

The Message of the Joseph Smith Translation: A Walk in the Garden

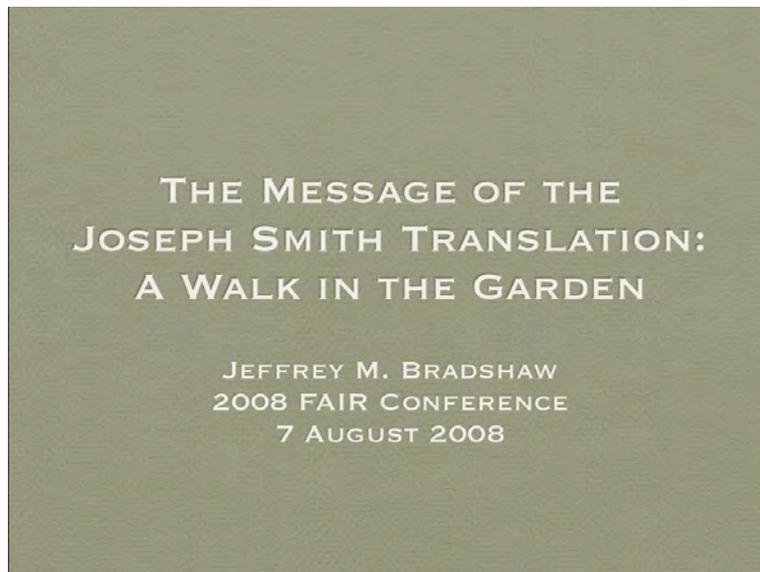
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FAIR 2008 Conference Presentation

7 August 2008

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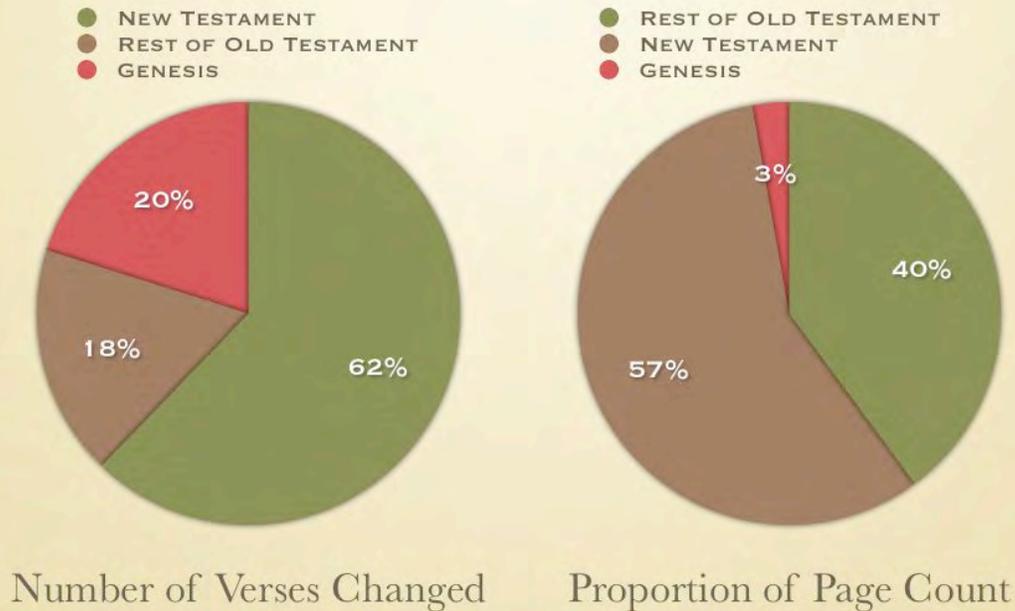
Today, I will ignore other fascinating perspectives that might be taken on the book of Moses to focus on what could be called “The Message of the Joseph Smith Translation,” with apologies to Hugh Nibley for the deliberate allusion to his brilliant book about “The Message of the Joseph Smith Papyri.”¹ As Nibley argued that the papyri associated with the book of Abraham could be seen as an “Egyptian endowment,” so I would like to consider with you the possibility that the commission of Joseph Smith to translate the Bible was as much as anything else an opportunity for the Prophet to be tutored in temple-related doctrines. Following a brief discussion of this conjecture, we will look more closely at selected themes from the book of Moses.

(Photograph of Old Testament Manuscript 1 (OT 1), page 1, 1830)

The placement of the book of Moses in the Pearl of Great Price obscures the fact that it is in reality part of the Joseph Smith Translation of the Bible, or JST. This is the first page of the manuscript of Moses 1²—dated June 1830, a time of great exuberance in the Church,³ but also a period of intense persecution for Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery, his revelatory companion and scribe.⁴ Like many of the Prophet's revelations, the manuscript appears to have been flowingly dictated in a single setting. That the Prophet could find the time, strength, and inspiration necessary to receive and record this beautiful and complex account of the visions of Moses during such a busy and difficult period is a wonder to me.⁵

Though apparently the Lord did not find it imperative that the JST be published in its entirety during Joseph Smith's lifetime, the revelations make it clear that it was an urgent priority that the Prophet undertake the translation itself. Why was this so?

NUMBER OF VERSES CHANGED

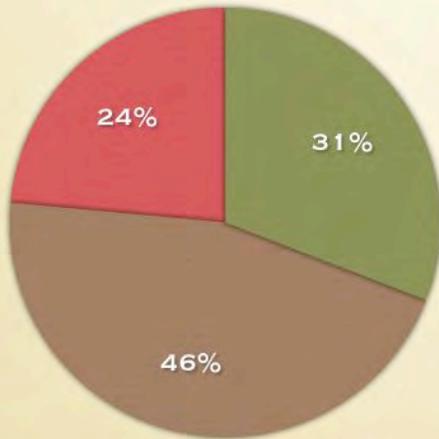


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The focus of Joseph Smith's effort, which provides clues to the answer to this question, is made apparent by a quick look at the overall translation results and schedule. A clear priority was accorded to the book of Genesis, especially the first 24 chapters. Strikingly, more than half of the changed verses in the JST Old Testament and 20% of those in the entire JST Bible are contained in Moses 1 and Genesis. As a proportion of page count, changes in Genesis occurred four times more frequently than in the New Testament, and twenty-one times more frequently than in the rest of the Old Testament. The changes in Genesis are not only more numerous, but also more significant in the degree of doctrinal and historical expansion.

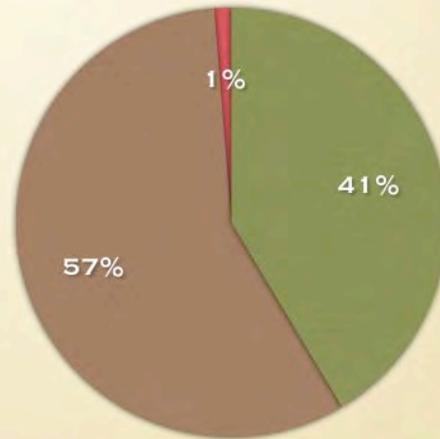
TRANSLATION TIME

● REST OF OLD TESTAMENT
● NEW TESTAMENT
● GENESIS 1-24



Duration of Translation Period

● REST OF OLD TESTAMENT
● NEW TESTAMENT
● GENESIS 1-24



Proportion of Page Count

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Looking at it from the perspective of translation *time* rather than the number of revisions made, the same picture holds. By mid-1833, three years after the process of translation started, Joseph Smith felt the JST was sufficiently complete that preparations for publication could begin.⁶ The proportions at left represent the known durations of periods when each part of the translation was completed, with the first 24 chapters of Genesis occupying 24% of the total time for the entire Bible. Though we cannot know how much of Joseph Smith's daily schedule the translation occupied during each of its phases, it is obvious that Genesis 1-24, the first 1% of the Bible, must have received a significantly more generous share of the Prophet's time and attention than did the remaining 99%.⁷

(Liz Lemon Swindle, *Go with Me to Cumorah*, 1997)

What important things could Joseph Smith have learned from translating Genesis 1-24? To begin with, the story of Enoch and his righteous city would have had pressing relevance to the mission of the Church, as the Prophet worked to help the Saints understand the law of consecration and to establish Zion in Missouri—and it is no coincidence that this account was first published in 1832 and 1833. However, we should not allow the salience of these immediate events to overshadow the fact that the first JST Genesis chapters also relate the stories of the patriarchs, especially Adam, Noah, Melchizedek, and Abraham. In consideration of this fact, and other evidence from revelations and teachings of this period, I have come to believe that the most significant aspect of the translation process as a whole was the early tutoring in temple-related doctrines received by Joseph Smith as he revised and expanded Genesis 1-24, in conjunction with his later translation of relevant passages in the New Testament and, for example, the stories of Moses and Elijah.⁸ Although I cannot undertake detailed arguments here today, I also believe that the portions of JST Genesis published in the book of Moses throw much more light on temple themes than has been usually supposed, and that their relevance goes far beyond the obvious passages on the Creation, the Fall, and early events in the lives of Adam and Eve. Under the same spirit of revelation, these chapters can serve as a tutorial to all those who prize the temple in our day.

