus,²² which were patterned after the clothing of heavenly beings. Thus, the temple clothing of priests symbolized the heavenly clothing that would someday supersede it.²³

It was reported in late retrospection of an 1833 incident that the Prophet had seen Michael the Archangel “several times,” “clothed in white from head to foot,” with a “peculiar cap, . . . a white robe, underclothing, and moccasins.”²⁴ According to Hugh Nibley, the white undergarment represents “the proper preexistent glory of the wearer,²⁵ while the [outer garment of the high priest] is the priesthood later added to it.”²⁶ In Israelite temples, the high priest changed his clothing as he moved to areas of the temple that reflected differing degrees of sacredness.²⁷ These changes in clothing mirror details of the nakedness and clothing worn by Adam and Eve in different parts of their garden sanctuary.²⁸

The Way of Life	The Way of Death
Obedience (Moses 5:1-6)	Defiance (Moses 5:13-14)
Sacrifice (Moses 5:4-8, 20)	Perversion of Sacrifice (Moses 5:18-19, 21)
The Gospel (Moses 5:58-59; 8:19)	Works of Darkness (Moses 5:29-31, 47-57; 8:26)
Chastity (Moses 6:5-23; 8:13)	Licentiousness (Moses 6:15; 8:14-21)
Consecration (Moses 7:18)	Violence and Corruption (Moses 5:31-33, 50; 6:15; 8:28)
Endless Life (Moses 7:23, 69; 8:27)	Untimely Death (Moses 8:30)

Figure 3. *The Two Ways: Covenant-Keeping and Covenant-Breaking*

Temple covenants. The temple journey of return and reunion is made possible through obedience to covenants, coupled with the strengthening power of the Atonement of Jesus Christ. As an Apostle, Elder Ezra Taft Benson outlined these covenants to a general audience as including “the law of obedience and sacrifice, the law of the gospel, the law of chastity, and the law of consecration.”²⁹

Some LDS scholars have conjectured that an ancient text somewhat like the book of Moses may have been used as a foundation for temple narrative in former times.³⁰ For instance, Mark Johnson has argued that temple covenant-making themes influenced both the structure and the content of the material included in the book of Moses.³¹ He observed that the author frequently “stops the historic portions of the story and weaves into the narrative framework ritual acts such as sacrifice; ... ordinances such as baptism, washings, and the gift of the Holy Ghost; and oaths and covenants such as obedience to marital obligations and oaths of property consecration.” Johnson goes on to suggest that while, for example, the account of Enoch and his city of Zion was being read, members of the attending congregation might have been “put under oath to be a chosen, covenant people and to keep all things in common, with all their property belonging to the Lord.”

The illustrations of covenant-keeping and covenant-breaking provided in the book of Moses in 1830-1831 correspond to the sequence of covenants that was introduced in the Nauvoo Temple more than a decade later, as shown in Figure 3. It is significant that the series of covenant-related themes in the book of Moses unfolds in what appears to be a definite order of progression. Moreover, the ultimate consequences of covenant-keeping as well as those of covenant-breaking are fully

illustrated at the conclusion of the account: in the final two chapters of the book of Moses, Enoch and his people receive the blessing of an endless life as they are taken up to the bosom of God³² while the wicked experience untimely death in the destruction of the great Flood.³³

Significantly, John W. Welch found a similar pattern in his analysis of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount, in which the commandments "are not only the same as the main commandments always issued at the temple, but they appear largely in the same order."³⁴ What seems to be deliberate structuring of biblical accounts to highlight a sequence of covenants can also be found in the Hebrew Bible. For example, the eminent Bible scholar David Noel Freedman called attention to a specific pattern of covenant-breaking in the "Primary History" of the Old Testament. He concluded that the biblical record was deliberately structured to reveal a sequence where each of the commandments was broken in specific order one by one.³⁵

In summary, Joseph Smith's translation of the book of Moses, in conjunction with his translation of other portions of the Bible, would have provided a powerful tutorial for the Prophet on temple-relevant stories, clothing, and covenants, long before the Nauvoo era.

2. Blessings of the Oath and Covenant of the Priesthood

The temple endowment was only one part of the extended sequence of ordinances of exaltation that were revealed over time to the Prophet. Thus, comparisons of ancient or modern rituals that focus solely on the endowment miss a significant part of the overall picture.

As Joseph Smith continued his translation of the Old Testament beyond the chapters contained in the book of Moses, he learned of righteous individuals whose experiences provided a further tutorial about temple ordinances and the priesthood as they existed anciently. For example, between December 1830 and June 1831, Joseph Smith translated Old Testament chapters that described the plural marriages of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and the New Testament account of the Sadducees' question about marriage in the resurrection.³⁶ By at least 1835, Joseph Smith had begun teaching the principle of eternal marriage to others such as William W. Phelps, who was told that he and his wife were "certain to be one in the Lord throughout eternity" if they continued "faithful to the end."³⁷ In 1835, William W. Phelps mentioned new light he had received from the Prophet on the subject of exaltation and eternal marriage, where those who would become "the sons of God"



Figure 4. J. James Tissot, 1836-1902: *The Offerings of Melchizedek*, ca. 1896-1902

would dwell in “a kingdom of glory ... where the man is neither without the woman, nor the woman without the man in the Lord.”³⁸

Additional revelations and teachings of Joseph Smith, in conjunction with the ongoing work of Bible translation, elaborated on the stories and significance of righteous individuals such as Melchizedek and Elijah, explaining how the priesthood authority they held related to additional ordinances and blessings that could be given in the temple after one had already received the endowment and been sealed in eternal marriage covenants.³⁹ For example, the blessings of the fulness of the Melchizedek Priesthood belong to one who is made a “king and a priest unto God, bearing rule, authority, and dominion under the Father.”⁴⁰ Correspondingly, worthy women may receive the blessings of becoming queens and priestesses.⁴¹ It is fitting for these blessings to be associated with the name of Melchizedek because he was the great “king of Salem” and “the priest of the most high God,”⁴² who gave the priesthood to Abraham.⁴³ Later kings of Israel, as well as Jesus Christ Himself, were declared to be part of the “order of Melchizedek,”⁴⁴ which was originally called “the Order of the Son of God.”⁴⁵ Additional revelatory insights of the Prophet relating to ordinances received after the endowment and marriage sealing are especially evident in the changes he made in his translation of the Gospel of John and the Epistle to the Hebrews.⁴⁶

In summary, a search through the translations, revelations, and teachings of Joseph Smith reveals that an outline of ordinances and blessings, including those to be received following the temple endowment,

	22-23 January 1832 (D&C 84:33-48)	19 January 1841 (D&C 124:39)	4 May 1842 (Documentary History 5:2)
Initiatory	“sanctified by the Spirit unto the renewing of their bodies”	“your anointings and your washings”*	“washings, anointings”
Endowment**	“the sons of Moses and of Aaron”	“your memorials for your sacrifices by the sons of Levi, and for your oracles in your most holy places wherein you receive conversations”	“endowments, and the communication of keys pertaining to the Aaronic Priesthood, and so on to the highest order of the Melchizedek Priesthood, setting forth the order pertaining to the Ancient of Days,” i.e., Adam
Marriage Sealing	“the seed of Abraham”		
Fulness of the Priesthood	“the church and kingdom”	“your statutes and judgments”	i.e., “the highest order of the Melchizedek Priesthood”
Election Made Sure; More Sure Word of Prophecy	“the elect of God”		“secure the fulness of those blessings which have been prepared for the Church of the Firstborn”
Second Comforter	“the Father teacheth him”		(a blessing of “the Church of the Firstborn” — D&C 88:3-5)
Receive the Kingdom	“all that my Father hath shall be given unto him”		“abide in the presence of the Elohim in the eternal worlds”

* “and your baptisms for the dead, and your solemn assemblies” immediately follows these words.

** As used in modern LDS terminology. By way of contrast, Joseph Smith seems to have used the word “endowment” to refer to the entire sequence of ordinances and blessings.

Figure 5. *Sequence of Blessings of the Oath and Covenant of the Priesthood*

was given to the Prophet early in his ministry. Indeed, by no later than 1835, the Lord revealed to Joseph Smith doctrines and principles relating to what we now call the ordinances of the initiatory, endowment, eternal marriage, the fulness of the priesthood, and exaltation in the presence of the Father. An examination of the second and third columns of Figure 5 reveals that the orderly sequence of these blessings was summarized in D&C 124:39 on January 19, 1841,⁴⁷ and again in a firsthand description of the events of May 4, 1842,⁴⁸ the day the Prophet Joseph Smith began to administer these ordinances in the upper story of the Red Brick Store. Significantly, however, the most complete list of these ordinances and blessings, shown in the leftmost column, was given by revelation in 1832, a decade earlier.⁴⁹

3. Priesthood Keys Symbolized in Words, Signs, and Tokens

Early revelations to Joseph Smith relating to the two temple themes discussed previously — namely, the narrative, clothing, and covenants of the endowment and the sequence of temple ordinances and blessings in the oath and covenant of the priesthood — have been discussed in detail elsewhere.⁵⁰ For this reason, the primary focus of this chapter is on the third item.⁵¹ I discuss some of the sacred keys of the priesthood that seem to have been understood by the Prophet during his early ministry.

In discussing these temple matters, I will try to follow the model of Hugh W. Nibley, who was, according to his biographer Boyd Jay Petersen, “respectful of the covenants of secrecy safeguarding specific portions of the LDS endowment, usually describing parallels from other cultures without talking specifically about the Mormon ceremony.”⁵²

When D&C 124 was revealed to the Prophet in 1841, he was told that “the keys of the holy priesthood”⁵³ had been “kept hid from before the foundation of the world”⁵⁴ and that they were soon to be revealed to the Saints in the “ordinances”⁵⁵ of the Nauvoo Temple. However, at least some of these keys had been introduced to the Prophet long before. For instance, in December 1830, using language that resembled the later 1841 revelation, the Lord could say already to Joseph Smith that He had “given unto him the keys of the mystery of those things which have been sealed, even things which were from the foundation of the world.”⁵⁶ This is temple language.⁵⁷

Though some regard the keys of the priesthood taught in the temple as having “only the most peripheral doctrinal significance,”⁵⁸ the teachings of Joseph Smith and Brigham Young make it clear that they are as essential in the next life as they are in this one.⁵⁹ For example, D&C 132 teaches that as a requirement for entering into “exaltation and glory” within the heavenly temple, the candidate for eternal life must be able to “pass by the angels, and the gods.”⁶⁰ Elaborating details of this requirement, Brigham Young taught that in order to do so the Saints must be “able to give them [i.e., the angels] the *key words, the signs and tokens*, pertaining to the Holy Priesthood.”⁶¹

3.1 Keywords

“Keywords” have been associated with temples since very early times. In a temple context, the meaning of the term can be taken quite literally: the use of the appropriate keyword or keywords by a qualified worshipper “unlocks” the gate for access to specific, secured areas of the sacred space.⁶²

In temples throughout the ancient Near East, including Jerusalem, “different temple gates had names indicating the blessing received when entering: ‘the gate of grace,’ ‘the gate of salvation,’ ‘the gate of life’ and so on,”⁶³ as well as signifying “the fitness, through due preparation, which entrants should have in order to pass through [each one of] the gates.”⁶⁴ In Jerusalem, the final “gate of the Lord, into which the righteous shall enter,”⁶⁵ very likely referred to “the innermost temple gate”⁶⁶ where those seeking the face of the God of Jacob⁶⁷ would find the fulfillment

of their temple pilgrimage. The last gate, like each of those previously encountered, could be opened only to entrants who had passed every prior test — and who, by virtue of their experience, were equipped with the relevant knowledge, understanding, and attributes of character to “endure to the end” of the way that led through the temple, where one received the ritual symbols that represented “eternal life.”⁶⁸

In this regard, it is important to understand that in each stage of that passage one was expected not only to *know* something but also to *be* something. Elder Dallin H. Oaks has taught that, in the day of final judgment, it will not be enough to merely have gone through the outward motions of keeping the commandments and receiving the ordinances — the essential question will be what we have ourselves *become* during our period of probation on earth.⁶⁹

The fact that the ultimate efficacy of the saving ordinances depends as much on what we have *become* as what we *know* explains why names are so closely associated with keywords. Indeed, Joseph Smith taught that “The new name *is* the key word.”⁷⁰ According to René Guénon, “all ancient traditions agree that the true name of a living thing reflects precisely its nature or its very essence.”⁷¹ For example, according to Guénon:⁷² “It is *because* Adam had received from God an understanding of the nature of all living things that he was able to give them their names” in the Garden of Eden.⁷³ This idea is consistent with Old Testament examples of figures such as Abraham, Sarah, and Jacob, who received new names only after the Lord had tested their integrity.⁷⁴ The importance of qualifying through worthiness and experience to take upon ourselves a sacred name is taught in ordinances such as the sacrament, where we learn that we must “always remember” and be “willing to take upon [ourselves] the name of Jesus Christ.”⁷⁵ Ultimately, however, we must not only be *willing* to take on the name of Jesus Christ but also become fully *ready* to do so if we are to receive every blessing outlined in the ordinances.⁷⁶ To take upon ourselves the name of Jesus Christ in actuality is to identify with Him to such a degree that we become one with Him in every aspect of saving knowledge and personal character.⁷⁷ As Hugh Nibley explained: “The importance of knowing the names of things and giving those names when challenged is more than the mere idea of the password; it is ... nothing less than ... ‘the law which makes of the name a veritable attribute of the thing named.’”⁷⁸

In 1829, Joseph Smith would have encountered this principle as he translated the words of King Benjamin,⁷⁹ who described how, at the last day, God would call by the name of Christ all those who had become like

Christ in every respect,⁸⁰ while calling all those who did not thus qualify by a *different* name that would reflect their different nature:

10. And now it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall not take upon him the name of Christ must be called by some other name; therefore, he findeth himself on the left hand of God. ...

12. I say unto you, I would that ye should remember to retain the name [of Christ] written always in your hearts, that ye are not found on the left hand of God, but that ye hear and know the voice by which ye shall be called, and also, the name by which he shall call you.

Names in Mesopotamian rites of kingship. A good example of a similar principle can be found in the rites of kingship in Old Babylon, such as those performed at Mari. It should be remembered that the Babylonian Creation Epic *Enuma Elish* used in the rites of royal investiture both “begins and ends with concepts of naming,” and that, as elsewhere in the ancient Near East, “the name, properly understood [by the informed], discloses the significance of the created thing.”⁸¹ If it is reasonable to suppose that the function of knowledge of sacred names in initiation ritual elsewhere in the ancient Near East might be extended by analogy to Old Babylonian investiture liturgy, we might see in the account of the fifty names given to Marduk at the end of *Enuma Elish* a description of his procession through the ritual complex in which he took upon himself the divine attributes represented by those names one by one.⁸² Ultimately, it seems, he would have passed the guardians of the sanctuary gate to reach the throne of Ea where, as also related in the account, he finally received the god’s *own* name and a consequent fusion of identity with the declaration: “He is indeed even as I.”⁸³

In the seal of the Sumerian king Gudea shown in Figure 6, a mediating deity introduces the humble, bareheaded, and nearly naked Gudea to a seated god.⁸⁴ A Mesopotamian equivalent of one of the guardian cherubim and a woman worshipping with upraised hands follow him. Gudea’s right arm is raised, and his left arm is outstretched. Holding Gudea by the wrist in ritual fashion, the mediating god and the seated god hold a vase featuring a seedling and flowing water. Water flows from the seated god himself into flowing vases, no doubt anticipating the sprouting of new seedlings that have yet to appear. The scene suggested is one of rebirth and transformation: drawing on the phraseology of the Gospel of John we might say that having been “born of water,”⁸⁵ the king, in likeness both of the sprout within the flowing vase and of the god to



Figure 6. Impression Seal of Gudea, Tello, Iraq, ca. 2150 BCE

which he is being introduced, is also to *become* a “well of water springing up into everlasting life.”⁸⁶

Names in Islamic worship and postmortal ascent. Islamic tradition also emphasizes the importance of knowing the names of God. For example, in a large wall within the Great Mosque of Abu Dhabi, ninety-nine names of God are depicted in beautiful Arabic calligraphy on the stylized leaves of a Tree of Life.

Though, in Islam, human language is incapable of adequately describing or even symbolizing God, the names serve as a prop for meditation and prayer. By contemplation of the attributes or qualities of God expressed in these names, worshippers can approach an understanding of the universe of cosmic and human reality, and God’s relationship to His Creation and His creatures. According to Ringgenberg:⁸⁷

One tradition holds that the one-hundredth name is the true Name of God, but that it remains unknowable, as a witness of the unspeakable transcendence of the One. One scholar of the seventeenth century could thus begin a poem by writing: “In the name of He who has no name.”

Figure 7 is a close-up of a representation of the unspeakable, unknowable one-hundredth name of God as a blank leaf on the Tree of Life. A Muslim friend once told me that this last name is not unknowable in eternity, since it will be given to each of the faithful by Allah himself when he or she enters Paradise after death.

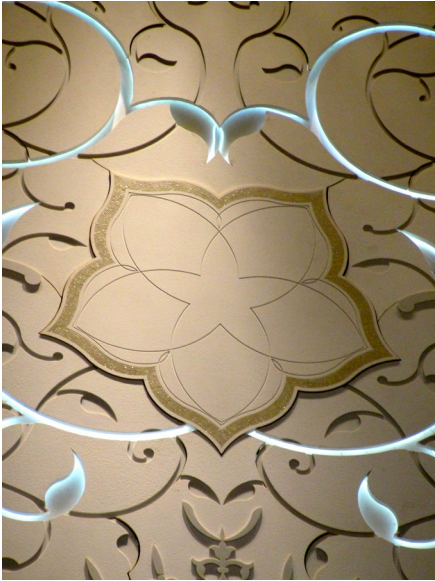


Figure 7. *The One-Hundredth Name of God*, Great Mosque of Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates



Figure 8. *Facsimile 2*, Book of Abraham

Significance of names in the book of Abraham, the New Testament, and the teachings of Joseph Smith. The theme of God’s disclosure of His own name to those who approach the final gate to enter His presence is reminiscent of the explanations of Facsimile 2 from the book of Abraham that date to sometime between 1835 and 1841.⁸⁸ In Figure 7 of that facsimile, God is pictured as “sitting upon his throne, revealing through the heavens the grand Key-words of the Priesthood” (Figure 8).

The shout of the people at Christ’s triumphal entry becomes more understandable when translated as “Blessed is he who comes *with* [rather than *in*] the Name of the Lord.”⁸⁹ Consistent with this translation, such a cry could be taken as an acknowledgment of Jesus’s role as the Messiah, the great High Priest, one who had the Divine Name sealed on His forehead⁹⁰ and could bring those who were prepared into the presence of God. Each “disciple” would then “be as his master,” and each “servant as his lord.”⁹¹

Referring to the hundred and forty-four thousand with the “Father’s name written in their foreheads” mentioned in Revelation 14:1, Margaret Barker further explains:⁹²

the servants of God-and-the-Lamb ... have been admitted to the Holy of Holies ... , and they bear on their foreheads the mark of high priesthood, the Name.



Figure 9. “A Plate of Pure Gold... upon Aaron’s Forehead” (Exodus 28:36, 38)

In 1843, the Prophet Joseph Smith similarly taught that the sealing in the forehead⁹³:

signifies sealing the blessing upon their heads, meaning the everlasting covenant, thereby making their calling and election sure.

On the “plate of pure gold” that was to be worn upon the forehead of the high priest were engraved the words “Holiness to the Lord” — thus equating each worthy and authorized high priest with the temple itself.⁹⁴ Paul taught this same principle to the Corinthian saints:⁹⁵

Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? ... the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.

Sacred names in tests of recognition. Once acquired, sacred names can be used in tests of recognition between individuals. This is possible because, in various religious traditions, some of these names are shared while others are specific to the individual. An example of such a set of names comes from early Christianity through an account of Clement of Alexandria. He gave a description of a group of “initiates” who had an account of the three names given to Moses. Whereas the first two of these names were unique to Moses, the final name might be regarded as a title: “Joachim, given him by his mother at circumcision; Moses, given him by Pharaoh’s daughter; and Melchi, a name he had in heaven which was given him, apparently by God, after his ascension”⁹⁶— and suggesting what Goodenough called the “eternal priesthood of Melchizedek.”⁹⁷

Islamic traditions associate a test of naming with the marriage of Adam and Eve.⁹⁸ In a manner similar to temple initiates in other cultures, Adam — before the Fall and after having been given instruction by God — was said to have been directed to recite a series of secret names to the angels in order to convince them that he was worthy of the elevated



Figure 10. *Adam and Eve Enthroned in Paradise*, 16th century

status of priest and king that had been conferred upon him.⁹⁹ This test of Adam’s knowledge of certain names culminated in an examination to determine whether Adam could identify Eve and recite *her* name. Notice the words al-Tha’labi uses to describe the incident:¹⁰⁰ “When Adam awoke from his sleep he saw [Eve] sitting at his head. The angels said to Adam, testing his knowledge: ‘What is this, Adam?’ He answered: ‘A woman.’ They asked: ‘And what is her name?’ he replied: ‘Eve (*hawwa*).” Al-Tha’labi observes further that when Adam and Eve were rejoined after the Fall “they recognized each other by questioning on a day of questioning. So the place was named *Arafat* (= questions) and the day, *Irfah* [= knowledge or recognition].”¹⁰¹

3.2 Signs and Tokens

The use of “signs” and “tokens” as symbols connected with covenants made in temples and used as aids in sacred teaching is an ancient practice.¹⁰² For example, the raised hand is a long-recognized sign of oath-taking,¹⁰³ and the Ark of the Covenant in the Tabernacle contained various tangible “tokens of the covenant”¹⁰⁴ relating to the priesthood, including the golden pot that had manna, Aaron’s rod that budded, and the tablets of the law.¹⁰⁵ As a related example, Elder Joseph Fielding Smith, then an Apostle, wrote about the tangible symbols of sacred realities that are incorporated in our weekly worship. He said that in partaking of the emblems of the sacrament that are distributed to the congregation



Figure 11. J. James Tissot, 1836-1902: *The Last Supper*, 1886-1894

by priesthood officiators “there is the token that we subscribe fully to the obligations”¹⁰⁶ of the sacrament prayer. Citing Book of Mormon examples, David Calabro concludes that sometimes a gesture can stand “for the covenant in that it signals membership in the covenant group.”¹⁰⁷

By way of analogy to a possible function of the items within the Ark of the Covenant — items that relate to the higher priesthood¹⁰⁸ — consider the Greek Eleusinian Mysteries,¹⁰⁹ which endured over a period of nearly two thousand years. These rites were said to consist of *legomena* (= things recited), *deiknymena* (= things shown), and *dromena* (= things performed). A sacred casket contained the tokens of the god, which were used to teach initiates about the meaning of the rites. At the culmination of the process, the initiate was examined about his knowledge of these tokens. “Having passed the tests of the tokens and their passwords, ... the initiate would have been admitted to the presence of the god.”¹¹⁰

In addition to a physical representation within sacred containers such as the Ark of the Covenant, tokens could be expressed in the form of a handclasp,¹¹¹ “a precise image for absolutely unique individuality and perfectly joined unity”¹¹² that could be used both in tests of knowledge and identity as well as in acts of recognition and reunion.