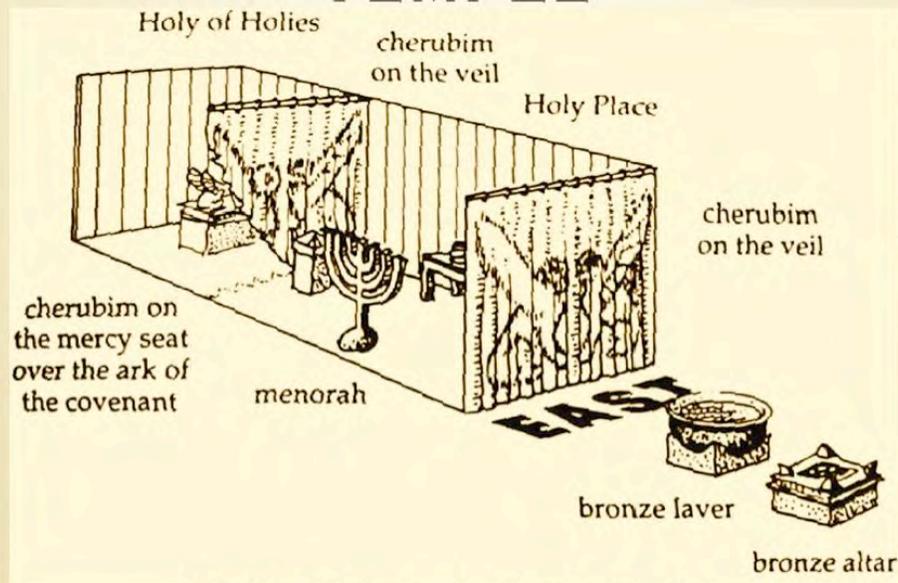


Public domain, see e.g., <http://www.fiddle-sticks.com/ViewofNauvoo1850s.jpg>

A corollary, in making this argument, is that a detailed understanding of the covenants and sequences of blessings associated with current forms of LDS temple worship were revealed to Joseph Smith a decade before he began to teach them in plainness to the Saints in Nauvoo.⁹ It has been generally supposed that in Kirtland the Prophet knew only a little about temple ordinances, and taught all of what he then knew to the Saints; and that when he got to Nauvoo the rest was revealed to him, and so he taught them something more. However, I think such a conclusion is mistaken. My study of the book of Moses and others of the initial revelations and teachings of Joseph Smith have convinced me that he knew early on much more about these matters than he publicly taught at the time, contradicting the view of those who consider the temple ordinances a late invention.¹⁰ Indeed, in a few cases, we know that the Prophet deliberately delayed the publication of temple-related revelations connected with his work on the JST until the Nauvoo period. For example, in Bachman's groundbreaking studies on the origins of D&C 132, which has not only to do with celestial marriage but also the whole context of temple work, he convincingly argued that nearly all of that section was revealed to the Prophet as he worked on the first half of JST Genesis, more than a decade previous to 1843, when the revelation was first recorded.¹¹ Likewise, Joseph Smith waited until 1843 to publish the first chapter of the book of Moses. In that revelation he had been specifically commanded not to show it "unto any except them that believe until I command you."¹² Some of what the Prophet learned as he worked on the JST may have never been put to writing.¹³ Brigham Young is remembered as stating "that the Prophet before his death [spoke] about going through the translation of the scriptures again and perfecting it upon points of doctrine which the Lord had restrained him from giving in plainness and fulness at the time."¹⁴

Though Moses chapters 1 and 5-8 contain the most new and interesting material from a temple perspective, today I would like to explore selected themes from the central chapters of the book of Moses, chapters 2-4, in greater detail. These chapters center on the stories of the Creation, the Garden of Eden, and the Fall—stories that, unlike the rest of the book of Moses, remain relatively unchanged from their biblical counterparts.

THE CREATION AND THE TEMPLE



Michael P. Lyon, 1952-; *Sacred Topography of Eden and the Temple*, 1994 (detail)

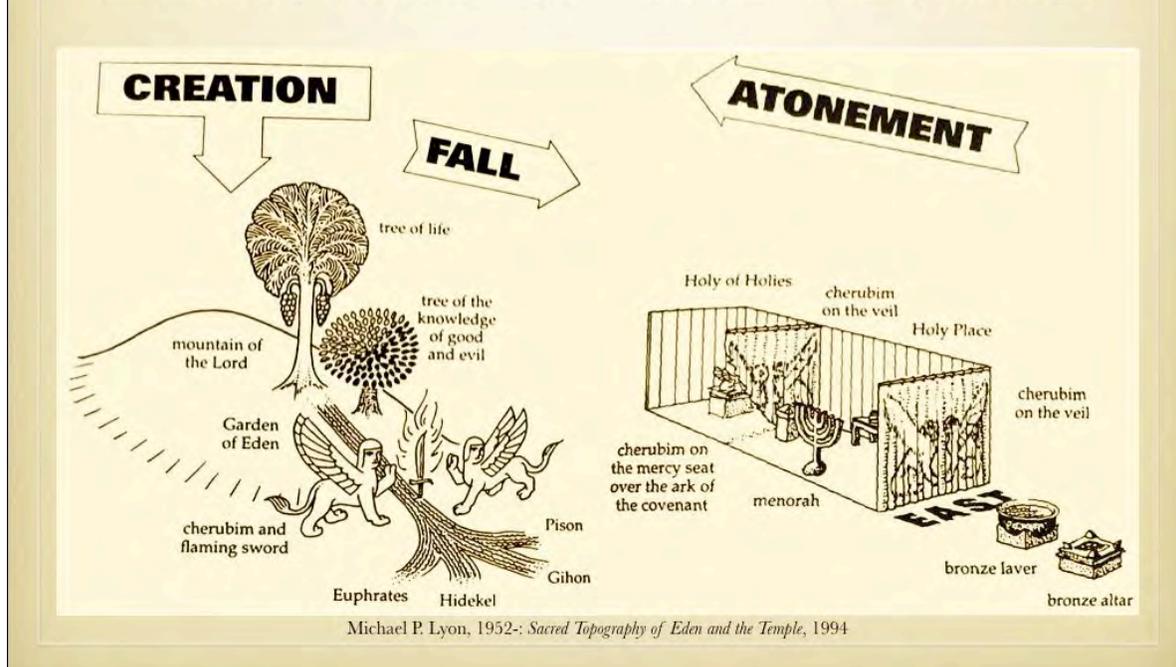
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There are significant differences in detail between the stories of creation attributed to Moses, and those found in the book of Abraham and in the temple. One reason may be that this instruction was given to Moses not primarily to inform him about how the world was made, but rather to show him the pattern for building a temple. Hugh Nibley has famously called the temple “a scale-model of the universe” [131, pp. 14-15]. Margaret Barker argues that the very architecture of the tabernacle and the temple of ancient Israel seems to have been a similitude based on Moses’ vision of the creation.¹⁵ Louis Ginzberg’s reconstruction of several Jewish sources is consistent with this idea:

God told the angels: On the first day of creation, I shall make the heavens and stretch them out; so will Israel raise up the tabernacle as the dwelling place of my Glory.¹⁶ On the second day I shall put a division between the terrestrial waters and the heavenly waters, so will [my servant Moses] hang up a veil in the tabernacle to divide the Holy Place and the Most Holy.¹⁷ On the third day I shall make the earth to put forth grass and herbs; so will he, in obedience to my commands, ... prepare shewbread before me.¹⁸ On the fourth day I shall make the luminaries; so he will stretch out a golden candlestick before me.¹⁹ On the fifth day I shall create the birds; so he will fashion the cherubim with outstretched wings.²⁰ On the sixth day I shall create man; so will Israel set aside a man from the sons of Aaron as high priest for my service.²¹

Exodus 40:33 describes how Moses completed the tabernacle. The Hebrew text exactly parallels the account of how God finished creation.²² *Genesis Rabbah* comments: “It is as if, on that day [i.e., the day the tabernacle was raised in the wilderness], I actually created the world.”²³

THE SACRED TOPOGRAPHY OF EDEN AND OF THE TEMPLE

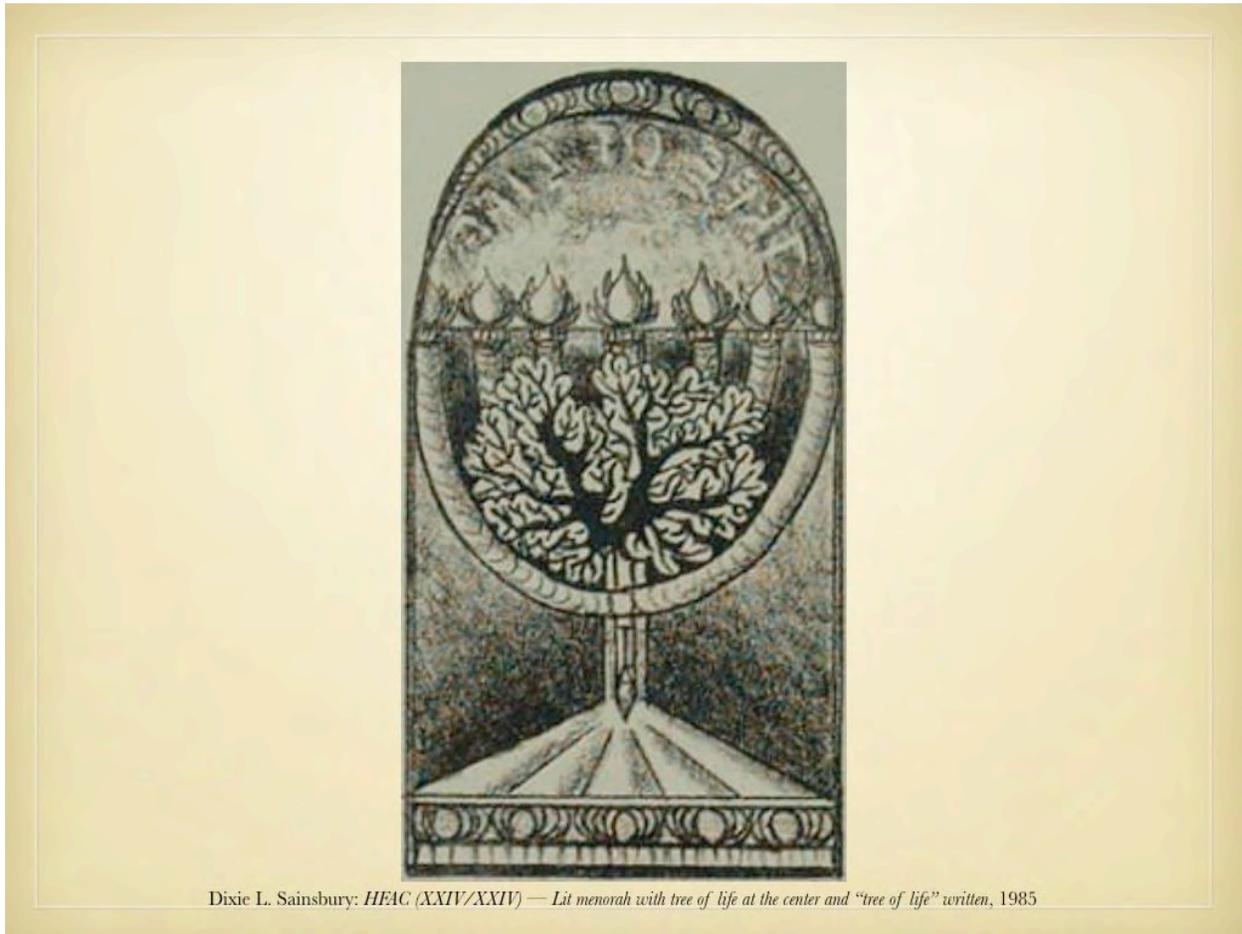


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Donald Parry has argued that the Garden of Eden can be seen as a natural “temple,” where Adam and Eve lived in God’s presence for a time, and mirroring the configuration of the heavenly temple intended as their ultimate destination.²⁴ Quoting Parry:

Anciently, once a year on *Yom Kippur*, the Day of Atonement, Adam’s eastward expulsion from the garden was reversed when the high priest traveled west past the consuming fire of sacrifice and the purifying water of the laver, through the veil woven with images of cherubim. Thus, he returned to the original point of creation, where he poured out the atoning blood of the sacrifice, reestablishing the covenant relationship with God.²⁵

In modern temples, the posterity of Adam and Eve likewise trace the footsteps of their first parents both away from Eden and then in a journey of return and reunion.²⁶ About the journey made within the temple, Nibley comments: “Properly speaking, one did not go ‘through’ the temple—in one door and out another—for one enters and leaves by the same door, but by moving in opposite directions... The Two Ways of Light and Darkness are but one way after all, as the wise Heraclitus said: ‘The up-road and the down-road are one’; which one depends on the way we are facing.”²⁷ It is in this sense that we can consider the whole collection of stories assembled in Moses chapters 2 through 8 to constitute “a walk in the Garden.”



Dixie L. Sainsbury: *HEAC (XXIV/XXIV) — Lit menorah with tree of life at the center and “tree of life” written, 1985*

http://contentdm.byu.edu/cdm4/item_viewer.php?CISOROOT=%2FMoa&CISOPTR=4169&DMSCALE=100&DMWIDTH=600&DMHEIGHT=600&DMODE=viewer&DMFULL=1&DMX=0&DMY=0&DMTEXT=&DMTHUMB=1&REC=6&DMROTATE=0&x=212&y=190 (Reproduction for commercial gain prohibited)

The Tree of Life is the most significant object in the Garden of Eden. Its presence has always been somewhat of a puzzle to students of the Bible, however, because it is only briefly mentioned in Genesis: once at the beginning of the story, in connection with the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil,²⁸ and once at the end when cherubim and a flaming sword are placed before it to prevent Adam and Eve from partaking of its fruit.²⁹ For this and other reasons, some scholars have concluded that there was originally only one special tree, the Tree of Knowledge, in the Garden of Eden story, and that the Tree of Life was added later as an afterthought.³⁰ This view is, of course, mistaken, as will be argued a little later.

Sometimes sacred trees are associated with a human king,³¹ or with the mother of a king, whether human or divine.³² Catherine Thomas noted that “most often in scripture... the tree is an anthropomorphic symbol. A tree serves well as such a symbol because it has, after all, limbs, a circulatory system, the bearing of fruit, and so forth. Specifically, scriptural trees stand for Christ and his attributes.”³³ Nicholas Wyatt concurs, adding that: “The Menorah is probably what Moses is understood to have seen as the burning bush in Exodus 3.”³⁴ Thus, Jehovah, the premortal Jesus Christ, was represented to Moses as one who dwells in the midst of the burning glory of the Tree of Life.³⁵

As an aside, Barker sees evidence that in the first temple a Tree of Life was symbolized *within* the Holy of Holies.³⁶ By way of contrast, most depictions of Jewish temple architecture show a menorah as being *outside* the veil. Could there have been a depiction of the Tree of Life in both places?³⁷ In any case, Barker concludes that the menorah 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.³⁸



Olive Tree in Gethsemane, 1977. Copyright Jeffrey M. Bradshaw

Ancient commentators often identify the Tree of Life with the olive tree.³⁹ Its extremely long life makes it a fitting symbol for eternal life, and the everyday use of the oil as a source of both nourishment and light evokes natural associations when used in conjunction with the ritual anointing of priests and kings, and the blessing of the sick.⁴⁰

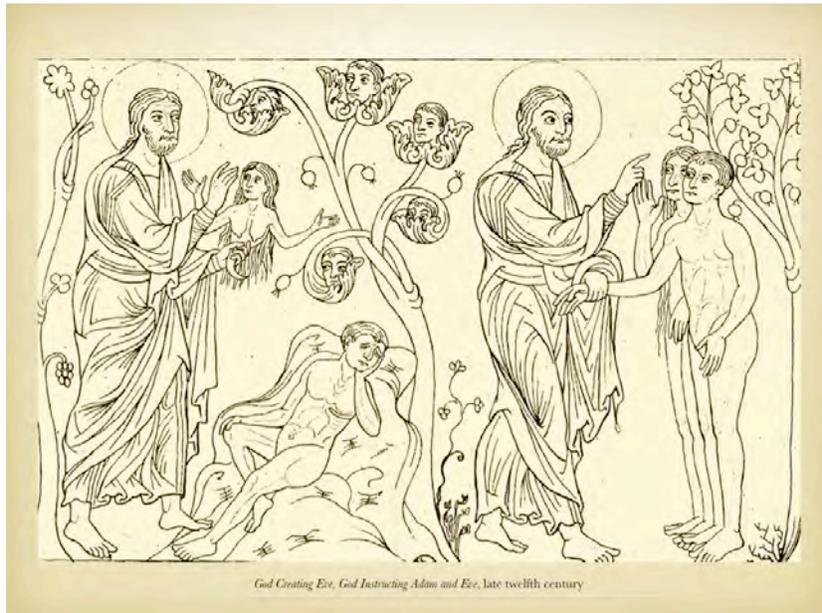
(Court of the Palms, Mural at Mari (Tel Hariri), Syria, ca. 1750 BCE)

The date palm, on the other hand, is the sacred tree in Assyrian mythology, and its longevity was a fitting symbol for long life to the Egyptians.⁴¹ This mural from 1750 BCE, writes J. R. Porter, “strikingly recall[s] details of the Genesis description of the Garden of Eden. In particular, the mural depicts two types of tree,” one type clearly being a date palm,⁴² “guarded by mythical winged animals[—the Assyrian version of the] cherubim.”⁴³ The lower half of the central panel shows figures holding jars from which flow four streams,” with a seedling growing out of the middle, recalling the streams that flowed out from underneath the Tree of Life in the Garden.⁴⁴ The streams originate in a basement room that might be seen as providing an ideal setting for ritual washings.⁴⁵ “The upper scene may depict a king being invested by the Mesopotamian fertility goddess Ishtar: Eve has been associated with such divine figures.”⁴⁶ Note the king’s right hand raised, perhaps in an oath-related gesture.⁴⁷ His outstretched left arm receives the crown and staff of his office.⁴⁸



Date Palm near the Dead Sea, 2007. Copyright Jeffrey M. Bradshaw.

In favor of the date palm as a representation of the Tree of Life are the Book of Mormon accounts of Lehi and Nephi's visions. Other sources specifically associate the date palm with the motifs of kingship, wisdom, the mother of a divine child, and the cosmos itself.⁴⁹ Lehi contrasts the fruit of the Tree of Life to the fruit of the forbidden tree: "the one being sweet and the other bitter."⁵⁰ The fruit of the date palm—often described as "white" in its most desirable varieties, well-known to Lehi's family, and likely available in the Valley of Lemuel where the family was camped at the time of the vision—would have provided a more fitting analogue than the olive to the love of God that was "sweet above all that is sweet."⁵¹



From the *Hortus Deliciarum*. Bibliothèque Nationale de France, with assistance of Mme Zerkane and Ingrid Appert. No reposting, redistribution, or reproduction of this image permitted.

Here is a twelfth-century drawing of two scenes from the Garden of Eden. At the left is Eve who is being created from Adam's rib, and at the right is God giving Adam and Eve a commandment not to partake of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge.⁵² Anderson points out an interesting divergence between Genesis story and the drawing featured here: "Whereas Genesis 2 recounts that Adam was created first,⁵³ given a commandment,⁵⁴ and only then received a spouse,⁵⁵ the [illustration] has it that Adam was created, then Eve was drawn from his rib, and finally *both* were given a commandment."⁵⁶ At right, God gestures toward the tree of knowledge in warning as He takes Adam firmly by the wrist. At the same time, Eve raises her arm in what seems a gesture of consent to God's commandment.⁵⁷

An interesting feature of the Tree of Life, in the middle of the drawing, is that it has sprouted human faces resembling Adam and Eve. This idea attests to Jewish and Christian traditions about individual premortal existence. The "Tree of Souls" which, in Jewish legend, represented the heavenly Tree of Life, was thought to produce "new souls, which ripen, and then fall from the tree into... the Treasury of Souls in Paradise. There the soul is stored until the angel Gabriel reaches into the treasury and takes out the first soul that comes into his hand" so it can be born into mortality.⁵⁸

(Diane Aposhian-Moffat, *Lehi's Vision of the Tree of Life*, 2002. See *Ensign*, January 2004, p. 44, online at <http://www.lds.org>)

One thing that has always perplexed students of Genesis is the location of the two trees in Eden. The Hebrew phrase corresponding to “in the midst” literally means “in the center.” Although scripture specifically applies the phrase “in the midst” only to the Tree of Life,⁵⁹ the Tree of Knowledge is later said by Eve to be located there, too.⁶⁰

(John M. Lindquist, *Sacred Stones Emerging from the Waters*, 1993)

A brief review of the symbolism of the “center” in ancient thought will help clarify the important roles that the Tree of Life and the Tree of Knowledge played “in the midst” of the Garden of Eden.⁶¹

In ancient Israel, the holiest spot on earth was believed to be the Foundation Stone in front of the Ark within the temple at Jerusalem. To the Jews, “it was the first solid material to emerge from the waters of creation,⁶² and it was upon this stone that the deity effected creation.”⁶³ John Lundquist cites a famous passage in the *Midrash Tanhuma* to this effect:

Just as the navel is found at the centre of a human being, so the land of Israel is found at the centre of the world. Jerusalem is at the centre of the land of Israel, and the temple is at the centre of Jerusalem, the Holy of Holies is at the centre of the temple, the Ark is at the centre of the Holy of Holies, and the Foundation Stone is in front of the Ark, which spot is the foundation of the world.⁶⁴

Often symbolized as a cosmic tree, the temple “originates in the underworld, stands on the earth as a ‘meeting place,’ and yet towers (architecturally) into the heavens and gives access to the heavens through its ritual.”⁶⁵ In this beautiful photograph by Lundquist, a structure of sacred stones emerging from the surrounding waters evokes a similar “tranquility charged with divine force.”⁶⁶



Masjid al-Haram at night



Gustave Doré, 1832-1883: *L'Empyrée*, illustration for Paradise Canto 31, Divine Comedy (1308-1321) by Dante Alighieri, 1857

Public Domain. See http://clickonislam.com/images/Mecca/album/pages/mecca_jpg.htm and http://www.artpassions.net/cgi-bin/dore_image.pl?./galleries/dore/paradiso34x.jpg

In the symbolism of the sacred center, the circle is often used to represent heaven, while the square represents earth.

This photo shows the sacred mosque of Mecca during the peak period of *hajj* (= pilgrimage).⁶⁷ As part of the ritual of *tawaf*, *hajj* pilgrims enact the symbolism of the circle and the square as they form concentric rings around the rectangular *Ka'bah* (= cube). Islamic tradition says that near this place Adam had been shown the worship place of angels, which was directly above the *Ka'bah* in heaven,⁶⁸ and that he was commanded to build a house for God in Mecca where he could, in likeness of the angels, “circumambulate... and offer prayer...”⁶⁹

At right we see Doré’s famous illustration of the empyrean heaven.⁷⁰ This is a representation of the highest heaven as a circular realm of pure fire.⁷¹ The heavenly throne, in the words of Lehi, is “surrounded with numberless concourses of angels in the attitude of singing and praising their God.”⁷² The representation of heaven as concentric circles can be contrasted to the figure of the intersecting circle and square—the latter combination symbolizing the coming together of heaven and earth in both the temple and in the soul of the seeker of Wisdom.