The role of the handclasp and uplifted hands in covenant-making and prayer. The handclasp was used by early Christians as part of ritual covenant-making. For example, Matt Brown describes a ritual

where initiates simultaneously performed their renunciation of Satan and made a covenant “by clasping the left hand of the officiating priest. Then another covenant was made — this time to commit oneself to Jesus Christ — by a clasping of the right hand with the officiator.”¹¹³

Sacred handclasps were also used in early Christian prayer circles (see Figure 11). For example, according to the *Acts of John*, Jesus concluded His final instructions to the Apostles with a choral prayer in which “he told [them] to form a circle, holding one another’s hands, and himself stood in the middle.”¹¹⁴

Psalm 24:3 asks: “Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in his holy place?” and then gives the answer: “He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart.”¹¹⁵ Donald Parry sees in Psalm 24 a possible reference to a prayer circle, noting that “prayer with upraised arms was an essential feature of holy petitions put up to God in the temple of Solomon.”¹¹⁶ “Clean hands” can be thought of as a symbol of the justificatory remission of sins while a “pure heart” can be considered as the result of the process of sanctification.¹¹⁷ The one whose “palms are innocent, and whose heart is pure” will have the “privilege of appearing before God in his temple,”¹¹⁸ that he “may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death.”¹¹⁹ Hence a Christian text has the penitent thief who spoke with Jesus on the cross being welcomed into Paradise only after he shows to the Cherubim “the writing [token, mark, authorization¹²⁰] which was in his hand, [that] was written in the blood ... of our Lord Jesus Christ.”¹²¹ This symbolism relates to sacrifice “after the order of the Melchizedek Priesthood”¹²² — not the Levitical offering of animal sacrifice but an ongoing dedication of one’s own life in a spirit of consecration,¹²³ in similitude of the sacrifice of our Savior. Elder Neal A. Maxwell explained that “real, personal sacrifice never was placing an animal on the altar. Instead, it is a willingness to put the animal in us upon the altar and letting it be consumed!”¹²⁴

The classical priestly posture of prayer with uplifted hands was known in the Old Testament¹²⁵ and continued as a feature of Christian prayer in Joseph Smith’s day. Zebedee Coltrin recorded that at the Kirtland School of the Prophets on January 23, 1833 the participants were to “wash themselves,” “put on clean clothing” — in likeness of the Israelites at Mount Sinai¹²⁶ — and then engage “in silent prayer, kneeling, with our hands uplifted each one praying in silence.”¹²⁷ In this instance, the prayer with uplifted hands was followed by an appearance of the Father and the Son.

The handclasp as a part of ritual or heavenly ascent. In an Old Testament context, sacred handclasps are often associated with ritual or actual ascent to the presence of God.¹²⁸ For example, Matthew Brown noted a depiction of a handclasp in a presentation scene involving “the Israelite king standing at the veiled door of the Jerusalem Temple and being admitted by the Lord into an assembly.”¹²⁹ He also notes important allusions in the Psalms. For example:

It is curious that in the King James translation of the Psalm 89 coronation text it is said that the Lord’s right hand will be established with the king.¹³⁰ ... Eaton renders this passage with these words (with the Lord speaking): “My hand shall hold him fast.”¹³¹ This suggests a handclasp between the Heavenly King and His earthly vice-regent. Indeed, [Kraus and Anderson] state outright that a right-handed clasp between God and the king belonged to the Israelite enthronement ritual.¹³²



Figure 12. Hans Memling, ca. 1433 – 1494: *The Gates of Paradise with St. Peter*, 1471-1473. Left wing of the *Altar of the Last Judgment* from St. Mary’s Church, Gdansk, Poland

At least one traditional Jewish exegete, ibn Ezra, recognized “similar mechanisms of human ascent” in Psalm 73:23-24: “for I am always with You; you grasped my right hand [and] led me into your [council], and afterwards granted me glory.”¹³³

At the time of their glorification, faithful Christians are often portrayed in a manner that recalls the practice of Israelite kings. For instance, Matthew Brown cites examples of sacred handclasps in this portrayal of “a monk ... being admitted through the gate of Paradise by the apostle Peter” (Figure 12). Stairways in some of these portrayals mark the scene as an ascension.¹³⁴

Note also this image from the tenth-century Bamberg Apocalypse, where John is admitted to the New Jerusalem by a special handclasp (Figure 13).



Figure 13. *The New Jerusalem, Bamberg Apocalypse, ca. 1000*

The handclasp as a symbol of the marriage relationship. Besides their use in tests of knowledge, clasped hands have been a popular symbol of the marriage relationship since ancient times,¹³⁵ as exemplified in this image and inscription for Jean-Baptiste Robail, age 70, and his wife, Rose Duclocher, age 72, who passed away on the same day in 1832 (Figure 14).

This was also a symbol used by the Prophet Joseph Smith by at least 1835. For example, Matt Brown observed that on November 24, 1835, Joseph Smith “performed a marriage ceremony ‘by



Figure 14. *Detail from the Robail-Navier Family Sepulchre, Cimetière de la Madeleine, Amiens, France, ca. 1832*

the authority of the everlasting priesthood.’ He requested the bride and groom to ‘join hands’ and then they entered into a ‘covenant’ while the Prophet pronounced ‘the blessings that the Lord conferred upon Adam and Eve.’”¹³⁶

Although sculptured hands of marriage partners in modern times nearly always show a simple handclasp, a significant number from ancient times pointedly feature a somewhat different gesture where the hand of the man is placed over the wrist of the woman. For example, Nicoletta Isar has analyzed a series of images from Greek Attic painted pottery that show “a certain ritual gesture” of “the bridegroom-god holding the wrist of his bride” that she takes as representing “the bond created by the nuptial ritual”¹³⁷ (Figure 15).



Figure 15. *Wedding Procession*, Attic white-ground pyxis by the Splachnoptes painter, ca. 450 BCE

The handclasp as a symbol of the resurrection. Importantly, Isar sees ancient ritual nuptial gestures as “strikingly similar”¹³⁸ to the gesture of Christ that raises Adam from the dominion of death in the *Anastasis* depiction of the moment of resurrection. She rightly denominates this as the “*princeps* theme”¹³⁹ of Byzantine iconography (Figure 16). Isar brilliantly concludes that the gesture of the hand of Christ grasping the wrist of Adam, “an anchor ... sure and steadfast”¹⁴⁰ that binds them together in unbreakable fashion, represents not only the “meeting ground of both life and death,” but also serves as a “visual metaphor of the ... nuptial bond,”¹⁴¹ an equally indissoluble union, “the conjugal harness by which both parts are yoked together.”¹⁴² This metaphor is visually highlighted by the stigma on the hand of the Savior that is carefully positioned at the exact center of the image to overlay precisely both the cross of Christ and the wrist of Adam.¹⁴³

This imagery will be meaningful to Latter-day Saints who, like Adam and Eve, become “partakers of the divine nature”¹⁴⁴ and by virtue of this fact participate in Christ’s sufferings as well as His glory.¹⁴⁵ Nowhere is this fact more apparent than in the temple where, as Truman G. Madsen points out, “a full-scale covenant relationship, the Atonement of Christ may be written, as it were, in our very flesh.”¹⁴⁶ There, as Cyril of Jerusalem said, “we suffer without pain by mere imitation his receiving



Figure 16. *Anastasis*, Daphni Monastery, near Athens, Greece, AD 1080-1100

of the nails in his hands and feet: the antitype of Christ's sufferings."¹⁴⁷ "One is ... obliged," writes Eugene Seach, to become not only "one flesh' with Christ, but [also] one life, one sacrifice, thus participating actively in the eternal act of love which began in the heavens."¹⁴⁸

The sacred embrace as an intensification and fulfillment of the hand-clasp. Hugh Nibley notes that according to the Manichaean religion, "the right hand was used for bidding farewell to our heavenly parents upon leaving our primeval home and [was] the greeting with which we shall be received when we return to it."¹⁴⁹ Likewise, the Mandaeans, whose history may intersect with disciples of John the Baptist,¹⁵⁰ still continue a ritual practice in which the *kushta*, a ceremonial handclasp, is given



Figure 17. E. S. Drower, 1879-1972: *The Kushta*, 1956

three times, each one of which, according to Elizabeth Drower, “seems to mark the completion ... of a stage in a ceremony.”¹⁵¹ At the moment of glorious resurrection, Mandaean scripture records that a final *kushta* will also take place, albeit in the form of an embrace — what the *Ginza* calls the “key of the *kushta* of both arms.” In this context, the two-armed embrace of Mandaean ritual can be seen as an intensification and a fulfillment of the handclasp gesture. It is an *intensification* of the handclasp because it signifies not only an unbreakable bond between two individuals but also a powerful symbol that signifies absolute unity and oneness between them. It is a *fulfillment* of the handclasp in the same sense that a fully rendered circle and square represent the successful completion of the work that the tools of the compass and the square were designed to perform. Here is what the *Ginza* says about the culminating moment when the Mandaean exits the mortal world and enters the world of glory through a ritual embrace:¹⁵²



Figure 18. Pompeo Batoni, 1708-1787: *The Return of the Prodigal Son*, 1773

Sitil [= Seth¹⁵³], the son of Adam ... was brought to the Watchhouse [where] Silmais, the treasurer, holds the nails of glory in the hand,¹⁵⁴ and carries the key of the *kushta* of both arms.¹⁵⁵ They opened the gate of the treasure house for him, lifted the great veil of safety upward before him, introduced him, and showed him that Vine [i.e., the Tree of Life],¹⁵⁶ its inner glory. ... Sitil, son of Adam, spoke: “On this [same] way, the Path and Ascent which I have climbed, truthful, believing, faithful and perfect men should also ascend and come, when they leave their bodies [i.e., at death].”

Another account in *Ginza* reads: “When it [i.e., the soul] arrived at the gate of the House of Life, the escort comes to meet it. He bears a resplendent wreath in his hand and a garment in both his arms. ... The Life stretched out (his hand), and joined in communion (*laufa*) with it, just as the elect join in communion (*laufa*) in the Place of Light.”¹⁵⁷

It is important to realize that, as with LDS temple ordinances, Mandaean ritual is designed to anticipate the postmortal heavenly ascent and reunion just described. Despite their probable post-Christian origins as a separate people, Nibley sees the “whole Mandaean ritual complex with its endless washings, garments, ritual meals, embraces,

grips and crownings [as being] reminiscent of the Egyptian endowment, and Drower, the principal authority on the subject, long ago called attention to the common prehistoric origin of both.”¹⁵⁸ Thomas argues for a connection to Palestinian baptist sects and the preexilic Israelite temple cult.¹⁵⁹ Even Yamauchi, who argued persuasively that, in contrast to mainstream scholarship, the Mandaean movement originated in the East and no earlier than the first centuries of the Christian era, nevertheless agreed with other researchers who saw the roots of their mythology and ritual in ancient Mesopotamian religion.¹⁶⁰

The sacred embrace as a symbol of renewed life. Both the handclasp and the sacred embrace may represent not only mutual love and trust but also a transfer of life and power from one individual to another. In what Elder Willard Richards called “the sweetest sermon from Joseph he ever heard in his life,”¹⁶¹ the Prophet described a vision of the resurrection that, like Mandaean ritual, included a handclasp and an embrace:¹⁶²

So plain was the vision. I actually saw men, before they had ascended from the tomb, as though they were getting up slowly. They took each other *by the hand*, and it was, “My father and my son, my mother and my daughter, my brother and my sister.” When the voice calls for the dead to arise, suppose I am laid by the side of my father, what would be the first joy of my heart? Where is my father, my mother my sister? They are by my side. *I embrace them*, and they me.

Those familiar with the Bible will, of course, recall relevant temple symbolism in the story of Jacob. The Christian ladder of virtues was a symbol of the process of spiritual progression that corresponds to the idea of progression toward eternal life through the making and keeping of covenants.¹⁶³ Speaking of Jacob’s dream of the heavenly ladder in Genesis 28, Elder Marion G. Romney said: “Jacob realized that the



Figure 19. Stephen T. Whitlock, 1951-: *Jacob's Ladder*, Bath Abbey, England, ca. 1500

covenants he made with the Lord were the rungs on the ladder that he himself would have to climb in order to obtain the promised blessings — blessings that would entitle him to enter heaven and associate with the Lord.”¹⁶⁴ Thus, the Prophet Joseph Smith correlated the “three principal rounds of Jacob’s ladder” with “the telestial, the terrestrial, and the celestial glories or kingdoms.”¹⁶⁵



Figure 20. *Jacob Wrestling with the Angel.* Chapter House, Salisbury Cathedral, England, 13th-century (restored)



Figure 21. *Relief,* Naples, Italy, 12th century

Later Jacob “wrestled (or embraced, as this may also be understood¹⁶⁶)” an angel who, after a series of questions and answers in a place that Jacob named Peniel (Hebrew “face of God”), gave him a new name (Figure 20). Then Jacob, encouraged by his encounter with the angel, reconciled with his brother Esau through a similar embrace, saying: “for therefore I have seen thy face, as though I had seen the face of God.”¹⁶⁷

Joseph Smith’s words about the gesture of embrace in the resurrection recalls similar symbolism in the stories of Elijah and Elisha, who each employed a similar ritual gesture as they raised a dead child back to life.¹⁶⁸ The more detailed account of Elisha reads as follows (see Figure 22):¹⁶⁹

And he [Elisha] went up, and lay upon the child, and put his mouth upon his mouth, and his eyes upon his eyes, and his hands upon his hands: and he stretched himself upon the child;¹⁷⁰ and the flesh of the child waxed warm.¹⁷¹

Although some might take the “intent of this physical contact [as] to transfer the bodily warmth and stimulation of the prophet to the child, Elijah’s prayer, however, makes it clear that he expected the life of the child to return as an answer to prayer, not as a result of bodily contact.”¹⁷² The threefold repetition of the act in the story of Elijah points to a ritual context,¹⁷³ perhaps corresponding to a similar Mesopotamian procedure where “the healer superimpose[s] his body over that of the patient, head to head, hand to hand, foot to foot.”¹⁷⁴



Figure 22. Frederic Leighton, 1830-1896: *Elisha Raising the Son of the Shunamite*, 1881

In addition to the stories of Elijah and Elisha, Eugene Seach notes the following parallels in Jewish and Christian sources:¹⁷⁵

The same embrace reappeared in the early Christian *Gospel of Thomas*, where Jesus tells the disciples that they must



Figure 23. Frank Wesley, 1923-2002: *The Forgiving Father*, ca. 1954-1958

“become one” with him by placing eyes in the place of an eye, and a hand in the place of a hand, and a foot in the place of a foot, and an image in the place of an image.¹⁷⁶

That this was remembered even during the Middle Ages is shown by the fact that the *Seder Eliyahu Rabbah* (eighth century) also explains how God will resuscitate the dead by lifting them out of the dust, setting them on their feet, and placing them between his knees to embrace them and press them to him. ...

Compare Acts 20:10, where Paul raises a man from the dead with a sacred embrace. Also the Jewish apocryphon, *Joseph and Aseneth*, where Joseph gives his bride eternal life with an embrace and a kiss.¹⁷⁷ Seeing anticipatory symbolism



Figure 24. Pietro Lorenzetti, ca. 1280-1348: *Deposition of Christ from the Cross*, Lower Basilica of San Francesco d'Assisi, ca. 1320

in this story, the Seder Eliyahu Rabbah specifically adds that the Messiah will be the very “Son of the Widow” whom Elijah raised from the dead.¹⁷⁸

Symbolism of the sacred embrace in the miracles, death, and resurrection of the Savior. According to Riesenfeld,¹⁷⁹ whose careful study of Old Testament incidents of raising the dead showed detailed parallels to the later miracles of the Savior: “It is perhaps more than chance that the miracles of revivication performed, according to Jewish belief, by Elijah, Elisha, and Ezekiel, each prefiguring the coming Messiah, in some way have reached fulfillment in the Messianic activity of Jesus Christ.”

According to Sparks and Gilquist, the actions of Elijah in reviving a dead child can also be seen as pointing forward to the “death, burial, and resurrection of Christ.”¹⁸⁰ Matthew Brown brought attention to Medieval paintings such as this one by Lorenzetti (Figure 24) that echo the actions of Elijah and Elisha, showing specific points of contact with the Savior at his death — face, hand, knee, and foot — with an embrace across the chest. Brown correlated such scenes with passages such as these from English mystery plays: “Behold my body ... / And therefore thou shalt understand / In body, head, feet, and hand.”¹⁸¹

Symbolism of death and resurrection in worship at the Dura Europos synagogue. Evidence from Qumran and synagogues in the first few centuries after Christ provides evidence that temple-related symbols related to death and resurrection to new life were not confined to Christian



**Ezekiel's
mission in
the world
of death**

**Ezekiel's
ascent to
heavenly
life**

**Ezekiel's
faithfulness
at all
hazards**

Figure 25. *The Cycle of Ezekiel from the Synagogue at Dura-Europos, ca. 244*

tradition. Figure 25 shows the Ezekiel Mural of the third-century Dura Europos synagogue, a visual witness to what Crispin Fletcher-Louis might describe as a ritual (rather than literary) expression “*of the divine encounter believed to take place in and through Israel’s temple worship, especially priestly offices.*”¹⁸² The painted murals were remarkably preserved only because the building had been filled with earth as a fortification during the ancient siege of the city.

Elsewhere, I have explored the view that heavenly ascent was a prominent theme in decorations throughout the synagogue. If such an interpretation is sustained, the art of the Dura synagogue constitutes the most convincing physical evidence available that the “Jewish mysteries” described in ancient sources may have had a tangible expression in ritual.

Significantly, detailed descriptions of ideas relating to “Jewish mysteries” were already to be found centuries earlier in the writings of the Jewish scholar Philo Judaeus of Alexandria. The core elements of Philo’s writings may go back to Solomon’s Temple.¹⁸³

Ezekiel is shown wearing three types of clothing as these scenes unfold (Figure 26). His changes in clothing can be interpreted as a progression, representing three different degrees of spiritual existence.¹⁸⁴ The three types of clothing recall the three divisions of the Jerusalem temple, and the changing of the high priest from colored to white garb before entering the holy of holies.¹⁸⁵ According to Philo, the greater initiation allowed Moses, “when ... clad in simple white,”¹⁸⁶ to abide in God’s presence “while he learns the secrets of the most holy mysteries,”¹⁸⁷ and to be “changed into the divine.”¹⁸⁸



Figure 26. *Changes of Clothing*

Yale scholar Erwin Goodenough noted the special markings of “clavi” and “gams”¹⁸⁹ on the clothing worn by the ten resurrected mortals shown below (Figure 27). As members of the heavenly circle, they pray with uplifted hands. From his observations of these markings at Dura Europos and elsewhere in the ancient world, Goodenough concluded, “Only those who appeared to be heavenly beings or the greatest saints of Judaism, mystic saviors, wear this clothing.”¹⁹⁰



Figure 27. *Clavi and Gams on Celestial Clothing*

Goodenough noted that these distinctive marks were found not only in the Dura murals but also in a cache of white textile fragments also discovered at Dura. According to Goodenough, these fragments “may have been fetishistic marks, originally on sacred robes, that were preserved after the garments had been outworn.”¹⁹¹



Figure 28. *Four Extended Divine Hands*

A prominent feature of the first two panels of the painting in Figure 28 is a series of five divine right hands, “the first clenched in the hair of the prophet,”¹⁹² and the remaining four open and extended toward him. Here, the “hand from heaven” is specifically associated with the “revivication of the dead.”¹⁹³

In a formula repeated throughout the rabbinical literature, the “key of the revival of the dead” is mentioned as one that “the Holy One ... has retained *in His own hands*”¹⁹⁴ — though this mural clearly shows that it can be delegated to others. As in Ezekiel accounts found elsewhere, the hand is extended to him “as if to give a command”¹⁹⁵ and also “to give strength to perform his task”¹⁹⁶ — here evidently to enable him to assist in bringing the righteous dead to eternal life.