(David Lindsley, *Behold Your Little Ones*, 1983)

Ultimately, the sacred center does not represent some abstract epitome of goodness nor merely a ceremonial altar or throne, but Deity itself, as shown in this image. The center is the most holy place, and the degree of holiness decreases in proportion to the distance from that center. For example, Kent Brown observes how at His first appearance to the Nephites Jesus “stood in the midst of them,”⁷³ and cites other Book of Mormon passages associating the presence of the Lord “in the midst” to the placement of the temple and its altar.⁷⁴ He also noted a similar configuration when Jesus blessed the Nephite children:

As the most Holy One, [the Savior] was standing “in the midst,” at the sacred center.⁷⁵ The children sat “upon the ground round about him.”⁷⁶ When the angels “came down,” they “encircled those little ones about.” In their place next to the children, the angels themselves “were encircled about with fire.”⁷⁷ On the edge stood the adults. And beyond them was what we might term profane space which stretched away from this holy scene...⁷⁸

Jesus’ placement of the children so that they immediately surrounded Him—their proximity exceeding even that of the encircling angels and accompanying fire—conveyed a powerful visual message about their holiness: namely, that “whosoever... shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.”⁷⁹ Hence, Jesus’ instructions to them: “Behold your little ones.”⁸⁰



Lutwin: *How the Devil Deceived Eve*, early 14th century (detail)

From Lutwin's *Eva und Adam*. Public domain. See e.g., http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/~hummm/Topics/AdamNeve/a_n_e16.jpg

Elaborate explanations have been advanced as attempts to describe how both the Tree of Life and the Tree of Knowledge could share the center of the Garden.⁸¹ For example, it has been suggested that these two trees were in reality different aspects of a single tree⁸² or that they shared a common trunk⁸³ or were somehow intertwined.⁸⁴ This detail, from a fourteenth-century drawing by Lutwin,⁸⁵ shows the Tree of Life and the Tree of Knowledge both standing in the center of the Garden with their branches intertwined.

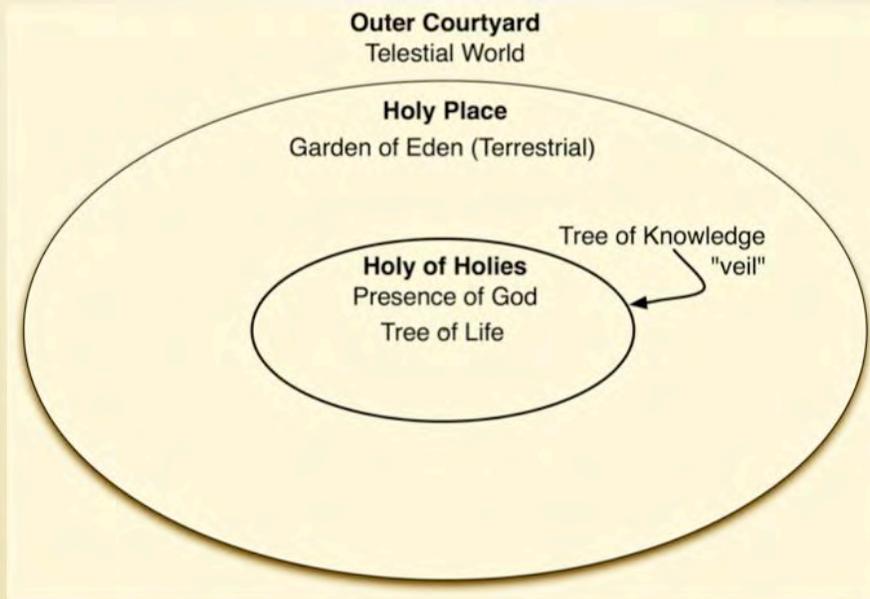
The subtle conflation of the location of two trees in the Genesis account seems intentional, preparing readers for the confusion that later ensues in the dialogue with the serpent. The dramatic irony of the story is heightened by the fact that while the reader is informed about both trees, Adam and Eve are only specifically told about the Tree of Knowledge. Satan will exploit their ignorance to his advantage.



Palm tree near Brawley, California. Copyright Jeffrey M. Bradshaw

Perhaps the most interesting tradition about the placement of the two trees is the idea that the foliage of the Tree of Knowledge hid the Tree of Life from direct view, and that “God did not specifically prohibit eating from the Tree of Life because the Tree of Knowledge formed a hedge around it; only after one had partaken of the latter and cleared a path for himself could one come close to the Tree of Life.”⁸⁶

THREE ZONES OF SACREDNESS WITHIN EDEN



After G. A. Andersen, *The Genesis of Perfection*. Copyright Jeffrey M. Bradshaw

It is in this same sense that Ephrem the Syrian, a brilliant and devoted fourth-century Christian, could call the Tree of Knowledge “the veil for the sanctuary”⁸⁷—the Tree of Life having been planted in an inner place so holy that Adam and Eve would court mortal danger if they entered unprepared. Though God could minister to them in the Garden, they could not safely enter His world.⁸⁸ Speaking in a similar spirit, Elder Bruce C. Hafen has explained that: “The mortal learning experience, represented by the *tree of knowledge*, is so necessary that God placed cherubim and a flaming sword to guard the way of the *tree of life* until Adam and Eve completed, and we, their posterity, complete this preparatory schooling... [God] cannot fully receive us and give us the gift of celestial life—partaking of [His] very nature—until we have *learned by our own experience* to distinguish good and evil.”⁸⁹

EPHREM'S CONCEPTION OF EDEN

Temple	Eden	Ark	Sinai
Holy of Holies	Presence of God Tree of Life (Summit)		The Glorious One
Veil	Tree of Knowledge (Heights)	Noah	Moses
Holy Place	The Righteous (Slopes)	Birds	Aaron and the Priests
Outer Courtyard	Penitent Sinners (Lower Slopes)	Animals	Israelites

After Brock's description in an introduction to the translation of *Hymns on Paradise*. Copyright Jeffrey M. Bradshaw.

Ephrem the Syrian's detailed description of the segmented layout of Eden draws on parallels with the division of the animals on Noah's ark and the demarcations on Sinai separating Moses, Aaron, the priests, and the people.⁹⁰ For now, we will only discuss the leftmost column. Here he depicts Paradise as a great mountain, with the Tree of Knowledge providing a boundary partway up the slopes. The Tree of Knowledge, he concludes, "acts as a sanctuary curtain [or veil] hiding the Holy of Holies which is the Tree of Life higher up."⁹¹

Significantly, a Gnostic text describes the "color" of the Tree of Life as being "like the sun" while the "glory" of the Tree of Knowledge is said to be "like the moon."⁹² Similarly, an Armenian Christian text records the belief that "the tree of good and evil is the knowledge of material things"—referring to the kind of knowledge that was made possible when Adam and Eve partook of the fruit—"and that the tree of life is the knowledge of divine things, which were not profitable to the simple understanding of Adam"—at least not until after he had successfully passed through the experience of mortality.⁹³

(Illustration of Adam and Eve Enthroned in Paradise)

For those who took the Tree of Life to be a representation of the Holy of Holies, it was natural to see the tree as the locus of God's throne.⁹⁴ As Terje Stordalen explains:

[T]he garden, at the center of which stands the throne of glory, is the royal audience room, which only those admitted to the sovereign's presence can enter. It is the appointed place for the meeting between God and the people who come before Him. In the garden God talks to Adam, and in the garden He waits for the souls who come back to Him.⁹⁵

Consistent with this illustration, an Islamic legend maintains that Adam and Eve, as God's vice-regents on the earth, were permitted to reign on His behalf from a throne in Eden until the moment of their transgression:

In the midst of Paradise there stood a green silken tent, supported on golden pillars, and in the midst of it there was a throne, on which Adam seated himself with Eve, whereupon the curtains of the tent closed around them of their own accord.⁹⁶

Although the idea of a second co-located tree is not usually mentioned in Islamic traditions concerning Adam and Eve,⁹⁷ note that the function of the curtains in the description was, of course, to screen the throne from public sight, just as the Tree of Knowledge veiled the view of the Tree of Life in Ephrem's depiction of Eden.