Goodenough observes that two of the extended hands in the first panel are portrayed with “palms forward. In contrast [with] the scenes at the right the [two] divine hands are turned, still right hands, but with the nails of each finger carefully indicated to make them certainly right hands, though their position is reversed.” Goodenough says that he “cannot believe that this had no significance to the artist who so carefully showed the detail.”¹⁹⁷

This reversal may suggest a change in the relationship of Ezekiel to God as he moves from the earthly to the heavenly realms, corresponding to the “well-known shifting of the garment from left to right in initiation ceremonies (for example, moving the tassel on the mortarboard at graduations)”¹⁹⁸ or the Jewish prayer shawl or robe that “is draped over one shoulder and then over the other.”¹⁹⁹ The imagery also recalls Philo’s

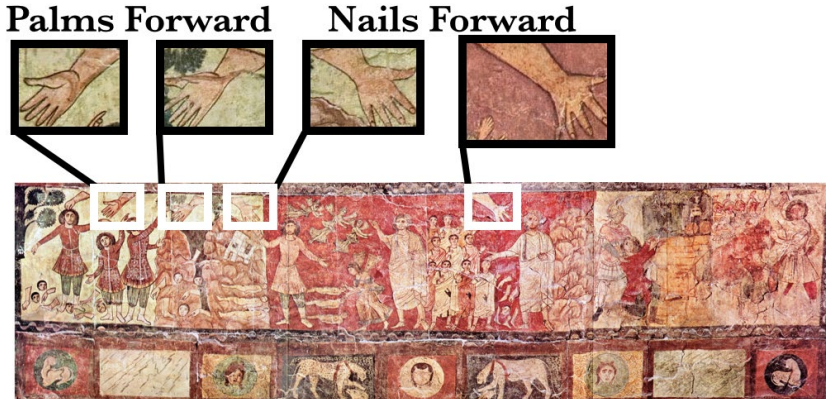


Figure 29. *Reversal of the Hands*



Figure 30. *Reconstructed Torah Shrine with Curtain*

description of the two successive initiations, the lesser one of Aaron and the greater one of Moses.

The “veil” of the temple is often represented within synagogues as the outer covering of the Torah Shrine, as in the Torah Shrine of Dura Europos (Figure 30). The “holy of holies” niche, where the Torah was kept, is topped by a large scallop shell, a symbol of resurrection.²⁰⁰ Indeed, Goldstein observed that the Torah shrine at Dura Europos was replete with “symbols of immortality or resurrection.”²⁰¹

Immediately above the Torah niche was a panel filled with other symbols of Jewish worship (Figure 31): the menorah (left), a representation of the Temple in Jerusalem (center), and the sacrifice of Isaac by Abraham (right). In front of the altar, a ram is caught in the thicket, and behind it is what appears, at first glance, to be someone standing at the entrance to



Figure 31. Decorations above the Torah Shrine

a tent (Figure 32). Although the figure in the background is often identified as Sarah,²⁰² it is difficult to see why she would have been included in this scene of Isaac’s sacrifice. Moreover, were this figure a female, one would have expected, instead of a white robe, a head covering and colored clothing, as with other Jewish women shown in the Dura murals.²⁰³

Margaret Barker interprets this detail of the painting of Abraham’s sacrifice of Isaac as “a figure going up behind a curtain held open by a disembodied hand — the symbol of the LORD. Since the temple curtain represented access to the presence of God, this seems to depict Isaac going to heaven.”²⁰⁴ In support of her conclusion, Barker cites Jewish and early Christian texts suggesting that, in the *Akedah*, Isaac literally died, ascended to heaven, and was resurrected. Of course, the themes of “death” and “resurrection” could just as easily fit a ritual context.

About this aspect of the Ezekiel mural, Margaret Barker has written:²⁰⁵

The idea of resurrection is certainly present; we do not know how resurrection was understood in the first temple, but resurrection was an expectation of the priests; i.e., that they were resurrected when they came into the presence of God at their consecration, and then returned to the world. This would explain Ezekiel returning to the world to face martyrdom [in the final panel of the mural].

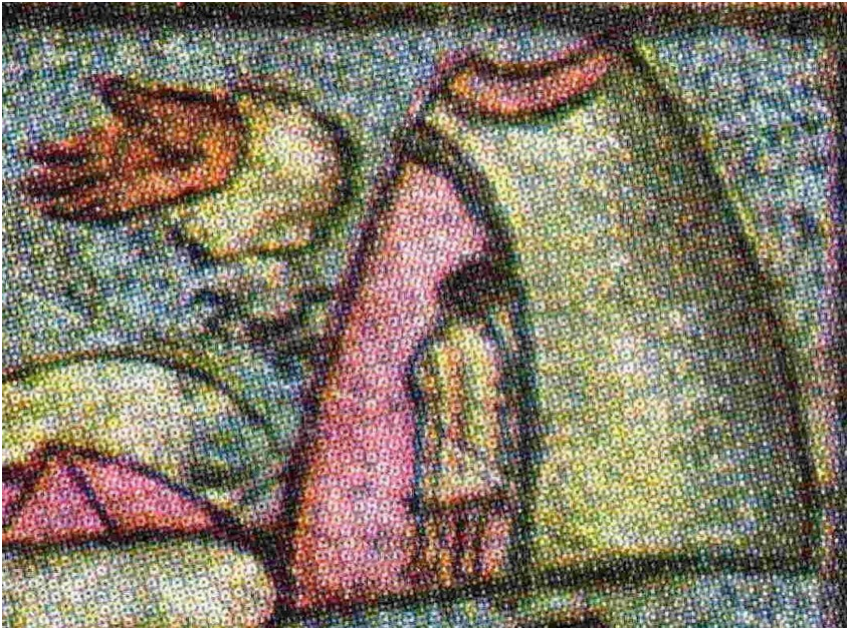


Figure 32. *Detail Showing Hand and Curtain: Isaac Ascends to Heaven*

Summarizing the primary function of the giving of keywords, names, signs, and tokens within a personal, contextual, multi-part process of authentication in ancient temple practices, Hugh Nibley explains:²⁰⁶

As you approach the camp surrounding the temple, you signify your intent with a reassuring sign, a *signum*, visible from a distance, calling attention to yourself as Adam does in his prayer and demonstrating your peaceful intent.²⁰⁷ Upon reaching the gate, you present your token, a tangible object (compare ... digit, *dactyl*, or a solid handclasp).²⁰⁸ All these serve as a *tessera hospitalis* [i.e., a symbol of mutual hospitality], admitting one to a closed group or a party, or a club, guild meeting, etc. It is presented to the doorkeeper, a herald trained in such matters: “The Holy One of Israel is the Keeper of the Gate, and he employs no servant there!” Most important, “he cannot be deceived.”²⁰⁹ The token recognized, you pronounce your name to the doorkeeper in a low voice, a whisper, for it is a special name agreed on between you and your host and should not be picked up and used by anyone else.²¹⁰



Figure 33. *The Temptation of Christ*, King Gagig I of Kars Gospels, ca. 1050

Symbols as an aid to detecting deception. Of course, the keywords, names, signs, and tokens would be of no importance as symbols of authentication unless deception were a real possibility. Documenting such deception, the Apostle Paul, drawing on early Jewish tradition,²¹¹ spoke of Satan transforming himself “into an angel of light.”²¹² With similar language, Joseph Smith also spoke of the devil having appeared deceptively “as an angel of light.”²¹³

Michael Stone sees a passage in the Latin *Life of Adam and Eve* as implying that “all Satan lacked to look like a heavenly angel was the glory. He lost the glory when he fell, and he could take it on temporarily in order to deceive Adam and Eve.”²¹⁴ Thus, Satan is depicted in Figure 33, as elsewhere in early Christian art, as angelic in form but differing in color — e.g., appearing with “false glory” in a dark blue tint rather than in a whiteness of glory.²¹⁵ Alternatively, one might interpret Satan’s blue color as his appearing, deceptively, in a form corresponding to the blue robe of the high priest, which represented being clothed in the likeness of the body — the blue-black “shadow” — of the incarnate Logos.²¹⁶

Elder Parley P. Pratt wrote that “although [spirits not worthy to be glorified] often attempt to pass as angels of light there is more or less of darkness about them. So it is with Satan and his hosts who have not been embodied.”²¹⁷ Moses, having received a vision of God’s true glory, had learned to distinguish it from Satan’s feigned glory and challenged the Adversary, saying: “Where is thy glory, for it is darkness unto me? And I can judge between thee and God.”²¹⁸ Joseph Smith also had to learn “by experience, how to discern between the spirit of Christ and the



Figure 34. Lutwin: *How the Devil Deceived Eve*, early 14th century

spirit of the Devil.”²¹⁹ According to an account by Oliver Cowdery, the Prophet, prior to obtaining the Book of Mormon plates, “beheld the prince of darkness, surrounded by his innumerable train of associates” and afterward was told the purpose of this vision by the angel Moroni: “All this is shown, the good and the evil, the holy and impure, the glory of God and the power of darkness, that you may know hereafter the two powers and never be influenced or overcome by that wicked one.”²²⁰

In addition to their ancient use as part of the most sacred forms of prayer and as part of ritual and actual heavenly ascent, a knowledge of keywords, signs, and tokens was apparently seen as important in detecting evil spirits.²²¹ For example, extracanonical accounts of Adam and Eve’s experiences after they leave the Garden of Eden are replete with stories concerning the unsuccessful attempts of Satan to deceive Adam and Eve, who become increasingly immune to his wiles through the knowledge and protective power provided by angelic teachings, covenants, and ordinances. For example, the *Life of Adam and Eve* tells of how Adam and Eve, following their transgression and expulsion from Eden, spent a specified number of days of penance standing in the Jordan River. During Eve’s penance, Satan appears as an angel of light to persuade her to leave the river prematurely. Stephen Robinson notes the significant warning that Adam had previously given her: “‘Take great care of thyself. Except thou seest me and all my tokens,²²² depart not out of the water, nor trust in the words, which are said to thee, lest thou fall again into the snare.’ Thus, properly equipped, Eve does not succumb to Satan the second time, according to the Slavonic version.”²²³

In a version of the same story that is shown in Figure 34, Adam asked God to drive the Adversary from his presence — whereupon the Devil vanished.²²⁴ Adam’s upraised arm is “a gesture of both speech and action”²²⁵ that could be taken as an oath-, covenant-, or prayer-related movement,²²⁶ a warning for Eve,²²⁷ and/or an attempt to repel Satan.²²⁸

When did Joseph Smith first learn about the keys by which he could detect true messengers from false ones? Arguably, on May 15, 1829, when John the Baptist restored the “keys of the ministering of angels”²²⁹ to him and Oliver Cowdery.²³⁰ During this experience “on the banks of the Susquehanna,”²³¹ it seems that Satan appeared to deceive the Prophet and thwart the restoration of priesthood authority. As the Prophet later recorded, Michael (or Adam) then came to his aid, “detecting the devil when he appeared as an angel of light!”²³² “Thus,” according to Joseph Fielding McConkie and Craig Ostler, “the right to receive the ministrations of angels and the ability to discern true messengers of God from counterfeits came before the Church was organized.”²³³ Significantly, an account of how Moses recognized and successfully commanded Satan to depart by the use of a key that included invoking the name of “the Only Begotten” was translated by Joseph Smith in 1830, about one year after this experience.²³⁴

3.3 Earthly Ordinances as Reflections of Heavenly Ordinances

Hugh Nibley has described how the instructional approach of the temple endowment provides needed flexibility while affording remarkable stability:²³⁵

The Mormon endowment ... is frankly a model, a presentation in figurative terms. As such it is flexible and adjustable; for example, it may be presented in more languages than one and in more than one medium of communication. But since it does not attempt to be a picture of reality but only a model or analog to show us how things work, setting forth a pattern of man’s life on earth with its fundamental whys and wherefores, it does not need to be changed or adapted greatly through the years; it is a remarkably stable model.

Moreover, consistent with the idea that the temple is a model or analog rather than a picture of reality is the distinction that Elder John A. Widtsoe made between earthly and heavenly ordinances:²³⁶

Great eternal truths make up the Gospel plan. All regulations for man's earthly guidance have their eternal spiritual counterparts. The earthly ordinances of the Gospel are themselves only reflections of heavenly ordinances. For instance, baptism, the gift of the Holy Ghost, and temple work are merely earthly symbols of realities that prevail throughout the universe; but they are symbols of truths that must be recognized if the Great Plan is to be fulfilled. The acceptance of these earthly symbols is part and parcel of correct earth life, but being earthly symbols they are distinctly of the earth and cannot be accepted elsewhere than on earth. In order that absolute fairness may prevail and eternal justice may be satisfied, all men, to attain the fulness of their joy, must accept these earthly ordinances. There is no water baptism in the next estate nor any conferring of the gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of earthly hands. The equivalents of these ordinances prevail no doubt in every estate, but only as they are given on this earth can they be made to aid, in their onward progress, those who have dwelt on earth.

4. The Restoration of Temple Ordinances

What did Joseph Smith know about modern temple ordinances by 1836? Plenty, it seems. If it weren't for the additional significant event of April 3, 1836, when Moses, Elias, and Elijah appeared to the Prophet in the Kirtland Temple to restore priesthood keys, we could have almost given the *terminus post quem* for Joseph Smith's knowledge of the doctrines and principles relating to temple matters we have outlined at a point three years earlier, 1833. And given Joseph Smith's disinclination to share the details of the most sacred events and doctrines publicly,²³⁷ it is certainly possible that he received specific knowledge about the temple matters discussed above even earlier than that.

An analysis of the historical record provides evidence that significant components of priesthood and temple doctrines, authority, and ordinances were revealed to the Prophet during the course of his early ministry. Further, many aspects of Latter-day Saint temple worship are well attested in the Bible and elsewhere in antiquity. In the minds of early Mormons, what seems to have distinguished authentic temple worship from the many scattered remnants that could be found elsewhere was the divine authority of the priesthood through which these ordinances had been restored and could now be administered in their fulness. Coupled

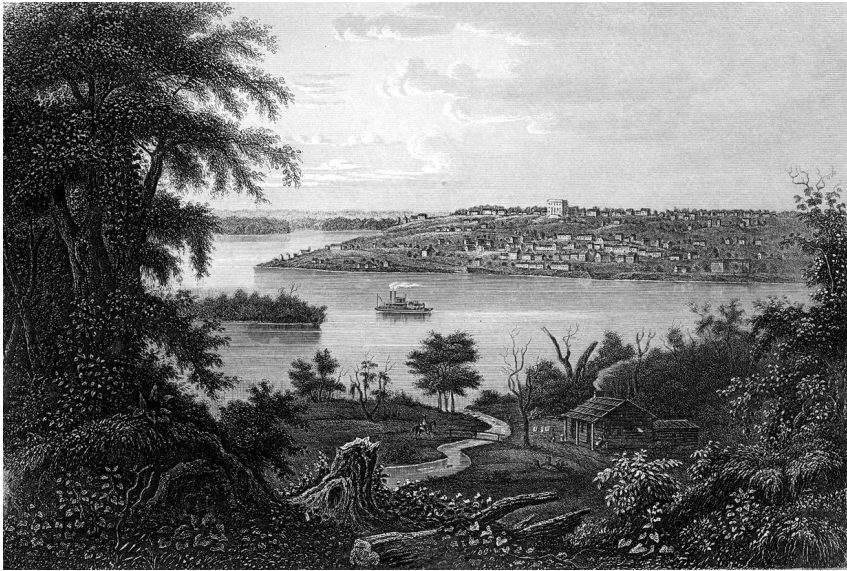


Figure 35. *View of Nauvoo from Iowa, 1850s*

with the restoration of the ordinances themselves is the rich flow of modern revelation that clothes them with glorious meanings. Of course, temple ordinances — like all divine communication — must be adapted to different times, cultures, and practical circumstances. Happily, since the time of Joseph Smith, necessary alterations of the ordinances have been directed by the same authority that first restored them in our day.²³⁸

Jesus’s parable of the householder finds application in the process by which modern temple ordinances came forth. As an “expert scribe”²³⁹ and a “good householder who makes suitable and varied provision for his household,”²⁴⁰ Joseph Smith restored ancient temple worship by bringing “out of his treasure things new and old”²⁴¹ — perhaps better translated as “things that are new and yet old.”²⁴² In other words, as one New Testament scholar observed, the “secrets themselves are not really ‘new’; they are ‘things hidden since the foundation of the world,’²⁴³ and it is only their revelation which is new.”²⁴⁴ In the same way, the Nauvoo Temple ordinances should not be regarded as a new and surprising development so much as the full-fledged blossoming of ideas and priesthood authority that had already budded in Kirtland — or even, arguably, when Joseph Smith experienced his First Vision.²⁴⁵ As Don Bradley perceptively observes:²⁴⁶

The faith [Joseph Smith] preached at the close of his career undeniably differed from the faith he preached at its opening. Yet eminent Yale literary critic Harold Bloom has asserted that Smith’s “religion-making imagination” was of the “*unfolding*” rather than the *evolving* type, that his religious system did not transform so much by the incorporation of others’ ideas but by the progressive outworking of his original vision.

To members of the Church who know and love the temple the results of the progressive unfolding of that original vision are palpable. Indeed it might be said that the temple ordinances revealed by the Prophet, like the scripture that came through him, “gave his believing [followers] a sense of what was experientially real, not merely philosophically true.”²⁴⁷ In an 1832 revelation, Joseph Smith was told:²⁴⁸

And this greater priesthood administereth the gospel and holdeth the key of the mysteries of the kingdom, even the key of the knowledge of God. Therefore, in the ordinances thereof, the power of godliness is manifest. And without the ordinances thereof, and the authority of the priesthood, the power of godliness is not manifest unto men in the flesh; For without this no man can see the face of God, even the Father, and live.

These verses make it clear that for the Prophet, like John the Apostle, “the specific gift of the power of knowing God is ultimately equated with eternal life itself.”²⁴⁹ However, as Hugh Nibley reminds us, “You comprehend others only to the degree you are like them.”²⁵⁰ This is the whole purpose of the temple: Through the divine influence that flows into all those who learn and live the truths that are made available through participating in temple ordinances and keeping the associated covenants,²⁵¹ the priesthood becomes a channel of personal revelation²⁵² and a power that enables one to become like God, experiencing “the power of godliness.”²⁵³

It is my personal witness that the LDS temple ordinances are, as Elder John A. Widtsoe affirmed, “earthly symbols of realities that prevail throughout the universe.”²⁵⁴ They point to heavenly meanings beyond themselves — meanings that can be revealed through our “minding true things by what their mock’ries be.”²⁵⁵ The ordinances perform an essential earthly function,²⁵⁶ providing “the means both of receiving instruction and demonstrating obedience,”²⁵⁷ helping make us ready, someday, to “behold the face of God,”²⁵⁸ as did Moses.



Figure 36. Joseph Brickey, 1973-: *Moses Seeing Jehovah*, 1998

In brief, those who participate in the ordinances of the temple are shown in ritual what Moses and others throughout ancient and modern history have experienced in actuality.

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Endnotes

1. J. Smith Jr., *Teachings*, 12 November 1835, p. 91. Compare this statement from 1834: “We all admit that the Gospel has ordinances, and if so, had it not always ordinances, and were not its ordinances always the same?” (*ibid.*, 22 January 1834, pp. 59-60).

Of course, the Nauvoo Temple ordinances had not been given to the Saints at the time these statements were made, so it is evident that the Prophet is making a broad claim about the antiquity of saving ordinances here, including the general “order of the house of God,” and not making an assertion about the completeness and exactness in every detail of the ordinances the Saints had then received. After the Nauvoo endowment was administered on 4 May 1842, Elder Willard Richards wrote: “In this council was instituted the ancient order of things for the first time in these last days” (ibid., 4 May 1842, p. 237) — asserting both the antiquity of the ordinance and the fact that this order was new to the select group to whom it had been given.

Though the Prophet revealed on 4 May 1842 “all those plans and principles by which anyone is able to secure the fulness of those blessings which have been prepared for the Church of the Firstborn” (ibid., 4 May 1842, p. 237), none of those who were part of the select group who received temple ordinances on that date had actually received the fulness of the priesthood, for which they would need to be made kings and priests rather than mere candidates (see J. Smith Jr., *Words*, p. 304 n. 21; J. M. Bradshaw, *Temple Themes in the Oath*, pp. 53-58). Note that even to be “ordained Kings and Priests” is limited in the sense that it is “all that can be given on earth” (Brigham Young, quoted in *Heber C. Kimball Journal*, kept by William Clayton, 26 December 1845, Church Archives, as cited in J. Smith, Jr., *Words*, p. 304 n. 21) — further blessings must be obtained as part of heavenly ordinances (J. M. Bradshaw, *Temple Themes in the Oath*, pp. 53-58).

Further emphasizing the eternal nature of the ordinances and the importance of maintaining their integrity, Joseph Smith said (J. Smith, Jr., *Teachings*, 11 June 1843, p. 308; cf. ibid., 1 September 1842, p. 264; ibid., 5 October 1840, pp. 168-173; JST Genesis 14:27-29; D&C 128:5, 18):

Ordinances instituted in the heavens before the foundation of the world, in the priesthood, for the salvation of men, are not to be altered or changed. All must be saved on the same principles. . . . If a man gets a fulness of the priesthood of God he has to get it in the same way that Jesus Christ obtained it, and that was by keeping all the commandments and obeying all the ordinances of the house of God.

Earlier that same year, the Prophet stated (ibid., 22 January 1843, pp. 21-22):

Some say that the kingdom of God was not set up on the earth until the day of Pentecost ... but, I say in the name of the Lord, that the kingdom of God was set up on the earth from the days of Adam to the present time. Whenever there has been a righteous man on earth unto whom God revealed His word and gave power and authority to administer in His name, and where there is a priest of God — a minister who has power and authority from God to administer in the ordinances of the Gospel and officiate in the priesthood of God, there is the kingdom of God. ... Where there is a prophet, a priest, or a righteous man unto whom God gives His oracles, there is the kingdom of God; and where the oracles of God are not, there the kingdom of God is not.

2. Cf. Raymond O. Faulkner, *A Concise Dictionary of Middle Egyptian* (Oxford: Griffith Institute, 1999), 131-32. R. G. Scott, To Acquire; R. G. Scott, How To Obtain.
3. See, e.g., R. O. Barney, *Joseph Smith's Visions*; R. Nicholson, *Cowdery Conundrum*. As a specific illustration of the sacred regard in which the Prophet held the temple ordinances, Andrew Ehat reminds us that none of the nine participants who were present when the Nauvoo endowment was first bestowed on 4 May 1842 recorded the events of that day in their personal reminiscences. In explanation of this fact, Ehat observes (A. F. Ehat, *Who Shall Ascend*, p. 49):

The Prophet Joseph Smith had asked each participant not to record the specifics of what they had heard and seen that day. Six weeks later, in a letter to his fellow apostle Parley P. Pratt, Heber C. Kimball wrote that these favored few had received “some precious things through the Prophet on the priesthood that would cause your soul to rejoice.” However, he added, “I cannot give them to you on paper for they are not to be written” (Heber C. Kimball to Parley p. Pratt, 17 June 1842, *Heber C. Kimball Papers*, LDS Church History Library). They were just too sacred.

4. See, e.g., Psalm 2:7; John 17:3; 1 John 3:1-3; D&C 76:24; 84:19-23, 38; 93:1; 132:24.
5. For example, Isaiah 6, 2 Peter 1:10, Ether 2-4, Moses 1, 7. For more on this topic, see J. M. Bradshaw, *Temple Themes in the Oath*, pp. 59-65.

6. J. E. Talmage, *The House of the Lord*, pp. 159-161. Cf. the words of Oliverly Cowdery (but sometimes mistakenly attributed to Joseph Smith [see A. F. Ehat, *Who Shall Ascend*, p. 62 n. 11]) in J. Smith Jr., *Teachings*, 22 January 1834, p. 51. President David O. McKay made the following statement (as remembered in T. G. Madsen, *House*, p. 282):

I believe there are few, even temple workers, who comprehend the full meaning and power of the temple endowment. Seen for what it is, it is the step-by-step ascent into the Eternal Presence. If our young people could but glimpse it, it would be the most powerful spiritual motivation of their lives.

About the difference between coming into the presence of God through heavenly ascent and through temple ritual, Andrew F. Ehat writes (A. F. Ehat, *Who Shall Ascend*, pp. 53-54):

As Moses' case demonstrates [see Moses 1], the actual endowment is not a mere representation but is the reality of coming into a heavenly presence and of being instructed in the things of eternity. In temples, we have a staged representation of the step-by-step ascent into the presence of the Eternal while we are yet alive. It is never suggested that we have died when we participate in these blessings. Rather, when we enter the celestial room, we pause to await the promptings and premonitions of the Comforter. And after a period of time, mostly of our own accord, we descend the stairs, and resume the clothing and walk of our earthly existence. But there should have been a change in us as there certainly was with Moses when he was caught up to celestial realms and saw and heard things unlawful to utter.

7. See, e.g., J. M. Bradshaw, *God's Image 1*, pp. 37ff; A. A. Orlov, *Garment of Azazel*, p. 48; J. M. Bradshaw, *Moses Temple Themes* (2014), pp. 26-50; J. M. Bradshaw et al., *God's Image 2*, pp. 82-85.
8. H. W. Nibley, *Apocryphal*, p. 312; cf. pp. 310-311. See W. W. Isenberg, *Philip*, 85:14-16, p. 159.
9. Joseph Smith — *History* 1:14-20.
10. *Ether* 3:6-28. For a detailed analysis, see M. C. Thomas, *Brother of Jared*.
11. See J. M. Bradshaw, *LDS Book of Enoch*.
12. J. E. Talmage, *The House of the Lord*, p. 83.

13. See, e.g., J. H. Walton, *Ancient*, pp. 123-127; H. W. Nibley, *Meanings and Functions*, pp. 1460-1461. For more on the structure and function of the story of Creation found in Genesis 1 and arguably used in Israelite temple liturgy, see, e.g., J. H. Walton, *Lost World*; M. S. Smith, *Priestly Vision*. W. P. Brown, *Seven Pillars* provides perspectives on other biblical accounts of creation. See J. H. Walton, *Genesis 1*, pp. 17-22, for a useful table that highlights similarities and differences among creation accounts in the ancient Near East. Cf. W. P. Brown, *Seven Pillars*, pp. 21-32.
14. J. E. Talmage, *The House of the Lord*, p. 83.
15. For example, T. D. Alexander, *From Eden*, pp. 20-23; G. K. Beale, *Temple*, pp. 66-80; G. J. Wenham, *Sanctuary Symbolism*; J. M. Lundquist, *Reality*; D. W. Parry, *Garden*; J. A. Parry et al., *Temple in Heaven*; T. Stordalen, *Echoes*, pp. 112-116, 308-309; R. N. Holzapfel et al., *Father's House*, pp. 17-19; J. Morrow, *Creation*; D. R. Seely et al., *Crown of Creation*.
16. For more on the correspondence between the symbolism of the Tree of Knowledge and the temple veil, see J. M. Bradshaw, *Tree of Knowledge*.
17. In most depictions of Jewish temple architecture, the menorah is shown as being *outside* the veil — in contrast to the Tree of Life, which is at the holiest place in the Garden of Eden. However, Margaret Barker cites evidence that, in the first temple, a Tree of Life was symbolized *within* the Holy of Holies (e.g., M. Barker, *Hidden*, pp. 6-7; M. Barker, *Christmas*, pp. 85-86, 140; J. M. Bradshaw, *God's Image 1*, pp. 366-367). 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 (M. Barker, *Older*, p. 221, see pp. 221-232). 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 (M. Lidzbarski, *Ginza*, GL 1:1, p. 429:3-20; cf. E. S. Drower, *Prayerbook*, 49, pp. 45-46).
18. D. W. Parry, *Garden*, pp. 135.
19. Cf. John 16:28.
20. For official Church descriptions and photographs of modern LDS temple clothing, see *Sacred Temple Clothing*. For detailed studies

of ancient temple clothing, see, e.g., H. W. Nibley, *Vestments*; D. W. Parry, *Ancient Sacred Vestments*; B. T. Ostler, *Clothed*; J. A. Tvedtnes, *Clothing*; S. D. Ricks, *Garment*; M. B. Brown, *Gate*, *passim*.

21. Genesis 3:7, 21; Moses 4:13, 27.

22. Exodus 28.

23. J. A. Tvedtnes, *Clothing*, pp. 662-695.

24. Daniel Tyler stated (H. L. Andrus et al., *They Knew* (2004), p. 48; see also excerpts in M. B. Brown, *Exploring*, p. 90):

A short time prior to his arrival at my father's house, my mother, Elizabeth Comins Tyler had a remarkable vision. Lest it might be attributed to the evil one, she related it to no person, except my father, Andrew Tyler, until the Prophet arrived, on his way to Canada, I think. She saw a man sitting upon a white cloud, clothed in white from head to foot. He had a peculiar cap, different from any she had ever seen, with a white robe, underclothing, and moccasins. It was revealed to her that this person was Michael, the Archangel.

The Prophet informed her that she had had a true vision. He had seen the same angel several times. It was Michael, the Archangel.

Other sources verify the circumstances of the reported incident, providing evidence that Daniel Tyler first met Joseph Smith when the Prophet stopped at his father's house in West Springfield, Erie County, Pennsylvania on October 6-8, 1833 — see, e.g., J. Smith Jr., *Documentary History*, 1:416-418.

25. The undergarment served as an earnest of the heavenly garment that would be restored to them through their faithfulness. In the context of rituals and ordinances based on the experiences of Adam and Eve, Nibley explained (H. W. Nibley, *Message 2005*, p. 489): "The garment [of light] represents the preexistent glory of the candidate. . . . When he leaves on his earthly mission, it is laid up for him in heaven to await his return. It thus serves as security and lends urgency and weight to the need for following righteous ways on earth. For if one fails here, one loses not only one's glorious future in the eternities to come but also the whole accumulation of past deeds and accomplishments in the long ages of preexistence." Cf. A. A. Orlov, *Garment of Azazel*, p. 49-53.

26. H. W. Nibley, *Message 2005*, pp. 489-490.
27. See G. A. Anderson, *Perfection*, p. 122.
28. See J. M. Bradshaw, *God's Image 1*, pp. 234-240.
29. E. T. Benson, Vision. Besides the statements by President Benson cited in this chapter, other summaries of the temple covenants by General Authorities can be found in J. E. Faust, *Who Shall Ascend*, p. 4; B. R. McConkie, *Obedience*; G. B. Hinckley, *Teachings 1997*, 10 April 1996, p. 147; J. E. Talmage, *House of the Lord*, p. 55; B. K. Packer, *Holy Temple*, p. 163; R. D. Hales, *Return*, pp. 4-5. Note that “*such higher principles as sacrifice and consecration are to the higher ordinances what the principles of faith and repentance are to the preparatory ordinances*” (B. C. Hafen and M. K. Hafen, *Contrite Heart*, p. 56, emphasis in original).
30. J. M. Bradshaw, *LDS Book of Enoch*; D. Calabro, *Joseph Smith and the Architecture of Genesis*; M. J. Johnson, *Lost Prologue*.
31. M. J. Johnson, *Lost Prologue*, pp. 23-24.
32. *Moses 7:69*.
33. *Moses 8:30*. In the book of *Moses*, Enoch's people are translated, so that they will never taste of mortal death, but nowhere is it explicitly asserted that they received eternal life and exaltation at that time, in the full sense of *D&C 132:29* and *Moses 1:39*. Of course, the endless life of Enoch's people and the untimely death of the wicked in the Flood *do* prefigure the ultimate fates of eternal life or spiritual death for the most righteous and most wicked of God's children.
34. J. W. Welch, *Temple in the Book of Mormon*, p. 373. For more extensive discussions, see J. W. Welch, *Sermon*; J. W. Welch, *Light*.
35. D. N. Freedman, *Nine 2001*, p. 1. For a full exposition of the argument, see D. N. Freedman, *Nine 2000*.
36. *Matthew 22:23–33*. See S. H. Faulring et al., *Original Manuscripts*, pp. 57–58. The preface to the 1981 LDS edition of *D&C 132* states that relevant “doctrines and principles . . . had been known by the Prophet since 1831.” For detailed studies, see D. W. Bachman, *New Light*; D. W. Bachman, *Authorship*. Vestiges of the Prophet's early encounters with these marriage passages in *Genesis* and *Matthew 22* seem to be reflected in some portions of *D&C 132:1–40* though, as with many of the other revelations in the *Doctrine and Covenants*, the final

form of the revelation clearly reflects continued development of these doctrines over succeeding years.

Elder Carlos E. Asay described the blessings of the sealing ordinances as (Carlos E. Asay, *In the Lord's Service: A Guide to Spirituatl Development*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1990, p. 11, as cited in B. C. Hafen and M. K. Hafen, *Contrite Heart*, p. 77):

pertaining to the prospects of (1) participating in the first [that is, celestial] resurrection, (2) all the blessings of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and (3) the [exalted] blessings of powers and kingdoms.

37. W. W. Phelps to Sally Phelps, May 26, 1835, cited in B. A. Van Orden, *Writing to Zion*, p. 550.

38. W. W. Phelps, Letter 8, p. 130. See 1 Corinthians 11:11. For more on this statement by Phelps, see D. W. Bachman, *New Light*, pp. 28-29. Thanks to Jacob Rennaker for pointing me to this reference.

M. B. Brown, *Gate*, p. 308 notes that sometime between 2 February and 2 July 1833, Joseph Smith would have translated JST Exodus 34:1-2, which was modified by him to read as follows (alterations shown in italics): “Seek ye out of the book of the Lord, and read *the names written therein*; No one of these shall fail; none shall want [i.e., lack] *their mate*; for my mouth it hath commanded, and *my spirit* it hath gathered them.”

Regarding the promise of becoming a son or daughter of God in the fullest possible sense through divine adoption, see B. C. Hafen and M. C. Hafen, *Contrite Spirit*, pp. 78-83. See also Romans 8:19; Revelation 21:7; 3 Nephi 9:17; Moroni 7:48; Moses 6:68; 7:1.

39. See, e.g., J. M. Bradshaw, *Temple Themes in the Oath*, pp. 45-58. References to the fact that Elijah was going to “reveal ... the Priesthood” and the implication that this would involve “the promises made to the fathers” were made by Moroni in his visit to Joseph Smith at a very early date (21 September 1823. See D&C 2:1-2).

40. O. Hyde, *Diagram*, p. 23. See also D&C 76:56-59. Cf. J. Smith, Jr., *Teachings*, 27 August 1843, p. 322: “Those holding the fulness of the Melchizedek Priesthood are kings and priests of the Most High God, holding the keys of power and blessings. In fact, that Priesthood is a perfect law of theocracy, and stands as God to give laws to the people, administering endless lives to the sons and daughters of Adam.” See also J. F. Smith, Jr., *Way 1945*, p. 208.

Because of the sacred nature of the ordinance that confers the fulness of the priesthood, it is generally described only in very general terms (see, e.g., B. R. McConkie, *New Witness*, p. 315). Summarizing the exacting requirements expected of those who receive this final ordinance of the temple, Joseph Smith taught (J. Smith Jr., *Teachings*, 20 January 1844, p. 331):

The question is frequently asked, “Can we not be saved without going through all those ordinances?” I would answer: “No, not the fulness of salvation.” Jesus said, “There are many mansions in my Father’s house, and I will go and prepare a place for you” (see John 14:2). “House” here named should have been translated “kingdom”; and any person who is exalted to the highest mansion has to abide a celestial law, and the whole law, too.

Although other temple ordinances had been administered to selected saints in Nauvoo beginning in 1842, the ordinance conferring the fulness of the Melchizedek Priesthood was not administered by the Prophet until the final months of 1843. This ordinance was sometimes referred to as a “second anointing” (J. Smith, Jr., *Journals, 1843-1844*, p. *xxi*). On 6 August 1843, Brigham Young said that “if any in the Church had the fulness of the Melchizedek Priesthood, he did not know it” (B. Young, 6 August 1843, in J. Smith Jr., *Documentary History*, 5:527). However, on 22 November 1843, he finally received this much-awaited ordinance (R. K. Esplin, *Succession*, p. 315. See also G. M. Leonard, *Nauvoo*, pp. 260-261). In later instructions at the temple, President Young said (*Heber C. Kimball Journal*, kept by William Clayton, 26 December 1845, Church History Library, brackets added, cited in J. Smith Jr., *Words*, p. 304 n. 21. Cf. J. Smith, Jr., *Journals, 1843-1844*, 23 July 1843, p. 66):

Those who ... come in here [i.e., the Nauvoo Temple] and have received their washing and anointing will [later, if faithful,] be ordained Kings and Priests, and will then have received the fulness of the Priesthood, all that can be given on earth. For Brother Joseph said he had given us all that could be given to man on the earth.

In contrast to the priesthood ordinances discussed previously which are available to all faithful members of the Church in this life, this crowning ordinance of the temple is now almost always reserved as a blessing for the hereafter. Indeed, even if the ordinance could

be performed in this life, the realization of the blessings it portends could not be made fully effective in mortality. Emphasizing the anticipatory nature of this ordinance, Brigham Young explained that “a person may be anointed king and priest long before he receives his kingdom” (cited in J. Smith Jr., *Documentary History*, 6 August 1843, 5:527).

41. G. M. Leonard, *Nauvoo*, pp. 260-261; J. Smith, Jr., *Journals, 1843-1844*, *xxi*; 28 September 1843, p. 104; J. Smith Jr., *Record*, 28 September 1843, p. 416. See also R. K. Esplin, *Succession*, pp. 314-315; J. Smith Jr., *Words*, 27 August 1843, pp. 244-247, 303-307 nn.; W. W. Phelps, cited in S. M. Brown, *Paracletes*, pp. 80-81.
42. Genesis 14:18. See also Hebrews 7:1-10, Alma 13:15-19, and JST Genesis 14:25-40.
43. D&C 84:14.
44. Psalm 110:4; Hebrews 5:6-10, 6:20, 7:1-28, and Alma 13:1-19.
45. See D&C 107:2-4.
46. As with all covenants and ordinances, the Savior set the example for His disciples. The Prophet said (J. Smith Jr., *Teachings*, 11 June 1843, p. 308):

If a man gets a fulness of the priesthood of God he has to get it in the same way that Jesus Christ obtained it, and that was by keeping all the commandments and obeying all the ordinances of the house of the Lord.

Summarizing the import of changes made to the Gospel of John, JST John 1:16-18 reads (S. H. Faulring et al., *Original Manuscripts*, p. 443 n. 2, spelling and punctuation standardized, emphasis added to indicate changes made in the JST. See also, generally, M. Barker, *King of the Jews* and J. S. Thompson, *How John's Gospel*):

And as many believe on his name shall receive of his fulness. And of his fulness have all we received, even immortality and eternal life through his grace.

For the law was given through Moses, but *life* and truth came through Jesus Christ.

For the law *was after a carnal commandment, to the administration of death; but the gospel was after the power of*

an endless life, through Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father.

An example of changes Joseph Smith made to clarify the nature of a particular ordinance has to do with the washing of the feet of Jesus's apostles in JST John 13:10 (S. H. Faulring et al., *Original Manuscripts*, NT 2, p. 465, spelling and punctuation standardized, emphasis added to indicate changes. See M. Barker, *King of the Jews*, pp. 376-381; B. R. McConkie, *NT Commentary*, 1:707-711; B. R. McConkie, *Mortal Messiah*, 4:36-41; J. E. Talmage, *Jesus the Christ*, pp. 552-553, 574):

Jesus saith to him, He that *has washed his hands and his head*, needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit; and ye are clean, but not all. *Now this was the custom of the Jews under the law; wherefore, Jesus did this that the law might be fulfilled.*

Elder Talmage specifically terms Jesus' act an "ordinance of the holy priesthood," saying that it "was more than mere service for personal comfort, and more than an object-lesson of humility" (*ibid.*, p. 553. Cf. B. R. McConkie, *Mortal Messiah*, 4:36). Specifically, Elder McConkie characterized the Savior's intent in performing this ordinance for the apostles as being "to seal his friends up unto eternal life in his Father's kingdom" (*ibid.*, 4:48).

Consider also the revelations and teachings of Joseph Smith relating to the two Comforters mentioned in John 14 (D&C 130:3; J. Smith Jr., *Teachings*, 27 July 1839, pp. 149-151. See also J. M. Bradshaw, *Temple Themes in the Oath*, pp. 73-79, 93-94; B. R. McConkie, *NT Commentary*, pp. 734-741; B. R. McConkie, *Mortal Messiah*, 4:74-78). It is not unlikely that the Prophet's understanding of these verses, as with John 12-13, came to him in the course of his Bible translation efforts that occurred sometime between January and July 1832 (S. H. Faulring et al., *Original Manuscripts*, p. 69). Note that we cannot be sure of the date of the change to John 12:7 because it was made on a small piece of paper pinned to the JST manuscript that contained "changes made after the original writing that were to be inserted in the text on the pages to which they were attached" (*ibid.*, p. 73).

Moreover, sometime between January and July 1832 Joseph Smith made significant changes in JST Hebrews 6:1-9, 7:3, 18-22, 26-27 relating to Melchizedek (*ibid.*, pp. 539-541). Additionally, in the NT 2

manuscript for Hebrews chapter 5, it was noted that “the seventh and eighth verses of this chapter are a parenthesis alluding to Melchizedek and not to Christ” (ibid., p. 537, spelling standardized).

Finally, a significant example of changes made by Joseph Smith that relate to temple ordinances received subsequent to the endowment and marriage sealing is in John’s account of the anointing of Jesus by Mary of Bethany. In the Synoptics, this incident is placed as part of the passion narrative that follows the triumphal entry into Jerusalem. John’s earlier setting of this event is a significant difference. The story is presented with “a precise time indication (‘six days before the Passover’) and as a sequel to the raising of Lazarus, in which light it is evidently meant to be understood. This is immediately apparent from ‘Bethany, where Lazarus was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead.’ ‘There,’ verse 2 continues with emphasis, “they made him a supper.’ There, where Jesus had become manifest in all the glory of the One sent by the Father ([John] 1:4, 14), doors were opened for Him and He sat in the midst of His own as a welcome guest” (H. N. Ridderbos, *John*, p. 414).

Since Mark 14:3-9 tells of a similar incident in the house of Simon the Leper, the story of anointing preserved in John 12 may have been the same event (M. Barker, *King of the Jews*, p. 341). Supporting such a conjecture, Craig Keener notes the possibilities that “Lazarus was a former leper also named Simon (double names were not uncommon); Simon was the father of Lazarus, Mary, and Martha; ‘leper’ was a nickname ... or a former state that Jesus had healed” (C. S. Keener, *John*, 2:861). However, noting that the text does not say that the event specifically took place at the house where Lazarus, Mary, and Martha lived, Margaret Barker argues that the location “could have been a religious house, maybe a gathering place,” and that perhaps those who were present “were the people who had preserved the memory of the temple oil” of anointing (M. Barker, *King of the Jews*, p. 342).

If indeed the event took place in Simon the Leper’s house, Julie M. Smith, (*Search, Ponder, and Pray*, p. 271) observes that “the temple has become a leper’s house and that the leper’s house has become a temple.” In this regard, J. D. M. Derrett, No Stone (cf. J. M. Smith, *Search, Ponder, and Pray*, p. 271) notes allusions in Jesus’ cleansing of the temple (Matthew 21:12-13; Mark 11:15-18; John 2:13-25; M. Barker, *King of the Jews*, pp. 191-197) to the cleansing of a leprous house (Leviticus 14:33-53). Smith also sees in the incident the pattern

of the anointing of the king in ancient Israel (e.g., 1 Samuel 10:1), something that would have normally taken place in the temple (J. M. Smith, *Search, Ponder, and Pray*, p. 270).

It would be appropriate for this ordinance to have taken place *prior* to Jesus' triumphal entry as a king into Jerusalem, which event John places immediately following the anointing of Jesus. Indeed, we might regard the combination of the anointing of Jesus and his triumphal entry into Jerusalem (John 12:1-43) as a midrash on Isaiah 52:7-53:12 (S. Hamid-Khani, *Revelation*, pp. 309-310. See also *ibid.*, pp. 116-118):

In the context of this so-called midrash, Mary's anointing of Jesus' feet in John 12:3-7 is seen as an allusion to Isaiah 52:7: "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good tidings, who publishes peace, who brings tidings of good, who publishes salvation, who says to Zion, 'Your God reigns!'" ... The jubilant shouting of the people (John 12:13) echoes the fulfillment of Isaiah 52:8-9. The return of the Lord to Zion, as described in Isaiah, could be seen as fulfilled in the return of Jesus to Jerusalem, which He has previously visited. When the people see Jesus, they see God (cf. John 12:45).