(Manichaean Wall painting of a Sacred Tree)

A Manichaean wall-painting from East Turkestan depicts a sacred tree with three trunks.⁹⁸ The symbolism of the three trunks in Manichaean iconography may be connected to the three sons of Noah of whom “the whole earth [was] overspread.”⁹⁹

The story of Noah’s family after the Flood has often been compared to the first chapters of Genesis. Immediately after their debarkation, God established His covenant with them, outlining dietary instructions and giving the commandment to “multiply and replenish” the renewed earth, in similitude of what He originally told Adam and Eve.¹⁰⁰ The ever-obedient Noah also imitated the example of the first parents by beginning at once to “till the earth.”¹⁰¹ Then comes the scene of a “Fall” and consequent judgment.¹⁰²

Often, the instigator of this “Fall” is wrongfully seen to be Noah who, it is reported, succumbed to the intoxicating influence of wine from his vineyard and retreated to the privacy of his tent.¹⁰³ Note, however, that the scriptures omit any hint of wrongdoing by Noah, and instead reserve all condemnation for his son Ham and his grandson Canaan.¹⁰⁴ And what was their sin? If we have understood the situation in Eden correctly, it is a perfect parallel to the transgression of Adam and Eve. Without proper invitation, Ham approached the curtains of his father’s tent and intrusively looked within, violating Noah’s sanctity and uncovering what should have been left unseen.¹⁰⁵

(Jan Brueghel the Elder, *The Garden of Eden*, 1612)

While the battle begun in the premortal councils and waged again in the Garden of Eden was a test of obedience for Adam and Eve, it should be remembered that the actual prize at stake was knowledge—the knowledge required for them to be saved and, ultimately, to be exalted. The Prophet taught that the “principle of knowledge is the principle of salvation,”¹⁰⁶ therefore “anyone that cannot get knowledge to be saved will be damned.”¹⁰⁷

This raises a conundrum: Since salvation was to come through knowledge, why did Satan encourage rather than prevent the eating of the forbidden fruit by Adam and Eve? It is evident that their transgression must have been as much an important part of the Devil’s strategy as it was a central feature of the Father’s plan. The difference in intention between God and Satan was apparent, however, when it came time for Adam and Eve to take the *next* step.¹⁰⁸ In this regard, the scriptures seem to suggest that the adversary wanted Adam and Eve to eat of the fruit of the Tree of Life *directly after* they took of the Tree of Knowledge—a danger which moved God to take immediate preventive action.¹⁰⁹ For had Adam and Eve eaten of the fruit of the Tree of Life at that time, as the prophet Alma said, “there would have been no death” and no “space granted unto man in which he might repent”—in other words no “probationary state” to prepare for a final judgment and resurrection.¹¹⁰

It is easy to see a parallel between Satan’s initial proposal in the spirit world and his later strategy to “frustrate” the plan of salvation through his actions in Eden. Just as his defeated premortal plan had proposed to provide a limited measure of “salvation” for all by precluding the opportunity for exaltation,¹¹¹ so it seems plausible that his unsuccessful scheme in the Garden was intended to impose an inferior form of immortality that would forestall the possibility of eternal life. However, because the Devil “knew not the mind of God,” his efforts “to destroy the world”¹¹² would be in vain: the result of his deceitful manipulations to get Adam and Eve to eat of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge was co-opted by God, and the risk of Adam and Eve’s partaking immediately of the fruit of the Tree of Life was averted by the merciful placement of the cherubim and flaming sword.

The Father did intend—eventually—for Adam and Eve to partake of the Tree of Life, but not until they had learned through mortal experience to distinguish good from evil.¹¹³



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Having selectively examined some of the ancient perspectives that might shed light on the context of the story of the Fall of Adam and Eve, we are now ready to return to the account itself, as given in the book of Moses, chapter 4.

The serpent is described as “subtle.” The Hebrew term behind the word thus depicts it as shrewd, cunning, and crafty, but not as wise.¹¹⁴ “Subtle,” in this context, also has to do with the ability to make something appear one way when it is actually another. Thus, it will not be in the least out of character later for Satan both to disguise his identity and to distort the true nature of a situation in order to deceive.¹¹⁵

The painting shows the Tempter in the dual guise of a serpent and a woman whose hair and facial features exactly mirror those of Eve. This common form of portrayal was not intended to assert that the woman was devilish, but rather to depict the Devil as trying to allay Eve’s fears, deceptively appealing to her by appearing in a form that resembled her own.¹¹⁶

Of more significance here is the fact that the serpent is a frequently used symbol of Christ and his life-giving power.¹¹⁷ In the context of the temptation of Eve, Draper *et al.* conclude that Satan “has effectively come as the Messiah, offering a promise that only the Messiah can offer, for it is the Messiah who will control the powers of life and death and can promise life, not Satan.”¹¹⁸ Not only has the Devil come in guise of the Holy One, he has chosen to appear in a very sacred place in the Garden of Eden.¹¹⁹ If it is true, as Ephrem the Syrian believed, that the Tree of Knowledge was a figure for “the veil for the sanctuary,”¹²⁰ then Satan has positioned himself, in an extreme of sacrilegious effrontery, as the very “keeper of the gate.”¹²¹

What was the nature of the forbidden fruit? Recalling an Egyptian version of the story, which revolved around the presumption of the hero, Setne, “in taking the book of Knowledge, which was guarded by the endless serpent” [132, p. 310], Nibley noted the fact that “a *book* of knowledge is certainly more logical than a *tree* of knowledge” [132, p. 311]. Islamic legend likewise insists on the idea that Satan was condemned for his claims that he would reveal a knowledge of certain things to Adam and Eve. He is portrayed as recruiting his accomplices (the “vain” peacock and the “fair and prudent” serpent) by deceptively promising them that he would reveal to them “three mysterious words” which would “preserve [them] from sickness, age, and death.”¹²² Having by this means won over the serpent, Satan then directly equates the effect of knowing these secret words with the eating of the forbidden fruit by promising the same protection from death to Eve if she will but partake.¹²³ Nibley elaborates: “Satan disobeyed orders when he revealed certain secrets to Adam and Eve, not because they were not known and done in other worlds, but because he was not authorized in that time and place to convey them.”¹²⁴ Although Satan had “given the fruit to Adam and Eve, it was not his prerogative to do so—regardless of what had been done in other worlds. (When the time comes for such fruit, it will be given us legitimately.)”¹²⁵

(James C. Christensen, *Pandora*)

At the moment of temptation, Satan deliberately tries to confuse Eve. The Devil, and the reader of scripture, know that there are two trees in the midst of the Garden, but only one of them is visible to Eve. Moreover, as Margaret Barker explains, “he made the two trees seem identical: the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil would open her eyes, and she would be like God, knowing both good and evil. Almost the same was true of the Tree of Life, for Wisdom opened the eyes of those who ate her fruit, and as they became wise, they became divine.”¹²⁶

The plausibility of the theme of confusion between the two trees in the record of Moses is strengthened by its appearance in extracanonical accounts. For example, in the *Qur'an* Satan does more than simply say that Eve will not suffer death if she eats the forbidden fruit. Instead, he makes the false claim that it is “the tree of immortality.”¹²⁷ However, in reality the tree was just the opposite of what the Devil stated it to be: “It was the tree of death, the spiritual death of man.”¹²⁸