In contrast to Mark 14:3-9, John — whose account, Keener argues, "probably reflects accurate and independent tradition here" (C. S. Keener, *Jesus*, p. 861) — describes the anointing as being of the feet alone rather than including an anointing of the head as one would expect in a kingly investiture. Barker explains Mary's actions in kneeling at the feet of Jesus in terms of her having assumed a posture of worship (see M. Barker, *King of the Jews*, p. 341. Cf. Matthew 28:9). More convincingly, however, Keener cites Culpepper in pointing to a series of structural parallels in John 12 that foreshadow the washing of the Apostles' feet by Jesus in John 13 (C. S. Keener, *John*, p. 859). In contrast to the Apostles, Jesus' feet are already clean, and thus can be anointed and wiped without the customary prior washing.

A. E. Harvey, *Companion 2004*, p. 347, admits that the NRSV translation of the Greek manuscript of John 12:7 leaves us with "no more than a guess at John's meaning," asserting the minimal conclusion that "whatever the exact sense of the words, Mary's action is evidently seen as some sort of anticipation of Jesus' death and burial." On the

other hand, the Joseph Smith Translation makes it clear that, as with the washing of the disciple's feet, we are reading a description of an ordinance being administered by Mary of Bethany, who some have taken to be the wife of Jesus. In JST John 12:7, we read (S. H. Faulring et al., *Original Manuscripts*, NT 2, p. 463, spelling and punctuation standardized, emphasis added to indicate changes. See also JST Mark 14:8 (ibid., p. 351)):

Then said Jesus, Let her alone; *for she hath preserved this ointment until now, that she might anoint me in token of my burial.*

Many years ago William Phipps, Professor of Religion and Philosophy at Davis and Elkins College in West Virginia, wrote an article and a popular book declaring his belief that the Jesus Christ was married (W. E. Phipps, *Was Jesus Married?* See also W. E. Phipps, *Sexuality of Jesus*). A more recent study of this topic is Anthony Le Donne's 2013 book, *The Wife of Jesus*, where the author takes a well-informed and nuanced view of this complex subject. In 2012, Harvard Professor Karen King announced the discovery of the so-called *Gospel of Jesus' Wife* that suggested a married Jesus. However, subsequent studies have led nearly all scholars to the conclusion that the fragment is a modern forgery (see A. Le Donne, *Wife of Jesus*, pp. 61-67). Current evidence from Bible scholarship is, and is almost certain to remain, inconclusive — neither definitively ruling out nor providing sufficient assurance for the possibility that Jesus was married.

Since the time of Jesus, the identities of Mary of Bethany, Mary Magdalene, and the nameless “sinner” who washed and kissed the feet of Jesus in Luke 7 have become confused and conflated (see A. Le Donne, *Wife of Jesus*, pp. 53-68; W. E. Phipps, *Was Jesus Married?* pp. 63-67). For example, *The Gospel of Philip* is an ancient source for the theory that Jesus married, not Mary of Bethany, but Mary Magdalene. Notably, *Philip* discusses marriage as a sacred mystery (see W. W. Isenberg, *Gospel of Philip*, 64:31-65:1, p. 148; M. Scopello et al., *Gospel of Philip*, 64:31-65:1, p. 171), performed in the “mirrored bridal chamber” (see 65:1-2. Isenberg, p. 149; Scopello, p. 172. Cf. *Exegesis on the Soul*, 132:27-133:31 — M. Scopello et al. (1990), p. 195; M. Scopello et al. (2007), pp. 230-231. See discussions of this concept in G. W. MacRae, *House of Revelation*, pp. 184-185; D. Iammarino, *Similarities*; G. Strathearn, *Valentinian Bridal Chamber*, pp. 100-103). Out of all the other women mentioned, Mary Magdalene is singled

out as Jesus' "companion" (= Greek *koinônos*) (59:6-11. Isenberg, p. 145; M. Scopello, p. 167). Noting Jesus' special love for her, including the observation that he "kissed her often on her [mouth]" the disciples are said to have asked Him why He loves her more than all of them (63:30-64:9. Isenberg, p. 148; Scopello, p. 171. See discussion in G. Strathearn, *Valentinian Bridal Chamber*, pp. 97-100).

Mary Magdalene, of course, was "one of Jesus' most faithful companions, for she did not forsake Him even when He was crucified. ... It is significant that all the Synoptics place Mary Magdalene first in each listing of women, just as Peter heads the listing of the apostles" (W. E. Phipps, *Was Jesus Married?*, p. 64). Most importantly, Elder Bruce R. McConkie observes that "the Risen Lord singled out Mary Magdalene to be the first witness, in point of time, of His resurrection. She was the first mortal of all mortals ever to see a resurrected person" (B. R. McConkie, *Mortal Messiah*, 4:265. Cf. J. E. Talmage, *Jesus the Christ*, p. 633).

Significantly, Joseph Smith changes the Savior's instructions to Mary in John 20:17 when she meets the resurrected Lord from "Touch me not" to "*Hold me not*" (S. H. Faulring et al., *Original Manuscripts*, NT 2, p. 467, emphasis added), more precisely meaning "Do not continue to hold me" (= Greek *me mou haptou*) since the "Greek verb tense with the negative means to stop an action in which one had been engaged" (W. E. Phipps, *Sexuality of Jesus*, p. 132. Cf. B. R. McConkie, *Mortal Messiah*, 4:264). Elder McConkie explains (*ibid.*):

We cannot believe that the caution which withheld from Jesus the embrace of Mary was anything more than the building of a proper wall of reserve between intimates who are now on two sides of the veil. If a resurrected brother appeared to a mortal brother, or if a resurrected husband appeared to a mortal wife, would they be free to embrace each other on the same terms of intimacy as had prevailed when both were mortals?

Nothing in the teachings of the LDS Church would be inconsistent with the idea of Jesus being married. Indeed, the Prophet Joseph Smith seems to have paid particular attention to the story of the anointing and apparently also on its implications for the likelihood of a marital relationship between Jesus and Mary of Bethany (J. M. Smith, *Search, Ponder, and Pray*, pp. 277, 278):

Unlike most JST revisions or expansions, [the changes in John 12 and Mark 14 do] not correct false doctrine, add information, harmonize the text with other passages, or clarify the text. ... [Instead, they assure] that we don't miss the key ideas that this story is about the anointing — not the objection — and that the woman's deeds parallel Jesus' words. The mere fact that a JST version exists also tells us that this story was a focus of attention for Joseph Smith.

As an example of a retrospective report connecting these teachings with the the Prophet, Elder Joseph F. Smith is reported by Elder Wilford Woodruff (both of them Apostles at that time) to have stated that the teachings about Jesus being the bridegroom at the marriage in Cana and in conjunction with other related New Testament passages originated with Joseph Smith. He is said to have specifically mentioned as evidence for their close relationship the scriptural passage about the anointing of Jesus' feet by Mary of Bethany. He also remembered as having commented on Jesus' close relationship with Martha, as well as on the record of Mary Magdalene's encounter with Jesus at the tomb (*Journal of Wilford Woodruff*, July 22, 1883, in W. Woodruff, *Waiting*, pp. 360-361, spelling, punctuation, and grammar modernized):

Joseph F. Smith ... spoke upon the marriage in Cana at Galilee. He thought Jesus was the Bridegroom and Mary and Martha the brides. He also referred to Luke 10th chapter, 38 to 42 verses. Also John 11th chapter, 2 and 5 verses, John 12th chapter, 3rd verse, John 20:8 to 18. [The Prophet] Joseph Smith spoke upon these passages to show that Mary and Martha manifested [a] much closer relationship than merely a believer, which looks consistent. He did not think that Jesus, who descended through polygamous families from Abraham down and who fulfilled all the law, even baptism by immersion, would have lived and died without being married.

While not drawing a definite conclusion about whether or not Jesus was the bridegroom for the marriage at Cana, Elder James E. Talmage wrote of Mary, the mother of Jesus: "She manifested concern and personal responsibility in the matter of providing for the guests. Evidently her position was different from that of one present by ordinary invitation. Whether this circumstance indicates

the marriage to have been that of one of her own immediate family, or some more distant relative, we are not informed” (J. E. Talmage, *Jesus the Christ*, pp. 135-136). Then in further commentary on this event, Elder Talmage wrote of Jesus’ response to Mary’s request for help (*ibid.*, p. 137):

“What have I to do with thee?” He asked and added: “Mine hour is not yet come.” Here we find no disclaimer of the ability to do what she apparently wanted Him to do, but the plain implication that He, not she, must decide when that time had come. She understood His meaning, in part at least; and contented herself by instructing the servants to do whatsoever He directed. Here again is evidence of her position of responsibility and domestic authority at the social gathering.

Despite the personal opinions expressed by various Church authorities, the doctrine that Jesus was married has not been officially adopted by the Church (D. Bills, Claims):

In a statement given to KSL, Dale Bills, a spokesman for The Church of Jesus Christ stated: “The belief that Christ was married has never been official Church doctrine. It is neither sanctioned nor taught by the Church. While it is true that a few Church leaders in the mid-1800s expressed their opinions on the matter, it was not then, and is not now, Church doctrine.”

47. D&C 124:39.

48. See J. Smith Jr., *Teachings*, 4 May 1842, p. 237; J. Smith Jr., *Documentary History*, 4 May 1842, 5:1–2. The account given in these sources is a later expansion by Elder Willard Richards of an entry he made in the daily record he had been assigned to keep for Joseph Smith (J. Smith Jr. et al., *Journals*, 1841-1843, pp. 53–54, spelling, grammar, and punctuation standardized):

4 May 1842, Wednesday
 ... In council in the President’s and General Offices with Judge [James] Adams, Hyrum Smith, Newell K. Whitney, William Marks, William Law, George Miller. Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, and Willard Richards. [illegible] and giving certain instructions concerning the

priesthood. [illegible], etc. on the Aaronic Priesthood to the first [illegible] continuing through the day.

Additional background for this entry is given by the editors of this Joseph Smith Papers volume in a footnote (*ibid.*, p. 54 n. 198, with my standardization of spelling, grammar, and punctuation of Richards' statements):

[Willard] Richards, who participated in the events of 4 May 1842, made the brief summary of Joseph Smith's daylong temple instruction in this journal entry and also prepared the following description of the new endowment, which later became part of the Joseph Smith multivolume manuscript history: Joseph Smith instructed those present "in the principles and order of the Priesthood, attending to washings, anointings, endowments and the communication of keys pertaining to the Aaronic Priesthood, and so on to the highest order of the Melchizedek Priesthood, setting forth the order pertaining to the Ancient of Days, and all those plans and principles by which anyone is enabled to secure the fullness of those blessings which have been prepared for the Church of the First Born, and come up and abide in the presence of the Eloheim in the eternal worlds. In this council was instituted the ancient order of things for the first time in these last days." According to Richards, Joseph Smith's instructions "were of things spiritual, and to be received only by the spiritually minded: and there was nothing made known to these men but what will be made known to all the Saints of the last days, so soon as they are prepared to receive, and a proper place is prepared to communicate them, even to the weakest of the Saints; therefore let the Saints be diligent in building the Temple, and all houses which they have been, or shall hereafter be, commanded of God to build, and wait their time with patience, in all meekness, faith, and perseverance unto the end, knowing assuredly that all these things referred to in this council are always governed by the principles of revelation."

Andrew Ehat further explains (A. F. Ehat, *Who Shall Ascend*, pp. 50–51):

As with many other diary entries that [Elder Richards] so seamlessly included in the *History of the Church*, he humbly

wrote the record as if it contained the words of the Prophet Joseph Smith. When he could find a diary containing information relating to the Prophet Joseph that was found nowhere else, he benignly revised and inserted into the *History* the words of others as if they were the Prophet's own. He knew Joseph did not have the time to record these things for himself (see D. C. Jessee, *JS History*, pp. 440, 470, 472–473). In fact, Elder Richards kept the personal diary of the Prophet for the last year-and-a-half of his life. But in the case of the endowment, Elder Richards had been an eyewitness of the events. So the words he would choose for this entry would reflect as much the impact of the events on himself as well as the enlarged understanding of the endowment he had personally gained in the ensuing three years. ... [Thus,] Willard Richards' draft for the Prophet's *History* entry for 4 May 1842 is ... actually the most comprehensive statement made by an original participant, providing us Joseph Smith's explanation of the meaning of the endowment.

The journal entry for the next day, 5 May 1842, reads: "Judge [James] Adams left for Springfield. The others continued in Council as the day previous, and Joseph and Hyrum were [illegible]" (J. Smith Jr. et al., *Journals, 1841-1843*, p. 54, spelling, grammar, and punctuation standardized). Elder Richards' expansion of this entry published in J. Smith Jr., *Documentary History*, 5:2–3 makes it apparent that "Joseph and Hyrum Smith received their endowment from those who had received it from the Prophet the previous day" (J. Smith, Jr., *Papers 1989-1992*, 2:380 n. 2. Cf. J. Smith Jr. et al., *Journals, 1841-1843*, p. 54 n. 199). Ehat explains (A. F. Ehat, *Who Shall Ascend*, p. 61 n. 2):

Only when new priesthood ordinances and powers were being bestowed would the persons who previously bestowed blessings, in turn, receive them back from them to whom they first administered the blessings. This was in accordance with the pattern established when John the Baptist commanded Joseph Smith to first baptize Oliver Cowdery, and then Oliver Cowdery to baptize Joseph Smith after they had been ordained by this heavenly messenger, 15 May 1829 (see Joseph Smith — *History* 1:70–72).

49. Section 76 of the Doctrine and Covenants also contains many significant references to temple themes. For a summary, see

M. B. Brown, *Exploring*, pp. 87-88. See also D&C 88:34, 36, 121, 123-125 and JST Exodus 34:1-2.

50. J. M. Bradshaw, *Moses Temple Themes* (2014); J. M. Bradshaw, *Temple Themes in the Oath*.

51. For a more detailed discussion of this topic, see J. M. Bradshaw, *Temple Themes in the Keys and Symbols*.

52. B. J. Petersen, *Nibley*, p. 354. Petersen added: “This approach earned him a great deal of trust from both General Authorities and from Church members.” Petersen cites a letter of gratitude sent from Elder Dallin H. Oaks to Nibley for his approach to temple scholarship. Along with the letter was a copy of a talk Elder Oaks had given “in which he addressed the manner and extent to which temple ordinances should be discussed outside the temple. Oaks assured Hugh that ‘nothing in this talk is intended to be a criticism of a discouragement of efforts as sensitive as yours. The talk has some targets, but you aren’t one of them’” (ibid., p. 356).

George Mitton recalls Nibley being concerned about the appropriateness of his Egyptian endowment manuscript (H. W. Nibley, *Message 2005*). President Harold B. Lee graciously agreed to read it, and when he had finished he invited Nibley to his office. Nibley was told that there was nothing of concern in what he had written, since he was only describing ancient Egyptian ritual (G. L. Mitton, 22 August 2014).

For Nibley’s views on confidentiality as it relates to temple ordinances, see, e.g., H. W. Nibley, *Sacred*, pp. 553-554, 569-572.

53. D&C 124:34.

54. D&C 124:41.

55. D&C 124:40.

56. D&C 35:18.

57. See M. L. Bowen, *Founded Upon a Rock*, pp. 22-24.

58. A. L. Mauss, *Reflections*, p. 80.

59. The importance of obtaining these essential keys was felt keenly by the early Saints in Nauvoo. Brigham Young recorded: “[S]uch was the anxiety manifested by the Saints to receive the ordinances of [the] Endowment — and no less on our part to have them get the keys of the Priesthood — that I gave myself up entirely to the work

of the Lord in the temple almost night and day” (Brigham Young Office Journal, 1844-1846, Box 71, Folder 4, Brigham Young Papers, 12 January 1846, spelling and punctuation modernized. Compare J. Smith Jr., *Documentary History*, 12 January 1846, 7:567). To satisfy their eagerness to learn, meetings to explain the priesthood ordinances were scheduled in the temple on Sundays during the month of December 1845, but they had to be discontinued when the attic could no longer bear the weight of the growing audience. At one of these meetings, President Heber C. Kimball expressed the spirit of urgency that attended the work: “We cannot rest day nor night until we put you in possession of the [keys of the] priesthood” (*Heber C. Kimball Journal*, 93, December 21, 1845, as excerpted in H. M. Whitney, *Scenes in Nauvoo*, 12:4, p. 26). Elder Amasa Lyman explained that the “portions of the priesthood which [they] had received are all essential matters” (*ibid.*, 12:4, p. 26), providing the keys to unlock the heavens in this life and in eternity. “You have learned how to pray,” said he, “putting you in possession of those keys by which you can ask for things you need and obtain them. This is the key by which to obtain all the glory and felicity of eternal life. It is the key by which you approach God” (*ibid.*, 12:5, p. 34).

60. D&C 132:19. See also v. 18. Cf. B. Young, 3 December 1854, p. 139:

When we talk of the celestial law which is revealed from heaven, that is, the Priesthood, we are talking about the principle of salvation, a perfect system of government, of laws and ordinances, by which we can be prepared to pass from one gate to another, and from one sentinel to another, until we go into the presence of our Father and God.

See also B. Young, 8 July 1855, p. 315; B. Young, 16 February 1868, pp. 163-164; B. Young, 24 May 1863, p. 172; H. C. Kimball, 22 November 1857, p. 63; O. Hyde, 3 January 1858, pp. 154-155.

61. B. Young, *Discourses*, p. 416; B. Young, 6 April 1853 - B, p. 31, emphasis added.

62. See, e.g., S. Mowinckel, *Psalms*, 1:180, 1:181 n. 191; J. H. Eaton, *Psalms Commentary*, 118:19-22, p. 405; J. Gee, Keeper; J. M. Bradshaw et al., Investiture Panel.

63. S. Mowinckel, *Psalms*, 1:181 n. 191.

64. J. H. Eaton, *Psalms Commentary*, 118:19-22, p. 405. See also Psalm 24:3-4.

65. Psalm 118:20.

66. S. Mowinckel, *Psalms*, 1:180.

67. Psalm 24:6. Parry sees an allusion to a prayer circle in this verse (D. W. Parry, Psalm 24).

68. 2 Nephi 31:20. This verse from the Book of Mormon, of course, refers to the actual blessing of eternal life at the end of one's probation rather than to the symbolic representation of that blessing that is experienced in earthly ordinances. Regarding the process of enduring to the end, Elder B. C. Hafen and M. K. Hafen, *Contrite Spirit*, pp. 57-58 observe:

Sometimes ... we refer to the first principles as if they represented the entire process of discipleship. When we do that, "endure to the end" can sound like an afterthought, as if our baptism and confirmation have hooked us like a trout on God's fishing line, and so long as we don't squirm off the hook, He will reel us safely in. Or some assume that "endure to the end" simply describes the "no worries" stage of life, when our main job is to just enjoy frequent trips to our cozy retirement cottage while refraining from doing anything really bad along the way.

But there *is* more. As President Russell M. Nelson has said, "Enduring to the end ... means the endowment and sealing ordinances of the holy temple" (Russell M. Nelson, "Begin with the end in mind," Seminar for New Mission Presidents, June 22, 2014. [For a summary of Elder Nelson's talk, see S. J. Weaver, *Begin Missionary Work*.]). And Noel and Sydney Reynolds, former president and matron of the Mount Timpanogos Utah Temple, believe that "endure to the end" is a gospel principle that is paired with the temple endowment, just as repentance is paired with baptism. President Reynolds said this is the stage when we decide if we really want to become as the Father and the Son are (stake conference talk, Orem Utah Sharon Stake, May 17, 2014). Nephi offered a similarly expansive view of "enduring" — we should "*endure to the end, in following the example of the Son of the living God*" (2 Nephi 31:16, emphasis added). The first principles will always be first —yet they are but the foundation for pressing on toward the Christlike life: "Therefore *not leaving* the principles of

the doctrine of Christ, let us *go on unto perfection*; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, ... [and] baptisms” (JST Hebrews 6:1-2, emphasis added).

69. D. H. Oaks, *To Become*, p. 32. See also J. E. Faulconer, *Self-Image*; D. A. Bednar, *Power to Become*, pp. 1-35.
70. D&C 130:11, emphasis added.
71. R. Guénon, *Symboles*, p. 36.
72. *Ibid.*, p. 36, emphasis added.
73. Genesis 2:19-20.
74. Genesis 17:5, 15; 32:28.
75. D&C 20:77.
76. See D&C 109:22, 26, 79. See also D. H. Oaks, *Taking Upon Us*; D. A. Bednar, *Name*, p. 98.
77. See, e.g., D. A. Bednar, *Power to Become*, pp. 9-10.
78. H. W. Nibley, *Message 2005*, p. 451.
79. Mosiah 5:10, 12.
80. Mosiah 5, verses 11 (“take heed that ye do not transgress, that the name be not blotted out of your hearts”) and 13 (“For how knoweth a man the master whom he has not served, and who is a stranger unto him, and is far from the thoughts and intents of his heart?”).
81. B. R. Foster, *Epic*, pp. 437-438.
82. Talon elaborates (P. Talon, *Enūma Eliš*, p. 27):

The importance of the names is not to be understressed. One of the preserved *Chaldaean Oracles* says: “Never change the Barbarian names” and in his commentary Psellus (in the 11th century) adds “This means: there are among the peoples names given by God, which have a particular power in the rites. Do not transpose them in Greek.” A god may also have more than one name, even if this seems to introduce a difficult element of confusion, at least for us. We can think, for example, of Marduk, who is equated with Aššur and thus named in many texts (especially Assyrian texts written for a Babylonian audience). He then assumes either the aspect of the One himself or the aspect of only an emanation of the

One. The same occurs when Aššur replaces Marduk in the Assyrian version of *Enuma Elish*.