Sacred Tree on the Apron of Charlemagne, eighth century

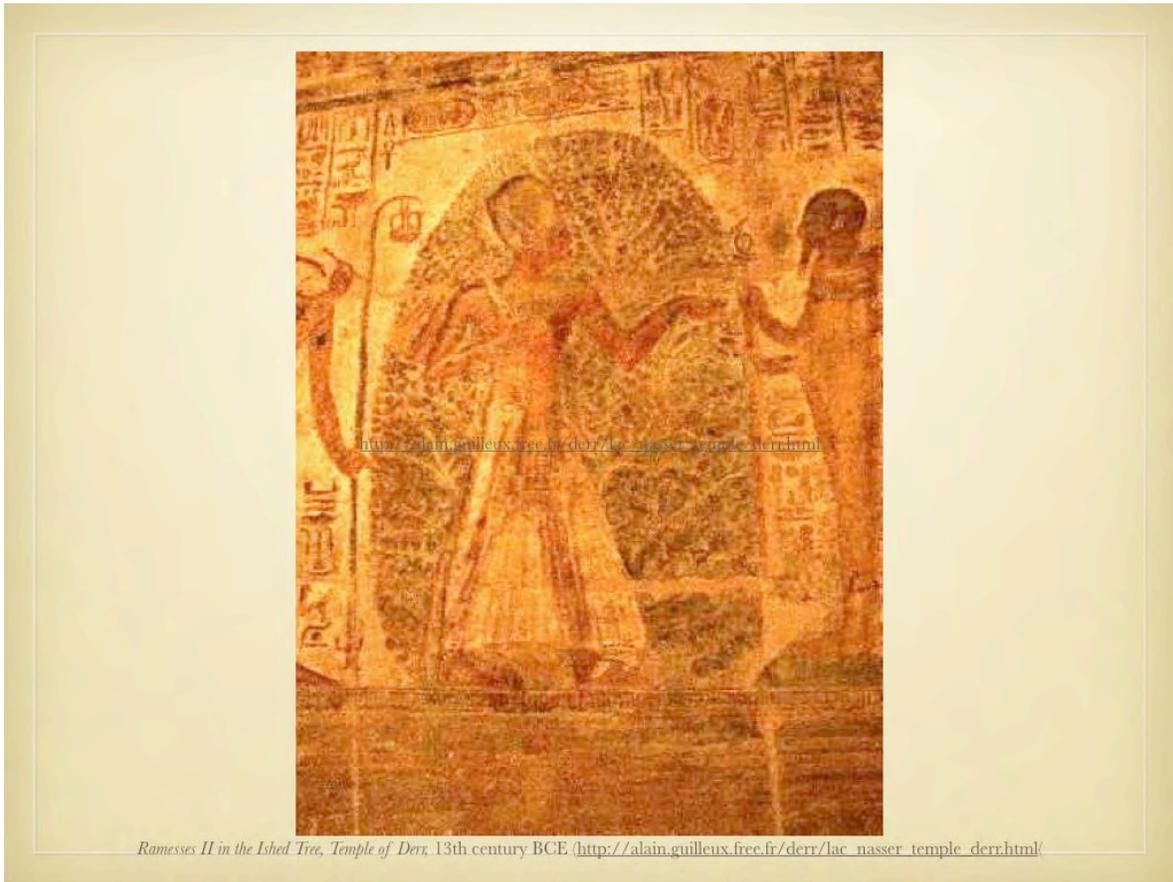
Public domain as per <http://www.archive.org/detail/s/christianantiqui02smituoft>, from Smith, W., & Cheetham, S. (1876, 1880). *A Dictionary of Christian Antiquities Being a Continuation of 'The Dictionary of the Bible'*. Hartford, CN: The J. B. Burr Publishing Company, 2:1307

Following their transgression, we are told that Adam and Eve made aprons from fig leaves. The fruit of the fig tree is known for its abundance of seeds, thus an apron of green fig leaves is an appropriate symbol for Adam and Eve's ability to procreate, to "be fruitful and multiply" after the Fall.

Ostensibly, the aprons functioned to hide their nakedness—but is there more to the story than this? Aprons have long been used in ritual contexts to represent power and authority. For example, a sacred tree was symbolically represented on an apron worn by the eighth-century Christian king Charlemagne, as in this figure included in Matthew Brown's valuable volume.¹²⁹ Kings in the Middle East were often represented as various sorts of trees. In Egypt and Mesoamerica, foliated aprons were used as a sign of authority.

In Moses 4:27, God Himself will be the one to clothe Adam and Eve, whereas in v. 13 we are told that Adam and Eve "made *themselves* aprons." Like their tasting of the forbidden fruit,¹³⁰ this action exemplifies the "recurring theme... of the attempt and failure of human effort in obtaining a blessing that only God can give."¹³¹ It is perfectly in character for Satan to have planted the suggestion of making aprons, since he often appropriates false signs of power and priesthoods for himself in order to deceive.¹³²

Note that this is Satan's third attempt to mislead Adam and Eve by false appearances. First, he appeared as a serpent, deceptively employing a symbol of Christ. Second, he made claims that confused the identities of Tree of Knowledge and the Tree of Life. Finally, in the episode of the fig-leaf aprons, he suggested a course of action to Adam and Eve that substituted a self-made emblem of power and priesthood for the true article obtainable only when authorized by God.



With permission of Alain Guilleux.

When Adam and Eve heard the voice of the Lord, the English text says that they “went to hide themselves from the presence of the Lord God *amongst the trees of the garden*.”¹³³ However this is a mistranslation, since the Hebrew for “tree” is singular in this verse—an important subtlety glossed over in nearly every vernacular edition of the Bible. As a rare exception, André Chouraqui’s French translation holds to a strict rendering of the key phrase describing Adam and Eve’s place of concealment: “in the center of [i.e., within] the tree of the garden.”¹³⁴ As Kastler observes, “they are not merely touching the [Tree of Knowledge] but they have for all intents and purposes merged with it... The tree has become their refuge—or perhaps their prison.”¹³⁵ They have experienced a kind of death.

The image of the guilty parties, Adam and Eve, being figuratively shut up in a tree recalls Egyptian motifs, such as the one evoked by the figure of Ramesses II as Osiris shown here.¹³⁶ Nibley also mentions “*Book of the Dead* vignettes showing the Lady incorporated—all but her upper part, and in many cases all but her arms only—in the fruit-bearing tree [suggesting] that the woman *in* the tree must actually have been eaten *by* it; she is the first victim, so to speak, and now invites her male companion to share her condition.”¹³⁷ Thus, in ancient year-rites in Egypt, the splitting of the tree “both terminates life and liberates it” allowing the captive initiate to be reborn.¹³⁸ The splitting of the tree also is also said to represent, “among other things, the ‘splitting of ‘good’ and ‘evil,’” or the law of opposites.”¹³⁹

An Islamic tradition likewise relates that: “Adam went inside of the tree to hide,”¹⁴⁰ recalling al-Tha’labi’s version of the story of the martyrdom of Isaiah.¹⁴¹ As in Egyptian texts, pseudepigraphal accounts report that Isaiah’s death in a split tree was immediately followed by his rebirth and ascension to heaven,¹⁴² a motif also found in ancient New World texts.¹⁴³

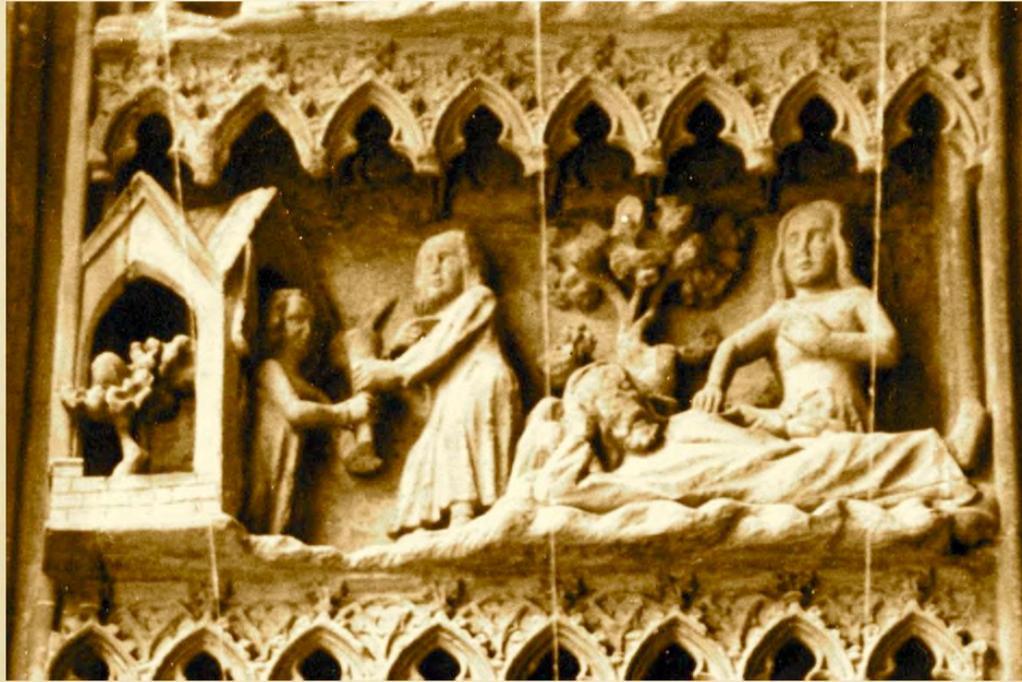
(Figure of Anubis leading Nakht, British Museum 10471¹⁴⁴)