83. E. A. Speiser, *Creation Epic*, 7:140, p. 72. Foster elaborates (B. R. Foster, *Epic*, pp. 437-438):

The poem begins and ends with concepts of naming. The poet evidently considers naming both an act of creation and an explanation of something already brought into being. For the poet, the name, properly understood, discloses the significance of the created thing. Semantic and phonological analysis of names could lead to understanding of the things named. Names, for this poet, are a text to be read by the informed, and bear the same intimate and revealing relationship to what they signify as this text does to the events it narrates. In a remarkable passage at the end, the poet presents his text as the capstone of creation in that it was bearer of creation's significance to humankind.

Of possible relevance is the suggestion in P. Talon, *Enūma Eliš*, pp. 269-270 that the successive mention of the nine gods in the first sixteen lines of *Enuma Elish* might be read with the Assyrian Tree of Life diagram in mind. Talon also observes that the description in Tablet VI of the feast involving the fifty great gods and the seven gods of destinies, wherein the seven assign the place of Ishtar as the daughter of Anu, might be seen as bringing their number to nine and, thus, the diagram to completion.

84. For additional context on this scene, see J. M. Bradshaw et al., *Investiture Panel*, p. 30. The cylinder-seal of Khashkhamer, Patesi of Ishkun-Sin (north Babylonia) and vassal of Ur-Engur, king of Ur, dated ca. 2400 BCE (see N. Isar, *Choros*, Plate 77) strongly resembles this scene, except that the vases of water are absent.
85. John 3:5. See H. W. Nibley, *Message 2005*, p. 164.
86. John 4:14.
87. The full explanation of Ringgenberg, *L'Univers Symbolique*, p. 58 reads as follows:

Nothing can express divine Oneness, since it is incomparable and unfathomable. For this reason, it defies attempts to reduce it to symbols, since symbols show, imagine, compare, relate, transmit, and materialize. There is no God but God: none

other but God can serve as a point of comparison: neither mankind, nor the world, nor contemplation. This supreme and ineffable Reality is evoked by the Sufis when they say “*Huwa*” — “Him.” A sketch of divine Intelligence, on the other hand, can be symbolized and expressed by 99 Names. Inspired by the Qur’an, these Names are the attributes or qualities of God that *can* be expressed. They also define the complete set of cosmic and human realities, as well as the relationship between God and Creation. If man can do nothing more than think about the transcendent unity of God, nothing more than meditate on His Essence, the divine Names can at least become props for thought and a means of meditation and prayer. Certain names evoke the essence of Divinity or its unchangeable qualities. ... Other names evoke instead the power of action that God possesses with respect to His Creation and his creatures. ... One tradition holds that the 100th name is the true Name of God, but that it remains unknowable, as a witness of the unspeakable transcendence of the One. One scholar of the seventeenth century could thus begin a poem by writing: “In the name of He who has no name.”

88. The substance of many of the explanations of this Facsimile can be dated to 1835–1836 (see B. M. Hauglid, *Textual History*, pp. 225-231), although we currently have no specific mention of comments relating to the explanations of Figures 3 and 7 until May 5, 1841 (Report of William I. Appleby in *ibid.*, p. 219). The explanations of Facsimile 2 were first published in the *Times and Seasons* 3/10 (15 March 1842), p. 724 (*ibid.*, p. 222). For translations and commentary on these Figures, see R. D. Draper et al., *Commentary*, pp. 291–292; M. D. Rhodes, Hypocephalus Translation; M. D. Rhodes, *Twenty Years*.

89. An English translation of the Hebrew as “with” is equally suitable to “in” in this context (M. Barker, *Hidden*, p. 44; cf. Matthew 21:9).

The meaning of being “willing to take upon [us] the name of Jesus Christ” in the sacrament is clear in light of temple ordinances (D. H. Oaks, *Taking Upon Us*; D. A. Bednar, *Name*, p. 98; D&C 20:77; 109:22, 26, 79). Truman G. Madsen writes: “You are required as disciples of Christ to come once in seven days and covenant anew to take upon you the name of Jesus Christ. In the house of the Lord you

come to take upon you His name in the fullest sense” (T. G. Madsen, *Temple and Mysteries*, p. 33).

90. Cf., e.g., Revelation 7:3, 14:1, 22:3-4, D&C 133:18.

91. Matthew 10:25.

92. M. Barker, *Revelation*, p. 229.

93. J. Smith Jr., *Teachings*, 13 August 1843, p. 321.

94. This concept is consistent with the self-conception of Jesus, who “saw Himself as the new Temple, the eschatological Temple that had been spoken of by the prophets and was awaited by many Jews of his day” (B. Pitre, *Jesus, the New Temple*, p. 82, see also pp. 59-63).

95. 1 Corinthians 3:16-17.

96. Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata*, 1:23, p. 335.

97. E. R. Goodenough, *Light*, pp. 292-293. M. Barker (Who was Melchizedek) concludes that Melchizedek (*Melchi-zedek* = king of righteousness) might be regarded as much a title as a name. Note that “Melchizedek” is written as two words in Genesis 14, Psalm 110, the Samaritan Pentateuch (S. Lowy, *Principles*, p. 320), the Targums (J. W. Etheridge, *Onkelos*, 14), and 11QMelchizedek (F. G. Martinez, *Melchizedek*, 2:9, p. 140).

In a similar practice, Mandaean children are given four names shortly after birth, one of which is “the most secret and important one” that is “used always (and almost exclusively) in religious rituals” (E. Lupieri, *Mandaeans*, p. 17. Cf. E. S. Drower, *Haran*, p. 32). The number four is also a significant part of initiation in the Mandaean tradition, which includes a testing process involving a series of four ritual handclasps (M. Roper, Adam. Cf. T. M. Compton, *Handclasp*, p. 622).

98. J.-L. Monneret, *Grands*, p. 481 n. 12; cf. M. i. A. A. al-Kisa’i, *Tales*, p. 28; al-Tabari, *Creation*, 1:94-97, pp. 266-269; G. Weil, *Legends*, p. 22.

99. *Qur’an* 2:30-33; cf. the idea of the naming as a test for Adam (vs. Satan) in al-Tabari, *Creation*, 1:97, p. 269; M. J. B. bin Gorion et al., *Mimekor*, 3, 1:6-7; L. Ginzberg, *Legends*, 1:62-64, 5:84-86 n. 35; E. G. Mathews, Jr., *Armenian*, p. 148 and n. 35; J. Neusner, *Genesis Rabbah* 1, 17:4:2, p. 183; M.-A. Ouaknin et al., *Rabbi Éliézer*, 13, pp. 87-88.

100. A. I. A. I. M. I. I. al-Tha’labi, *Lives*, p. 48. Cf. p. 54. See also al-Tabari, *Creation*, 1:120, p. 291.

101. A. I. A. I. M. I. I. al-Tha'labi, *Lives*, p. 54. Cf. al-Tabari, *Creation*, 1:120, p. 291.
102. See, e.g., L. M. Hilton, Hand; J. M. Bradshaw, Ezekiel Mural.
103. D. R. Seely, Raised Hand; D. Calabro, Stretch Forth; D. Calabro, When You Spread; D. Calabro, Understanding.
104. H. W. Attridge et al., *Hebrews*, p. 236. Cf. Exodus 25:16; Hebrews 9:4. For more about the symbolism of these and other ancient temple objects as they related to the higher priesthood, see J. M. Bradshaw, *God's Image 1*, pp. 658-660, 679-681.
105. Hebrews 9:4.
106. J. F. Smith, Jr., *Doctrines*, 2:344.
107. D. Calabro, Stretch Forth, p. 21. See also pp. 21-24 and, e.g., Alma 46:21, Helaman 2:7, D&C 88:133.
108. For more about the symbolism of these and other ancient temple objects as they related to the higher priesthood, see J. M. Bradshaw, *God's Image 1*, pp. 658-660, 679-681.
109. For more on the Eleusinian Mysteries, see *ibid.*, pp. 675-679.
110. T. M. Compton, Token. For a shorter version of this study, see T. M. Compton, Handclasp.
111. See D. Calabro, When You Spread, pp. 23-27.
112. Noting the “many continuities between the [Greek/Hellenistic] mystery religions and early Christianity,” Todd Compton studied parallels in “the climax of the recognition scene [of Greek recognition dramas], with its crucial tokens, and the climax of the mystery ritual, with its tokens.” He observed (T. M. Compton, Handclasp, pp. 612-614):

There are a number of words in Greek and Latin that mean “token” in recognition drama—e.g., *anagnōrismata* (“thinks for making known again”), *spargana* (the swaddling wrappings of the lost child, often figured), *sēmeia* (“signs, marks, signals”). But one of the most interesting token-words is the basis for our word “symbol”: *symbolon* (singular; plural: *symbola*), found as a name for tokens both in recognition and mystery. The word means “things thrown together” (i.e., something thrown together after it has been once broken apart, from *ballo*, “thrown,” and *sun-*, “with or together”).

Liddell, Scott, and Jones, in their *Greek-English Lexicon*, define it thus: “tally, i.e., each of two halves or corresponding pieces of *astragalos* [knuckle-bone] or other object, which two *xenoi* [guest-friends], or any two contracting parties, broke between them, each party keeping one piece, in order to have proof of the identity of the presenter of the other.” Both halves represent their two owners, and each is a symbol of identity, the individual, parted; the halves “thrown together,” unified, are the symbol of the two separate identities merging into one. So the *symbolon* is a precise image both for absolutely unique individuality and perfectly joined unity. No other parts would fit the two *symbolon* halves; paradoxically, their unique identity is what creates their complete unity as represented by the unified token. It is also significant that the perfect fitting together is dependent on a previous breaking. ...

The handclasp and the embrace perfectly express this concept of two separate halves coming together to create a unity; and one of the tokens in the *Rudens* [a recognition drama by Plautus] is a handclasp. Herman shows us an ivory *symbolon* carved in the likeness of two clasped hands. Even more evocative is the moment of high emotion after the recognition scene with token telling (identifying tokens one by one), they are renewing an embrace they had shared years earlier. The parent-child *symbolon*, broken by fate, violent nature, or human greed and malevolence has been renewed.

Compton finds the handclasp (*ibid.*, p. 614):

a perfect *symbolon* image on a human, physical level: two separate hands, symbols of the separate identities of their possessors, are joined, and fingers intertwine to make a new unity, complex yet simple. Though its “secular” use — as a widespread token of recognition, friendship, and agreement — is obvious, it was also co-opted by the mystery religions for use as an emblem for many things: love, initiation, arrival, salvation, union with the god, apotheosis.

For more on the Greek Mysteries and a more complete summary of Compton’s comparative study, see J. M. Bradshaw, *God’s Image 1*, pp. 675-679. For more on the ancient use of the handclasp as a religious symbol, see *ibid.*, pp. 681-686.

113. M. B. Brown, August 9 2008.
114. E. Hennecke et al., *Acts of John*, 94, p. 227. See discussion in N. Isar, *Dance of Adam*, pp. 193-194.
115. Psalm 24:4.
116. D. W. Parry, Psalm 24, p. 61 n. 9.
117. D. A. Bednar, *Clean Hands*, pp. 82-83.
118. D. W. Parry, Psalm 24, p. 60.
119. Philippians 3:10.
120. H. W. Nibley, *Sacred*, p. 557.
121. I. Mika'el, son of Bakhayla, *Godhead*, p. 136; cf. J. M. Bradshaw, *God's Image 1*, Commentary 5:5-b, p. 359; Excursus 37: Traditions About the Role of Abel, p. 617; Endnote 4-32, p. 308; Endnote E-146, p. 736; M. Lidzbarski, *Ginza*, GL 1:1, p. 429; S. C. Malan, *Adam and Eve*, 1:69, pp. 83-84.
122. J. Smith Jr., *Words*, p. 55 n. 29. See Mosiah 13:27-35.
123. See J. M. Bradshaw, *God's Image 1*, Excursus 33: The Restoration of Sacrifice, p. 609. See also H. W. Nibley, *Prayer Circle*, pp. 59-60.
124. N. A. Maxwell, *Deny*.
125. See, for example, Psalm 24:3-4; Job 11:13; Isaiah 1:15-16; Lamentations 3:41.
126. Exodus 19. Cf. A. F. Ehat, *Ordinances*, p. 38.
127. M. H. Graffam, *Salt Lake School*, p. 38. Also see p. 44 of the same book, which gives more of Coltrin's recollections of the Kirtland School of the Prophets: "They opened with prayer. Joseph then gave instructions to prepare their minds. He told them to kneel and pray with uplifted hands." Thanks to David Calabro for this reference.
128. E.g., M. B. Brown, *Handclasp, Temple, King*; D. Calabro, *Divine Handclasp*; S. D. Ricks, *Dexiosis*.
129. See Psalm 27; cf. D&C 76:67. See M. B. Brown, *Israelite Temple*.
130. Psalm 89:13, 21.
131. J. H. Eaton, *Psalms Commentary*, p. 317.
132. A. A. Anderson, *Psalms*, p. 535; H.-J. Kraus, *Psalms*, p. 173.
133. J. C. Reeves, *Heralds*, p. 123; cf. p. 137 n. 80.

134. M. B. Brown, August 9 2008.
135. S. D. Ricks, Dexiosis.
136. J. Smith Jr. et al., *Journals, 1832-1839*, 24 November 1835, pp. 109-110. Two months later, he pronounced upon a couple “the blessings of Abraham Isaac and Jacob and such other blessings as the Lord put into my heart” (20 January 1836, p. 165; cf. 14 January 1836, p. 153).
137. N. Isar, *Choros*, pp. 52-53. Isar notes that some scholars see the imagery primarily as “one of abduction,” with the gesture signifying “the submission of the bride to her husband.” However, as discussed by Isar and other sources she cites, “the bridegroom’s grasp of the wrist also means ‘joining’” (ibid., p. 53 n. 14). See also ibid., pp. 54-57.
138. Ibid., p. 52.
139. Ibid., p. 49.
140. Hebrews 6:19. See vv. 18-20.
141. N. Isar, *Choros*, p. 73.
142. Ibid., p. 73. The imagery recalls a verse from the Jewish-Christian *Odes of Solomon*: “Like the arm of the bridegroom over the bride So is my yoke over those who know me” (J. H. Charlesworth, *Odes*, 42:8).
143. Cf. N. Isar, *Choros*, p. 52. In addition, Isar notes: “The diagonals formed by Christ’s stretched hand and the vertical line of the cross held by Christ describe an invisible, but unmistakable, sacred pattern. This pattern reveals the first letters contained in the [Greek] name [for] Jesus Christ ... [*iota, chi, rho*]” (ibid., p. 52). She further argues that “the hidden geometry inscribed in the image that gives structure to the composition ... forms the axis of a chiasmic pattern” (ibid., p. 52). Reading “what is on a visual model above and below the center of the image, upwards and downwards on the central axis of the body of Christ” she finds that (ibid., p. 70):

The image shows Christ “trampling down death by death,” literally stepping on Satan’s body. The broken doors of hell are now shaped as X, the Greek letter [*chi*]. By breaking the doors, Christ turns them in some sort of propeller (X), properly a chiasmus, to skim the ground and rise up. This ground, a chiasmus-like cross, is the very weapon by which Death is annihilated. This can be read at Daphni in the context of the cross symbolism. There, the *Anastasis* enters in dialogue

with the image of the Crucifixion, placed at the other side of the eastern transept bridging the space across the *bema*, the most sacred part of the church where the great mystery is enacted. What is below the center of the *Anastasis* is not mere repetition, but intensification of the cross symbolism. Christ's movement, trampling down death by death, has a paradoxical course: it is ascension by descending. His movement up may be read as a vigorous leap, a bursting forth while taking hold of Adam's hand.

144. 2 Peter 1:4.

145. Romans 8:17.

146. T. G. Madsen, *Suffering*, p. 234. See Romans 8:17; 2 Corinthians 4:10; Galatians 2:20, 6:17; S. C. Malan, *Adam and Eve*, 1:69, pp. 83-84; I. Mika'el, son of Bakhayla, *Godhead*, p. 136.

147. Translation by Hugh Nibley in H. W. Nibley, *Meanings and Functions*, p. 1461. The translation of the wider passage in Cyril of Jerusalem, *Five*, 20:5, p. 148 reads: “[W]e did not really die, we were not really buried, we were not really crucified and raised again; but our imitation was in a figure, and our salvation in reality. Christ was actually crucified, and actually buried, and truly rose again; and all these things He has freely bestowed upon us, that we, sharing His sufferings by imitation, might gain salvation in reality. O surpassing loving-kindness! Christ received nails in His undefiled hands and feet, and suffered anguish; while on me without pain or toil by the fellowship of his suffering He freely bestows salvation.”

Eugene Seaich sees the term “fellowship” as an ancient technical term, associated with ritual embrace (J. E. Seaich, *Freemasonry*. See also J. E. Seaich, *Ancient Texts* 1995, pp. 826-828):

The ... expression, “fellowship,” which has remained so closely associated with this embrace in Masonic lore, likewise had an ancient origin, being identical to the Greek word, *koinonia*, used to describe the union of Christ and his disciples, who must suffer what the Savior suffered in order to obtain eternal life:

As ye are sharers (*koinonoi*) of the sufferings (of Christ), so shall you also be of the consolation (2 Corinthians 1:5-7).

That I might know him and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings (*koinonian tes pathematon autou*), being conformed to his death, that if possible I may obtain the resurrection from the dead (Philemon 3:10-11).

He has given us precious and very great promises that you might become sharers (*koinonoi*) of the Divine Nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world (2 Peter 1:4).

Additional embraces depicting this saving “fellowship” have been preserved in the early Jewish-Christian *Odes of Solomon*:

Thou hast given us thy fellowship (J. H. Charlesworth, *Odes*, 4).

I have been united to Him. . . . Indeed, he who is joined to Him who is immortal Truly shall become immortal (*ibid.*, 3:7-8).

And Immortal Life embraced me And kissed me. And from that is the Spirit which is within me. And it cannot die because it is life (*ibid.*, 28:7-8).

And I put off darkness, And put on light.

And even I myself acquired members. . . . And his everlasting fellowship (*ibid.*, 21:3-5).

Like the arm of the bridegroom over the bride So is my yoke over those who know me (*ibid.*, 42:8).

The Coptic Gospel of Philip similarly retains the Greek word, *koinonia*, to describe Mary Magdalene’s redemptive relationship with Christ (W. W. Isenberg, *Philip*, 59:8-9, p. 145; 63:33, p. 148), a relationship which apocryphal writers understood to be that of “consort” or “wife” (cf. R. M. Wilson, *Philip*, p. 115). This again reflects the widespread tradition in the Western Church that Mary was the “fallen” human counterpart of the Church, whom Jesus had come to redeem, even as Hosea’s wife, Gomer, had been the counterpart of Yahweh’s fallen “Bride,” the spiritually “dead” Israel (Hosea 1-3). By such fellowship, “the holy united itself to the unholy in order to make it holy” (F. I. Andersen et al., *Hosea*, p. 165; cf. 1 Corinthians 7:14; D&C 74), i.e., shared its Divine Nature with its defunct “partner” (*koinonos*) in order to bring her back to life.

The tradition of the embrace and ceremonial entry into the church and the altar within Catholic liturgy are discussed in M. von Wellnitz, *Liturgy*, pp. 33-34.

148. J. E. Seach, *Ancient Texts* 1995, p. 550; Revelation 13:8; D&C 138:13. Compare this statement from B. C. Hafen and M. K. Hafen (*Contrite Heart*, p. xvi; cf. pp. 3, 48-50, 63-67, 204-238): “[T]he temple is the place where we covenant to unite our sacrifice with [Christ’s] sacrifice, and in that union — in that becoming one with our Master — our eternal lives are born.” Jules Gross notes that “to imitate the ‘passion’ of a hero-savior in order to ensure salvation” is the heart of the mysteries (J. Gross, *Divinization*, p. 87). Note also P. E. S. Thompson’s observation that the story of God’s choosing of Abraham — and later of Israel — “was to demonstrate that it was not an election to privilege ... but to responsibility for all mankind” (cited in A. LaCocque, *Trial*, p. 19).
149. H. W. Nibley, *Sacred*, p. 557. Cf. J. M. Bradshaw, *God’s Image 1*, pp. 884-885:

The symbolism of heavenly ascent was incorporated into Manichaeism scripture and ritual. The “descent of the First Man from the land of light,” his redemption, and his return to the kingdom was a “favorite theme,” and was “in a very real sense the story of each soul” (I. Gardner, *Kephalaia*, p. 42). The *Kephalaia* (ibid., pp. 43-46) speaks of “five lessons” (38:5) that were successively bestowed upon the First Man as he took his leave from the gods, the angels, and the Mother of Life. Later, “when he ascended from the war, he came in to the kingdom of the household of his people by these [same] five mysteries,” performing each of them anew as he was “brought upward out from the struggle” (39:7-11; 39:21). Likewise each disciple will perform these five things in the church, and “the last of these things shall be bequeathed upon them from the right hand of charity” (41:5). In recapitulating the experiences of Adam, these ritual acts also prefigure the actions that Manichaean disciples will perform after death when, “[a]t the time of their coming forth ... the angel who holds the victory prize extends to him the right hand. And it draws him out of the abyss of his body, and accepts him in with the kiss and love. That soul shall make obeisance to its redeemer” (41:11; 41:17-21). He “shall be perfected and increased ... in the household of the

living ones, with the gods and the angels and all the apostles and the chosen. And he receives the crown [...] glory in the life for ever” (41:22-25).

The imagery of separation and reunion embodied in the sacred embrace is also captured in the story of the creation of Eve, where bone and flesh is separated out from Adam’s body in order to form Eve. Subsequently, however, the man and the woman reunite in an embrace to become “one flesh” (M.-A. Ouaknin, *Rabbi Éliézer*, 12, p. 84. Thanks to Matthew B. Brown for this suggestion):

The Holy One ... took one bone of [Adam’s] bones and flesh from his heart, and He made from them a help meet. ... When he awoke from his torpor, he saw her standing before him; immediately, he embraced and kissed her, exclaiming: “Bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh” (Genesis 2:23).

150. S. Zinner, *Vines of Joy*.

151. E. S. Drower, *Water*, p. 106. Likewise, the series of “five signs and five mysteries” in Manichaean ritual are expressed by the “right hand” and the “embrace” (I. Gardner, *Kephalaia*, 9, pp. 43–46). Drower compares the Mandaean rite of *kushta* to practices among the Parsis and Iraqi Jews (E. S. Drower, *Water*, pp. 103-105) and in Eastern Christian churches where the “handclasp accompanied by an embrace or kiss” is given by the priest and then passed on to the rest of the congregation (*ibid.*, pp. 106-110). She further concludes that the ritual use of the handclasp is of “undoubted antiquity,” citing the “hand-ceremony” at Mesopotamian Akītu festival of the New Year that goes back to the third millennium BCE (*ibid.*, p. 102 n. 1).

152. Translated from the German version of M. Lidzbarski, *Ginza*, LG 1:1, p. 429:

Sitil, den Sohn Adams ... stellten ihn an das Wachthaus Silmais, des Schatzmeisters, der die Pflöcke des Glanzes in der Hand hält und die Schlüssel der Kusta auf beiden Armen trägt. Sie öffneten ihm das Tor des Schatzhauses, hoben vor ihm den großen Vorhang der Sicherheit in die Höhe, führten ihn ein und zeigten ihm jenen Weinstock, dessen Inneres Glanz. ... Sie essen, und die Wonnigkeit des Lebens kommt und legt sich über sie. Sie winden Kränze der Wonnigkeit und legen sie sich aufs Haupt. ... Sitil, der Sohn Adams, sprach: “Auf diesem Wege, Pfad und Aufstieg, auf dem ich emporgestiegen

bin, sollen auch die wahrhaften, gläubigen, trefflichen und vollkommenen Männer emporsteigen und kommen, wenn sie aus ihrem Körper scheiden.”

Cf. 2 Nephi 1:15: “But behold, the Lord hath redeemed my soul from hell; I have beheld his glory, and I am encircled about eternally in the arms of his love”; 2 Nephi 4:33: “O Lord, wilt thou encircle me around in the robe of thy righteousness!”

153. Seth was in the likeness and image of Adam (Moses 6:10), just as Adam and Eve had been made in the image and likeness of God (Moses 6:9, 22).
154. The term refers to carpenters’ nails, not fingernails.
155. Nibley comments: “That is the code for the signs that Adam had to receive — his instructions. The one who holds the nails of glory, and the signs in the hands, and the key to the initiation rites is the master of the Treasure House” (H. W. Nibley, *Apocryphal*, p. 300). Cf. Isaiah 49:16; Zechariah 13:6; Cyril of Jerusalem, *Five*, 2:5, p. 148.
156. J. O. Ryen, *Mandaean Vine*, pp. 203-204. A close association between the symbolism of the “true vine” and that of the “true olive tree” can be found in 1 Nephi 15:15-16.
157. K. Rudolph, *Coptic*, GR 3:6, p. 263.
158. E. S. Drower, *Mandaeans*, pp. xviii-xix; H. W. Nibley, *Message 2005*, p. 445. The rituals “that they are the most famous for, and from which their Arabic name is derived (*subba* [hence the name Sabaeans]), are those concerning immersion in running water” (E. Lupieri, *Mandaeans*, pp. 15-16). However, they also engage in a variety of more esoteric rights. For example, after birth, the newborn Mandaean child is given four names, one of which is “the most secret and important one” that is “used always (and almost exclusively) in religious rituals” (*ibid.*, p. 17. Cf. E. S. Drower, *Haran*, p. 32).

According to Drower: “Mysteries’, i.e., sacraments to aid and purify the soul, [are intended] to ensure her rebirth into a spiritual body, and her ascent from the world of matter. ... In the case of the Nasoraeans [i.e., Mandaeans] this interpretation is based on the Creation story ... , especially on the Divine Man, Adam, as crowned and anointed King-priest” (E. S. Drower, *Adam*, p. xvi). Anciently, all adult members of the sect were initiated into the mysteries through a series of rites described in Mandaean sacred writings. Today, the rites

are still carried out in a limited way for anyone who is to become a priest (*tarmida*). Writes Lupieri (E. Lupieri, *Mandaeans*, pp. 25-26):

The ceremony for consecrating a *tarmida* [= priest] is even richer and on a bigger scale than a wedding. ... The *sualia* [= candidate for initiation as a *tarmida*] is clothed as if he were dying or dead man ready for burial. He is dressed in a new *rasta* [= white ceremonial robe] with a gold coin sewn on the right and a silver one on the left. Gold symbolizes the sun and silver the moon, and their presence means that whoever wears that particular *rasta* must undertake the voyage through the heavens, controlled by the evil planetary powers, to the higher light. Dressed as a dead man, then, the *sualia* must demonstrate to his teacher, to the priests, and to the people gathered to celebrate that he possesses the necessary knowledge and preparation.

The consecration ceremony for the *tarmida* must be understood in light of portrayals of the soul in Mandaean scripture “as an exile, a captive; her home and origin being the supreme Entity to which she eventually returns” (E. S. Drower, *Adam*, p. xvi).

The Mandaean book of John gives the following account of how Adam awoke, having lost his body of light and being placed on the dreary earth, and welcomed the messenger who was sent by his Father to instruct him (G. R. S. Mead, *Mandaean John-Book*, 13, p. 91):

At the call of the Envoy Adam, who lay there, awoke ... and went forth to meet the Envoy: “Come in peace, O Envoy, Life’s messenger, who hast come from the House of my Father. How firmly planted withal dear, beautiful Life in his region! But how [meanly] for me has a [foot]stool been set up [i.e., Tibil, the dreary earth] and my dark form sits on it lamenting.”

Thereon the Envoy made answer and spake to the corporeal Adam: “Thy throne has been set up in Beauty, O Adam; and ’tis thy form sits here lamenting. All were mindful of thee for thy good and fashioned and sent me to thee. I am come and will give thee instruction, O Adam, and free thee from this world. Give ear and hearken and get thee instructed, and mount to Light’s region victorious.”

The Mandaean literature abounds with references to the idea that three messengers were sent to teach Adam and to protect him from the deceptive and dangerous influence of evil powers. For example, in the *Canonical Prayerbook*, it says: “And Hibil-Ziwa came and blessed three ‘uthras, and the three ‘uthras blessed Adam and all his descendants” (E. S. Drower, *Prayerbook*, 379, p. 292). According to Nibley, these envoys “taught Adam and Eve the hymns, and the order of prayer, and the ordinances which would help one to return to the presence of the Father” (H. W. Nibley, *Apocryphal*, p. 302). *Ginza* records (K. Rudolph, *Coptic*, GR 3:1, pp. 177-178):

When I (Manda d-Hiia) installed Adam, I appointed three ‘uthras over him. I set myself at the head of the ‘uthras whom I set over Adam and Eve. I stood before them and taught them wonderful hymns (*drase*). I instructed them in the ritual books (*sidre*) so that they might perform the *masiqtas* [after the manner] of the ‘uthras. I taught them prayers so that they might be confirmed through the prayers of the Life. ... I brought myself forward and instructed them, as a teacher (*rabba*) does his pupils (*swalya*). I conversed with them and blessed them, and the blessing of the good ones shall rest upon them. Adam, his sons, and his generation shall behold the Place of Light.

In another passage from *Ginza* (GR 11:1), Nibley also sees a description of the efforts of Satan to oppose the ministry of the three envoys (cited in H. W. Nibley, *Apocryphal*, pp. 302-303). Quotation marks in the original are modified here to better distinguish *Ginza* citations from Nibley’s own explanations):

The evil spirits, who claim the world for their own, resent the Sent Ones’ instructions. “These three men are in the world,” they say, “but the are not really men. They are light and glory, and they have come down to little ‘Enosh’ [physical man—Adam] who is helpless and alone in the world” [*Die Bösen der Welt sollen sagen: “Diese drei Männer sind in der Welt, jedoch sind sie keine Männer, sondern Glanz und Licht ist es, das seine Gestalt zeigt in dieser Welt beim kleinen En.s, der allein in dieser Welt dasteht”* (M. Lidzbarski, *Ginza*, GR 11:1, p. 264)]. They are intruding on our world. “The children of men have taken over the earth. They are really strangers who speak the language of the three men. They have accepted the

teachings of the three men and rejected us in our own world” [“... *die Menschenkinder waren in Fülle da. Sie sprechen in der Rede des fremden Lebens, sprechen in der Rede dieser drei Männer. Sie schließen sich dem Leben an und unterwerfen sich diesen drei Männern. Sie erheben sich gegen uns und verachten uns in dieser unserer eigenen Welt*” (ibid., GR 11:1, p. 263)]. They refuse to acknowledge our kingdom and our glory. The devils don’t like the three men interrupting their program and spoiling things. Thus, the evil ones plotted to overthrow Adam, who was hoping for “Manda d-Hiia (Teacher of Life), the messenger from the Father to come and give him aid and support” [*Ich hoffe auf Mandit dHaije, daß er komme und mir eine Stütze sei* (ibid., GR 11:1, p. 263)].

At the final stage of the *tarmida* consecration ceremony, the candidate symbolically enacts a journey from the material world to the Place of Life (E. Lupieri, *Mandaeans*, p. 27):

Once the texts have all been recited, another straw hut is quickly built under the guidance of the priests. This hut is in every respect similar to the *manda*, but without the mud stucco. It is built to the north of the courtyard, with its opening facing south, directly opposite that of the *andiruna* [a previously-built house covered with blue cloth which represents the material world]. The second hut is called a *skinta*, which means “dwelling,” “house,” or “temple,” and is covered with a large sheet of white cloth. [See R. Thomas, *Israelite Origins*, pp. 22-23, for comparisons of the design of the huts and Israelite temples.]

... The next morning just before dawn [the *sualia*] will leave the *andiruna*, and, after pausing halfway between the two huts to again recite a sacred text, he finally enters the *skinta*.

In a passage no doubt corresponding to a more elaborate version of the same kind of enactment, the culmination of the process by which one is admitted to the Place of Life is described in the Mandaean liturgy (E. S. Drower, *Prayerbook*, 49, pp. 45-46):

When [the soul] puts on the vesture of the sons of perfection she laugheth, rejoiceth ... about the glorious splendor, the honor resting on and belonging to her. She proceeded in the vesture of Yuzataq-Manda-d-Hiia and went onwards and

reached the Waters of Death [i.e., the frontier of the world of light (ibid., p. 45 n. 6)]. The waters covered her, but Radiance crossed over ... and said, “Life, I am Thine, and for Thy name’s sake came I forth from the world ... so that we may bring out this soul ... so that she cometh before him.” ... He graspeth her with the palm of his right hand and handeth her over to two *’uthras* ... who open the Door of Life, plant the plant of Life and establish the first counterpart of the House of Life.

159. R. Thomas, *Israelite Origins*, pp. 11-26.
160. E. M. Yamauchi, *Gnostic Ethics*, pp. 80-86. See also G. Widengren, *Enthronement*, who discusses Mandaean baptism in light of Syrian-Mesopotamian ritual traditions.
161. *Rhoda Richards Diary*, 16 April 1843, cited in J. Smith Jr., *Words*, p. 199. Rhoda was a sister to Willard Richards. Elder Richards recorded the most complete account of the Prophet’s sermon.
162. *Joseph Smith Diary* by Willard Richards, 16 April 1843, in *ibid.*, pp. 195-196, spelling and punctuation modernized, emphasis added.
163. R. Guénon, *Symboles*, pp. 336-339; J. Smith Jr., *Teachings*, 7 April 1844, pp. 346-348, 354; M. C. Thomas, *Hebrews*; M. C. Thomas, *Brother of Jared*; N. M. Sarna, *Mists*, p. 82.
164. M. G. Romney, *Temples*, pp. 239-240. See H. W. Nibley, *Sacred*, pp. 579-581.
165. J. L. Carroll, *Reconciliation*, p. 95 n. 18; J. Smith Jr., *Teachings*, 21 May 1843, p. 305. Only the words “Ladder and rainbow” appear in Willard Richards’ original notes for this statement, as they appeared in Joseph Smith’s diary (J. Smith, Jr. et al., *Journals, 1843-1844*, 21 May 1843, p. 21). These notes were later filled out under the direction of Elder George A. Smith, who continued the compilation of Joseph Smith’s *History of the Church* in the 1850s after the death of Elder Richards (J. Smith, Jr. et al., *Journals, 1843-1844*, p. 21 n. 68; D. C. Jessee, *JS History*, p. 470). See J. M. Bradshaw, *Faith, Hope, and Charity*, for arguments regarding the possibility that the ideas behind the filled-out phrase originated in the teachings of the Prophet, even these teachings did not occur on 21 May 1843.
166. For an insightful comparison of the “wrestles” of Jacob and Enos, see M. L. Bowen, *And There Wrestled*.

167. See B. H. Porter et al., *Names*, pp. 506-507. On the parallel between Jacob's encounters with the angel and with Esau, see, e.g., E. Fox, *Books of Moses*, pp. xi-xii.
168. 1 Kings 17:21-22; 2 Kings 4:34-35. The account of Elijah reads as follows (1 Kings 17:21-22):
- 21 And he stretched himself upon the child three times, and cried unto the Lord, and said, O Lord my God, I pray thee, let this child's soul come into him again.
- 22 And the Lord heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived.
169. 2 Kings 4:34-35.
170. In the case of Elijah, one English translation of the Greek *Septuagint* is given as "crouched upon him," i.e., "with his head between his knees," as in 1 Kings 18:42 (M. Cogan et al., 2 Kings, p. 58 n. 35). Another translation influenced by the *Septuagint* renders the corresponding phrase as "'breathed deeply upon the child.' The preference seems to be based upon the words of Elijah's prayer that the breath of life might return to the boy's body, and the consequence that the boy began to breathe again. This rejection of a perfectly clear Hebrew verb [*wayyitmōdēd* = 'stretched himself out'] is unnecessary" (J. Robinson, *First Book of Kings*, p. 203).
171. Verse 35 reads: "Then he returned, and walked in the house to and fro; and went up, and stretched himself upon him: and the child sneezed seven times, and the child opened his eyes." "Apparently the effort exhausted the prophet so that he has to rest a bit before making a second attempt. The sneezing indicates that the child's breath has returned. 'Seven' often appears in rituals [e.g., 2 Kings 5:10]" (H. W. Attridge et al., *HarperCollins Study Bible*, p. 525 n. 4:35).
172. K. L. Barker et al., *NASB Study Bible*, p. 485 n. 17:21. Finding it incredible that a revival from the dead could have been accomplished by Elijah with divine help, one study Bible comments: "Elijah attempted what is sometimes described as the first recorded case of artificial respiration on the child, who was critically ill but not dead" (A. Berlin et al., *Jewish*, p. 713 n. 21).
173. "'Three' often figures prominently in rituals" (H. W. Attridge et al., *HarperCollins Study Bible*, p. 509 n. 17:21).
174. A. Berlin et al., *Jewish*, p. 713 n. 21.

175. J. E. Seaich, Freemasonry. See also J. E. Seaich, *Ancient Texts 1995*, pp. 826-828.
176. H. Koester et al., *Thomas*, 22, p. 129.
177. C. Burchard, Joseph, 15:5-6, p. 226; 19:10-11, p. 233.
178. See G. Kittel et al., *Dictionary*, 9:527, cited in J. E. Seaich, Freemasonry. The importance of this symbol of the atonement was also emphasized in Egyptian temple rites (H. W. Nibley, *Message 2005*, p. 427):
- The normal sequence of ordinances as depicted in temple reliefs is, according to Barguet, washing, laying on of hands, leading by the hand, entering the gate, embracing, and crowning. In Egyptian rites, gates or doorways are symbolic of passage and arrival, of the completion of one phase of the operation and the beginning of another; not only is the gate the normal place for the embrace of greeting and farewell, but, as the symbols and inscriptions engraved on the door frames of tombs and temples make clear, the portal itself typifies the performing of such an embrace. A spontaneous and natural gesture, embracing is not only a sign of affection but also one of acceptance, recognition, and reception at every level, from the formal and hypocritical embrace of the diplomat to the “mystical union” of the initiate. The ritual embrace is the “culminating rite of the initiation”; it is “an initiatory gesture weighted with meaning . . . , the goal of all consecration.”
179. H. Riesenfeld, Resurrection, p. 3.
180. J. N. Sparks et al., *Orthodox Study Bible*, p. 412 n. 17:21.
181. M. B. Brown, 16 November 2010. With the permission of George L. Mitton. Cited passage from an English mystery play is from G. England et al., *The Towneley Plays*, 46-47, p. 314, spelling modernized. These plays were written in 1388 by Augustinian or Black Canons in Woodkirk, England near Wakefield (*ibid.*, pp. x-xi), and performed until 1576.
182. C. H. T. Fletcher-Louis, *Religious Experience*, pp. 132, 133, emphasis in original. On the rise of temple terminology and forms in the synagogues and the expanded centrality of prayer during the Amoraic period, see J. Magness, *Heaven*, p. 23. For a discussion of

similar ideas in the Psalms and the Dead Sea Scrolls, see D. J. Larsen, *From Dust*.

183. M. Barker, *Angel*, pp. 114-133. See also J. E. Seaich, *Ancient Texts 1983*, pp. 56-68.
184. E. R. Goodenough, *Light*, p. 96. Seaich sees similarities to the gathering of Israel at Sinai 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" (J. E. Seaich, *Ancient Texts 1995*, p. 660, see also pp. 568-577, 661, 807-809). For a summary of parallels in the imagery of *Merkavah* mysticism and the experience of Israel at Sinai, see J. Magness, *Heaven*, p. 35 n. 238. Ephrem the Syrian, an early Christian scholar, saw the imagery of clothing in the story of Adam and Eve and the symbolism of the Jerusalem Temple as "a means of linking together in a dynamic fashion the whole of salvation history; it is a means of indicating the interrelatedness between every stage in this continuing working out of divine Providence," including "the place of each individual Christian's baptism [and other ordinances] within the divine economy as a whole" (Sebastian Brock in Ephrem the Syrian, *Paradise*, pp. 66-67).
185. G. A. Anderson, *Perfection*, p. 123.
186. E. R. Goodenough, *Light*, p. 96.
187. Philo, *Giants*, 54, 2:473.
188. Philo, *Exodus*, 70, 2:29. See also R. S. Eccles, *Pilgrimage*, pp. 60-61; E. R. Goodenough, *Introduction to Philo*, pp. 147-153. The extent to which Philo intended to imply a literal deification of Moses is a matter of scholarly debate. Russell provides a useful history and overview of Jewish and early Christian beliefs relating to deification (N. Russell, *Deification*). While both admitting many evidences suggesting that Philo's view of deification might be taken at face value and also recognizing the influence of Philo's teachings on later Christian teachings on the subject, he nevertheless agrees with the consensus of most modern scholars that "Philo is unwilling to say that Moses is a god except by title or analogy" (*ibid.*, p. 64). Russell, however, does see stronger ideas of deification analogous to early Christian views in some strands of Palestinian Judaism and later rabbinic mysticism (*ibid.*, pp. 65-76). For additional discussion of

traditions of Moses' deification, see W. A. Meeks, *Moses*, pp. 354-371; J. W. Welch, *Light*, pp. 25-27.

189. Some scholars have dismissed the depictions of this distinctive clothing as merely the product of slavish copying by the mural makers from standard design books. Others assert that different marks may serve merely to distinguish between male and female garments (M. Avi-Yonah, *Critique*). Such marks on Christian robes, as well as on clothing in Hellenistic Egypt, Palmyra, and on Roman figures of Victory are thought to be "a symbol of immortality" (E. R. Goodenough, *Dura Symbolism*, 9:163). For further discussion of Goodenough's conclusions and a report of similar patterns found at Masada and elsewhere, see J. W. Welch et al., *Gammadia*.
190. E. R. Goodenough, *Dura Symbolism*, 10:205; see also 9:88-89, 126-29, 162-64; E. R. Goodenough, *Garments*. In describing the purple "outer garment of the high priest as depicted in the murals of the Dura Europos synagogue" (see, for example, the figure of Aaron in E. R. Goodenough, *Dura Symbolism*, 11, plate 10), Nibley notes that "the white undergarment is the proper preexistent glory of the wearer, while the other is the priesthood later added to it" (H. W. Nibley, *Message 2005*, pp. 489-490). The dark-blue or purple color of the robe of the high priest simultaneously served as a symbol of incarnation of the divine Logos (see W. Williams, *Shadow*).
191. E. R. Goodenough, *Garments*, p. 225; see also E. R. Goodenough, *Dura Symbolism*, 9:127-29.
192. E. R. Goodenough, *Dura Symbolism*, 10:182-83 n. 85.
193. H. Riesenfeld, *Resurrection*, p. 34.
194. *Ibid.*, p. 12, emphasis added.
195. *Ibid.*, p. 33.
196. *Ibid.*
197. E. R. Goodenough, *Dura Symbolism*, 10:182-183 n. 85.
198. H. W. Nibley, *Message 2005*, p. 443.
199. D. Rona, *Revealed*, p. 194. An excavation of a Christian burial site in Egypt has produced evidence that some burials included "one or more robes with linen strips wrapped around the upper half of the body and gathered into a knot on either the left ... or, more commonly, on the right shoulder," indicating priestly authority (C. W. Griggs, *Evidences*, p. 227).

200. See E. R. Goodenough, *Dura Symbolism*, 9:66. Used as a symbol of the resurrection since Greco-Roman times, a sculpture of a scallop shell also appears in the celestial room of the Salt Lake Temple immediately above the veil (J. E. Talmage, *House of the Lord*, Plate 22). In other ancient contexts, it was also used to represent fertility. Compare this with the scallop shell shown over the veil in a depiction of the Jerusalem temple in Khirbet Samara, an ancient Samaritan synagogue (W. J. Hamblin, Temple Mosaic).
201. J. A. Goldstein, *Judaism*, p. 118.
202. See, e.g., E. R. Goodenough, *Dura Symbolism*, 9:67–77.
203. Moon observes that Jewish women “depicted in the synagogue frescoes wear pink, brown, beige, and beige-yellow—not white, forbidden by the Mishnah. White, we should explain, was exclusive to men, especially to those of status, as the figures of Moses and others in the frescoes attest. ... [In addition,] Jewish women were required to cover their head” (W. G. Moon, *Nudity*, pp. 596-597).
204. M. Barker, *Temple Themes*, p. 28.
205. M. Barker, June 11 2007.
206. H. W. Nibley, *Temples Everywhere*, p. 14. Cf. H. W. Nibley, *Sacred*, pp. 557-562.
207. See D. Calabro, *When You Spread*, pp. 30-31.
208. As an example, see the following excerpt from verse seven of Hymns (1985), Hymns (1985), “A Poor Wayfaring Man of Grief,” #29:
- The stranger started from disguise.
The tokens in his hands I knew;
The Savior stood before mine eyes.
209. 2 Nephi 9:41.
210. Secular examples of the uses of the terms “sign” and “token” consistent with this perspective can be found, for example, in Shakespeare’s play *The Taming of the Shrew*. First, note Biondello’s statement to Lucentio which illustrates the idea that signs and tokens are the kinds of things that want explanation (W. Shakespeare, *Taming*, 4:3:75, 78-80, p. 134):
- [M]y master ... left me here behind to expound the meaning
or moral of his signs and tokens.

Observe that in Shakespeare's day, the term "signs and tokens" not only referred to communicative words and gestures, as in the example above but also to specific tangible identifiers (e.g., clothing, badges) that were sometimes used to indicate membership in a given group, such as servants belonging to a given noble household (D. Kay, *Shakespeare*, p. 88).

Second, note a pair of examples that might be used to illustrate the distinction between the distal demonstration of the sign and the intimate proximal communication of the token (cf. D. Calabro, *When You Spread*, p. 18). In the closing scene of the play, Petruchio tests Kate to see whether she will show "sign of her obedience" by leaving the table to persuade the "froward wives" of Lucentio and Hortensio to return to their husbands (W. Shakespeare, *Taming*, 5:2:116-118, p. 139):

Nay, I will win my wager better yet,
and show more *sign* of her obedience,
Her new-built virtue and obedience.

Finally, after triumphantly seating herself beside her husband and making a speech that the feminist Germaine Greer called "the greatest defense of Christian monogamy ever written" (cited in A. D. Nuttall, *Shakespeare*, p. 72), Kate puts her hand lovingly upon the hand of her husband and says to the other wives — though principally speaking for the hearing of Petruchio (W. Shakespeare, *Taming*, 5:2:176-179, p. 139):

Then vail your stomachs, for it is no boot,
And place your hands below your husband's foot;
In *token* of which duty, if he please,
My hand is ready, may it do him ease.

211. B. Witherington, III, *Conflict*, p. 449.

212. 2 Corinthians 11:14.

213. D&C 128:20. See also 2 Nephi 9:9; D&C 129:4-7; J. Smith Jr., *Teachings*, 1 April 1842, pp. 204-205.

214. M. E. Stone, *Adam's Contract*, p. 18. Cf. S. C. Malan, *Adam and Eve*, 1:27, pp. 27-29, 1:60, pp. 67-70, and 2:5, pp. 110-111.

215. M. E. Stone, *Adam's Contract*, pp. 18-19. See also A. A. Orlov, *Garment of Azazel*, pp. 69-71.

216. M. Barker, *Gate*, pp. 119-120; W. Williams, Shadow.
217. P. P. Pratt, *Key*, p. 72.
218. Moses 1:15. Similarly, in the *Conflict of Adam and Eve with Satan*, God warns Adam and Eve about Satan, saying: “This is he who promised you majesty and divinity. Where, then, is the beauty that was on him? Where is his divinity? Where is his light? Where is the glory that rested on him?” (S. C. Malan, *Adam and Eve*, 1:51, p. 56). Orlov observes that the very face or countenance of the Devil is clothed with darkness, while the face of the glorified visionary is bathed in light (A. A. Orlov, *Garment of Azazel*, p. 79).
219. O. Cowdery, Letter 8, p. 200, spelling and capitalization modernized.
220. *Ibid.*, p. 198, spelling and capitalization modernized.
221. See A. F. Ehat, *Ordinances*, pp. 32-35. On 1 May 1842, referring to the keys of the kingdom of God, Joseph Smith explained to the Saints that: “The keys are certain signs and words by which false spirits and personages may be detected from true, which cannot be revealed to the Elders till the Temple is completed” (J. Smith Jr., *Words*, 1 May 1842, p. 119). That these keys were to be given in the endowment to both men and women was made clear in his remarks a few days earlier to the Relief Society that “the keys of the kingdom are about to be given to them, that they may be able to detect everything false — as well as to the Elders” (*ibid.*, 28 April 1842, p. 117, spelling modernized. See also his journal summary on p. 119).
222. In another version of the story, Adam implies that Eve was to wait in the water until “an angel of God” came to bring her out (M. Herbert et al., *Irish Apocrypha*, p. 10).
223. S. E. Robinson, *Book of Adam*, p. 142. See also B. T. Ostler, *Clothed*, p. 6.
224. M.-B. Halford, *Eva und Adam*, p. 262: “Adam, sighing, turned to heaven. He prayed: ‘Creator, sweet God, everything that heaven and earth contain is under your command; in your mercy drive from me this evil spirit who alienates me from you. Give me the joy and the status which he lost in heaven. This I ask of you, Lord, grant me this through your goodness and in your honour.’ After these words the Devil vanished.”
225. P. H. Jolly, *Eve and Adam*, p. 14.

226. S. D. Ricks, Oaths, pp. 49-50; J. W. Wevers, *Notes*, p. 200. Note that in one source, before her penance, Eve is instructed by Adam: “Raise your hand toward the Lord” (M. Herbert et al., *Irish Apocrypha*, p. 9).
227. S. E. Robinson, *Book of Adam*, p. 142.
228. Cyril of Jerusalem, *Five*, 19:2, 4, pp. 144-145; H. W. Nibley, *Message* 2005, 1:2, 4, p. 516.
229. Joseph Smith—History, 1:69; D&C 13:1.
230. Cf. J. F. McConkie et al., *Revelations*, p. 1040. Alternatively, A. L. Baugh, *Parting the Veil*, p. 273 argues that “Satan’s appearance also seems to be associated with the restoration of the Melchizedek Priesthood since [in D&C 128:20] Joseph refers to Peter, James, and John’s appearance on the Susquehanna in the very next sentence.”
231. D&C 128:20.
232. D&C 128:20. Cf. 2 Corinthians 11:14; 2 Nephi 9:9; D&C 129:8; Moses 1:2, 9, 11-25.
233. J. F. McConkie et al., *Revelations*, p. 1040. Considering the similarity of language used in 2 Nephi 9:9 to describe Satan’s efforts to deceive Adam and Eve, these same authors conjecture that Adam “came to aid the Prophet . . . on this occasion” “by virtue of his own experience in such things” (*ibid.*, p. 1035).

Ehat and Cook relate that “George A. Smith, who . . . was a witness to all the dimensions of Joseph’s teachings on this subject, later said, “There was no point upon which the Prophet Joseph dwelt more than the discerning of Spirits”” (J. Smith Jr., *Words*, p. 21. George A. Smith’s statement can be found in “Minutes of Meetings held in Provo City,” 28 November 1869, Church Archives). However, as with most other sacred incidents of his early ministry, the Prophet was at first reticent to speak openly about these keys.

The earliest record of Joseph Smith’s specific teachings on how to detect true and false messengers comes from notes of a private discourse given to the Twelve Apostles on July 2, 1839. The Prophet taught that “an angel of God never has wings. Some will say that they have seen a spirit; that he offered them his hand, but they did not touch it. This is a lie. First, it is contrary to the plan of God; a spirit cannot come but in glory; an angel has flesh and bones; we see not their glory. The devil may appear as an angel of light. Ask God to

reveal it; if it be of the devil, he will flee from you; if of God, He will manifest Himself, or make it manifest” (J. Smith Jr., *Teachings*, 2 July 1839, p. 162).

Related teachings also appear in an entry in the diary of Wilford Woodruff for June 27, 1839 (Smith, Jr., *Words*, Wilford Woodruff Diary, 27 June 1839, p. 6):

Among the vast number of the Keys of the Kingdom of God Joseph presented the following one to the Twelve for there benefit in there experience & travels in the flesh which is as follows. In order to detect the devel when he transforms himself nigh unto an angel of light. When an angel of God appears unto man face to face in personage & reaches out his hand unto the man & he takes hold of the angels hand & feels a substance the Same as one man would in shaking hands with another he may then know that it is an angel of God, & he should place all Confidence in him Such personages or angels are Saints with there resurrected Bodies, but if a personage appears unto man & offers him his hand & the man takes hold of it & he feels nothing or does not sens any substance he may know it is the devel, for when a Saint whose body is not resurrected appears unto man in the flesh he will not offer him his hand for this is against the law given him & in keeping in mind these things we may detec the devil that he deceived us not.

In December 1840, William Clayton recorded similar teachings by the Prophet (J. Smith Jr., *Words*, p. 44), and he gave the same teachings in substance again to Parley p. Pratt on February 9, 1843, two days after he returned from his mission. In Joseph Smith’s Diary, 9 February 1843, we read (J. Smith, Jr., *Journals, 1841-1843*, 9 February 1843, pp 257-258; J. Smith Jr., *Record*, p. 300):

there are 3 adminitater [administrators]: Angels. Spirits [and] Devils — one class in heaven Angels [are] the spir[i]ts of Ju[s]t men made perfect. — innumerable co[mpany] of angels & spirits of Ju[s]t men made perfect.

[If] An Angel appears to you how will you prove him. ask him to shake hands if he has flesh & bones — he is an Angel. “spirit hath not fl[e]sh & bones” [see Luke 24:39]

spirit of a Ju[s]t man made perf[e]ct. person in its tabernacle
could [not] hide its glory.

if David Patten or the Devil came. how would you determi[n]
e should you take hold of his hand you would not feel it. If it
were a false administrin [administrator] he would not do it.

true spirit will not give his hand

the Devil will. 3 keys —

This journal entry was later expanded and canonized as D&C 129, where the Prophet described in a general way the “three grand keys” whereby the Saints could “know whether any administration is from God” (D&C 129:9).

On 28 April 1842, Joseph Smith taught the Relief Society that when the temple was complete they would receive “keys” by which they could “detect everything false” (J. Smith Jr., *Teachings*, 28 April 1842, p. 226). Elaborating in a sermon given on May 1, 1842, he said: “The keys are certain signs and words by which false spirits and personages may be detected from true, which cannot be revealed to the Elders till the Temple is completed. . . . There are sign in heaven, earth, and hell; the Elders must know them all, to be endowed with power, to finish their work and prevent imposition” (J. Smith Jr., *Words*, 1 May 1842, pp. 119-120).

For more on Joseph Smith’s teachings and experiences on the detecting of evil spirits, see A. F. Ehat, *Ordinances*, pp. 33-35; A. L. Gaskill, D&C 129:8.

234. See Moses 1. For a detailed commentary on this chapter, including a comparison with the pseudepigraphal *Apocalypse of Abraham*, see J. M. Bradshaw, *Moses Temple Themes* (2014), pp. 23-50. See also J. M. Bradshaw, *God’s Image 1*, pp. 32-81, especially pp. 53-58.
235. H. W. Nibley, *Message 2005*, p. xxix.
236. J. A. Widtsoe, *Work*, p. 33. Cf., e.g., B. Young, 3 December 1854, p. 138. Shedding further light on Hugh Nibley’s statement that the endowment “does not attempt to be a picture of reality but only a model or analog to show us how things work” (H. W. Nibley, *Message 2005*, p. xxix) and Elder Widtsoe’s distinction between earthly and heavenly ordinances is a story Nibley relates that seems to imply that LDS temple ordinances, as essential as they are in this life, must be performed again in a more perfect and final

form as part of ordinances available in the next life (H. W. Nibley, *Abraham's Creation Drama*, from 26:19–27:18; compare with the published version, H. W. Nibley, *Drama*, p. 12):

I readily accept the margin allowed by taste and practicability [in the design of temples and the performance of the work done therein]. While the thing is still building, it's in the planning stage where alterations are possible. Our temple work, the whole work is still in its planning stage. My grandfather told me when he went through the temple once with Brother Joseph F. Smith, President of the Church — they were very close friends, they traveled together in the islands and that sort of thing — and President Smith told him, he said, “Charlie, all this work will have to be done again.” You see, this is just a dry run. It's not working right at all. That didn't keep me from going to the temple!

Well, this is not the final, real temple, the ideal future temple of the Temple Scroll. Here we do not receive crowns of glory, but only the promise that if we are true and faithful, later, we may be qualified, we may be eligible. But not here. This is a training center, a school for precepts and a showplace for examples (see D&C 109).

Speaking of the relationship between things done in heaven and on earth, President Joseph F. Smith taught (J. F. Smith, *Gospel Doctrine*, p. 461): “The things we experience here are typical of the things of God and the life beyond us. There is a great similarity between God's purposes as manifested here and His purposes as carried out in His presence and kingdom.” Referring specifically to the work of salvation, Elder Bruce R. McConkie taught (B. R. McConkie, *Sermons*, p. 168):

The vision of the degrees of glory begins by saying, “Hear, O ye heavens, and give ear, O earth” (D&C 76:1). In other words, in that revelation the Lord was announcing truth to heaven and to earth because those principles of salvation operate on both sides of the veil; and salvation is administered to an extent here to men, and it is administered to another extent in the spirit world. We correlate and combine our activities and do certain things for the salvation of men while we are in mortality, and then certain things are done for the

salvation of men while they are in the spirit world awaiting the day of resurrection.

For example, the baptisms we perform on behalf of the dead correspond to work the dead need to do on their own behalf in the spirit world to enable “their release from the prison-house.” When we do their work on earth “they shall hear in the spirit world of the work that has been done for them by their children here,” and as a result of their matching efforts in the spirit world “their chains of bondage will fall from them, and the darkness surrounding them will clear away” (J. F. Smith, *Gospel Doctrine*, pp. 469-470).

In all such things, the temple ordinances provide the best blueprint available on earth for understanding the heavenly economy. For, as with the living, “[t]he dead who repent will be redeemed, through obedience to the ordinances of the house of God” (D&C 138:58). President Brigham Young taught that the righteous who go “behind the veil . . . shall go on from step to step, from rejoicing to rejoicing, and from one intelligence and power to another, [their] happiness becoming more and more exquisite and sensible as [they] proceed in the words and powers of life” (B. Young, 31 July 1859, p. 349). And, as with the living, only those who are obedient to the fulness of the ordinances will receive the fulness of salvation (J. F. Smith, Jr., *Doctrines of Salvation*, 2:23):

Will those in the other kingdoms besides the celestial, have the gospel taught to them? Yes, . . . and every soul eventually must become acquainted with the plan of salvation at least as far as it is possible for him to do. . . . But matters which have been held in reserve for the faithful and which have been kept hid from the world by divine decree since before the foundations of the earth, need not be known after the resurrection any more than before, to those who are not entitled to receive them. For instance, there will be covenants and obligations required of these who enter into the exaltation which in no way will apply to those who do not enter into the exaltation, for they do not receive the fulness. In every kingdom the inhabitants must know that they have been redeemed from death, and have received such blessings as are granted them, through the mercy of Jesus Christ.

237. For more on the Prophet's reluctance to share details of sacred events, see R. O. Barney, *Joseph Smith's Visions*; R. Nicholson, *Cowdery Conundrum*.
238. For a brief overview and a perspective on adaptations of temple ordinances, see J. M. Bradshaw, *Freemasonry*, pp. 180-184.
239. S. T. Lachs, *Rabbinic Commentary*, p. 230 n. 52 translates the first part of the KJV Matthew 13:52 phrase "every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven" as "every scribe who is expert" (cf. the late Hebrew *baqi* and compare JST Matthew 13:52: "Every scribe well instructed in the things of the kingdom of heaven" [S. H. Faulring et al., *Original Manuscripts*, NT 1, pp. 193-194]). Lachs compares this phrase to parallels such as "expert in the inner teachings of the Torah, expert in the mysteries of Torah, expert in medicine, and expert in *halakhah*."
- R. T. France, *Gospel of Matthew*, p. 546 discusses the relevance of this saying to the role of the "apocalyptic scribe," "because it was a special role of such scribes to understand and interpret dark sayings; parables were their stock-in-trade." Elder Bruce R. McConkie relates this phrase to the idea that "the Twelve, all the disciples, both male and female ... knew the meanings of the parables, the deep, hidden, glorious meanings of these gems" (McConkie, *NT Commentary*, 2:268).
240. R. T. France, *Gospel of Matthew*, p. 546.
241. Matthew 13:52.
242. W. D. Davies et al., *Gospel According to Matthew*, 2:447 n. 63. The translation recalls a similar paradox in the name and idea of the "New and Everlasting Covenant" (The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, *Gospel Principles 2009*, p. 85). According to Joseph Smith, the origins of this covenant were prior to creation (J. Smith, Jr., *Teachings*, 16 May 1841, p. 190). The designation of this covenant as "new" is usually explained in terms of it having been revealed "anew" in each dispensation.
243. Matthew 13:35.
244. R. T. France, *Gospel of Matthew*, p. 546. Fittingly, as applications of this saying, Joseph Smith gave "the Book of Mormon," "the covenants given to the Latter-day Saints," and "the translation of the Bible — thus bringing forth out of the heart things new and old" (J. Smith, Jr., *Teachings*, December 1835, p. 102).

245. Don Bradley has argued that the First Vision was Joseph Smith's initiation as a seer and constituted a kind of endowment (D. Bradley, Unpublished manuscript in the possession of the author, 19 July 2010, cited with permission). Acknowledging that the earliest extant account of the First Vision does not appear to modern readers to be anything like an endowment experience, Bradley writes:

Smith's vision looks like a typical conversion vision of Jesus (insofar as a Christophany can be typical — that is, it shares a common pattern) when the account from his most "Protestant" phase is used and is set only in the context of revivalism. Yet there is no reason to limit analysis only to that account and that context. All accounts, and not only the earliest, provide evidence for the character of the original experience. Indeed, literary scholars Neal Lambert and Richard Cracroft (N. E. Lambert et al., *Literary Form*) have argued from their comparison of the respectively constrained and free-flowing styles of the 1832 and 1838 accounts that the former attempts to contain the new wine of Smith's theophany in an old wineskin of narrative convention. While the 1838 telling, in which the experience is both a conversion and a prophetic calling, is straightforward and natural, the 1832 account seems formal and forced, as if young Smith's experience was ready to burst the old wineskin or had been shoehorned into a revivalistic conversion narrative five sizes too small.

Noting that "latter-day revelation gives us the fuller account and meaning of what actually took place on the Mount" where Moses came into the presence of the Lord (Moses 1), Elder Alvin R. Dyer saw a similarity between the heavenly ascent of Moses and that of Joseph Smith in the First Vision (A. R. Dyer, *Meaning*, p. 12). For a detailed description of allusions to ordinances in the first chapter of the book of Moses, see J. M. Bradshaw, *Moses Temple Themes* (2014), pp. 26–50.

246. D. Bradley, Unpublished manuscript in the possession of the author, 19 July 2010, cited with permission.
247. K. Flake, *Translating Time*, p. 525. Of course, this does not mean that other kinds of knowledge gained in the temple are not just as vital. See J. M. Bradshaw, *Temple Themes in the Oath*, pp. 1–5, 11–18.

248. D&C 84:19-22.

249. S. E. Robinson et al., *D&C Commentary*, 3:31-32. See John 17:3.

250. H. W. Nibley, *Unrolling*, p. 165. Cf. 1 John 3:2. See also J. M. Bradshaw, *God's Image 1*, p. 35.

251. Elder D. Todd Christofferson, in L. T. Perry et al., *Gospel Answers*.

252. J. Smith Jr., *Teachings*, October 1840, p. 167.

253. Daniel L. Belnap has written the following about the “power of godliness” referred to in D&C 84:20-21 (D. L. Belnap, Introduction, pp. 4-5):

[T]here is a relationship between the performance of priesthood ordinances (or rituals) and the expression (or manifestation) of the power of godliness. ...

The term “godliness” is found twenty-two times in the scriptures, the majority of which are found in the New Testament. Perhaps the most familiar reference for Latter-day Saints is 2 Timothy 3:2-5, which describes the general condition of man in the last days: “Men shall be lovers of their own selves, ... without natural affection ... [and] having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof.” In these references, godliness does not appear to serve as a synonym for the power of God but is instead the correct or proper way of interacting with the divine from the mortal perspective and thus refers to the interactive nature of the mortal-divine relationship, even the embodying of that relationship. In other words, it is a state that a mortal must achieve in order to interact with divinity. Thus, if one is to be transformed to enter into the divine social state, or receive exaltation, the power of godliness must be made manifest in him, and this manifestation, or awareness, according to Doctrine and Covenants 84:20, is found in the ordinances of the Gospel under the authority of the priesthood.

For additional discussion of the sort of transformative experience made possible within the ordinances, see B. C. Hafen and M. K. Hafen, *Contrite Spirit*, pp. 70-74; J. M. Bradshaw, *Moses Temple Themes*, pp. 185-192 (esp. pp. 191-192); J. M. Bradshaw, *Temple Themes in the Oath*, pp. 111-116 (esp. pp. 114-115).

254. J. A. Widtsoe, *Work*, p. 33. Also cited in A. K. Parrish, *Widtsoe*, pp. 307-308. Thanks to Robert Smith for pointing out this citation.
255. W. Shakespeare, *Henry V*, 4:Prologue:53, p. 955. In other words, “representing to yourself the truth of what we imitate so badly” (*ibid.*, p. 955 n. 53). Nibley often used this line from Shakespeare in reference to temple drama (e.g., H. W. Nibley, *Drama*, p. 11).
256. For example, in providing us with types that will be useful in the next world. See also note 253 above.
257. H. W. Nibley, *Treasures*, p. 178.
258. D&C 84:23.