This figure comes from the hieroglyphic funerary papyrus of a Royal Scribe and Chief Military Officer who lived in the 14th century BCE.¹⁴⁵ The guide Anubis leads the deceased one by the hand. They approach a tree that stands before the “false door,” signifying the entrance to the Other World. To reach that door, they must pass by—or perhaps more accurately *through*—the tree.¹⁴⁶ The elaborate preparations that the candidate for admission had made during life and after death were all to the end of making this passage to the next life successful.¹⁴⁷

(Adam and Eve clothed in regal robes in Eden, and naked after the Fall)

Western art typically portrays Adam and Eve as naked in the Garden, and dressed in “coats of skin” after the Fall. However, Orthodox tradition depicts the sequence of their change of clothing in reverse manner. How can that be? The Eastern Church remembers the accounts that portray Adam as a King and Priest in Eden, so naturally he is shown there in his regal robes.¹⁴⁸ On the other hand, Orthodox exegetes interpret the “skins” that the couple wore after their expulsion from the Garden as being their own human flesh. Anderson takes this to mean that “Adam has exchanged an angelic constitution for a mortal one”¹⁴⁹—a terrestrial glory for a celestial one.

Rabbinical writings describe how, in likeness of Adam and Eve, each soul descending to earth “divests itself of its heavenly garment, and is clothed in a garment of flesh and blood” [169, 200, p. 166], the prior glory being, as it were, “veiled... in flesh.”¹⁵⁰ The various “afflictions” of mortality initially given to Adam and now bestowed upon “all... generations”¹⁵¹ frequently number seven: “They are against the ‘seven natures: the flesh for hearing, the eyes for seeing, the breath to smell, the veins to touch, the blood for taste, and bones for endurance, and the intelligence for joy;’¹⁵² or against life, sight, hearing, smell, speech, taste, procreation^{153,154}. Though Adam and Eve were protected from fatal harm at the time of their extremity, Satan had been allowed to hurt them, and we are told that the wounds made by the “blows of death”¹⁵⁵ “remained on their bodies.”¹⁵⁶



The Quest of Seth for the Oil of Mercy, 1351-1360

With the permission of Assaf Pinkus. No reposting, redistribution, or reproduction of this image permitted.

Christian tradition preserves a memory of Adam's intense sufferings from these wounds as he approached death, and of the efforts of Seth and Eve to relieve his anguish. They prayed to God that "He might... send His angel to give them some oil from the tree of his mercy... to anoint... Adam on account of the pains of his body."¹⁵⁷ Eventually, with a branch of a tree from the Garden of Eden,¹⁵⁸ Seth receives the promise that the oil of mercy will flow for mankind through the atoning sacrifice of Christ. Likewise, early Christians wrote of being anointed in all parts of the body with oil from the tree of life in imitation of Adam,¹⁵⁹ and afterward of being "vested with the token of those garments he or she shall enjoy at the resurrection."¹⁶⁰

The story is shown in this sculpture preserved at the Holy Cross Minster in Schwäbisch Gmünd, Germany. Following the description of Assaf Pinkus:

Adam lies on the ground, on his sickbed, supporting his head in his hands. Eve sits behind him. Her right hand grasps his shoulder while her left is held to her breast, exhibiting her storm of emotions. Behind them one can see a sprouting tree. To their right Seth receives a branch from an angel standing at the entrance to a Gothic structure symbolizing Paradise. Inside the canopy is a tree.... Seth [is] an almost abstract figure, existing exclusively to perform his mission: 'to fetch for mankind the gift of God's mercy'...¹⁶¹

Thus, Seth represents Christ himself, and these scenes of Eve's mourning over the death of Adam and Seth's journey to paradise, can be seen as "prefigurations of the Pieta and Crucifixion."¹⁶²



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We have come nearly to the end of our "walk in the Garden." However, a question raised earlier has not been resolved: Is the Tree of Life more usefully thought of as representing an olive tree or a date palm? At least some ancient interpreters might have answered: Both!

Reconciling the competing ideas of a Tree of Life that bears sweet fruit like the date as opposed to oil-producing fruit like the olive is a Gnostic suggestion that the Garden story was concerned with *three* special trees rather than two.¹⁶³ In addition to the original Tree of Life and Tree of Knowledge, the third tree, an olive tree, is said to have sprouted up only *after* the sin of Adam,¹⁶⁴ when a Savior was mercifully provided for him. In Christian imagery, a related idea was often visually represented by a cruciform tree flanked by two small identical trees from the Garden of Eden.¹⁶⁵ The centrally-depicted "Tree of Mercy," said in other sources to have been planted by Seth over the grave of Adam, would be destined to bear "the fruit of the crucified Christ."¹⁶⁶ Thus, in a sense, there were thought to be two "Trees of Life": the original Edenic eschatological tree with its *sweet* fruit that was represented *within* the Holy of Holies, and the subsequently-sprouted *oil-bearing* Tree of Mercy that stood *in front of the veil*, the latter being a symbol of the Savior, His atonement, and the Gospel that was explained to Adam and Eve after the Fall. In a larger sense, the olive tree of mercy also might be seen as representing the whole house of Israel,¹⁶⁷ whose mission it is to help carry out the Savior's work of gathering and blessing all the nations of the earth¹⁶⁸ — what Truman G. Madsen describes as the "Messianic calling [appointed to all] those who receive the Messiah."¹⁶⁹ The primary function of the olive tree was evidently viewed as being to supply the requisite oil for an atoning anointing of healing and sanctification. It was seen as a secondary "Tree of Life" in the sense that the Savior's power could reverse the "blows of death" to which Adam and Eve previously had been subjected.

(William Blake, *The Clothing of Adam and Eve*, 1803)

Our choices parallel those faced by Adam and Eve. Though we have all succumbed to Satan's deception and taken of the Tree of Knowledge (as Roman 5:14 says, "after the similitude of Adam's transgression"), Jesus Christ, our redeeming "Tree of Life," supplies the requisite healing and light, what Hebrews calls the "oil of gladness,"¹⁷⁰ to all who accept Him as their Redeemer. As the only *true* "keeper of the gate,"¹⁷¹ He lovingly welcomes the faithful back into the presence of the Father, where the original Edenic Tree of Life, bearing the sweet fruit of eternal life and the fulness of the love of God, is found. And, in the end, all three trees will indeed become one.

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Endnotes

¹ [132].

² See [64, plate 2, p. 406b].

³ Several significant events had recently transpired: the Book of Mormon had come from the press in March, the Church had been organized in April, and the first conference had been held in early June. Joseph Smith's continuing role as a seer and a translator had been affirmed by a revelation received at the organizational meeting in April (D&C 21:1-6).

⁴ [40, pp. 116-118].

⁵ The question of whether one should assume that every change made in the JST constitutes revealed text is discussed in [27, pp. 51-53; 114, pp. 252-253; 173, pp. 456-470]. Besides arguments that can be made from the actual text of the JST, there are questions regarding the reliability of and degree of supervision given to the scribes who were involved in transcribing, copying, and preparing the text for publication [173, pp. 459-460]. Differences are also apparent in the nature of the translation process that took place at different stages of the work. For example, a significant proportion of the Genesis passages that have been canonized as the book of Moses (including, of course, Moses 1) "[look] like a word-for-word revealed text," evidence from the study of two sections in the New Testament that were translated twice indicates that the later "New Testament JST is not being revealed word-for-word, but largely depends upon Joseph Smith's varying responses to the same difficulties in the text" ([173, pp. 461-462]; for the original study by Jackson and Jasinski, see [90]).

⁶ Jackson explains: "Even though some of the... corrections [made after 1833] provide important clarifications and insights, the overwhelming majority of significant contributions of the Joseph Smith Translation were made during the original dictation... [Several] facts cast doubt on the common belief that he continued to revise the wording of the translation the rest of his life. From 2 July 1833 on, there are no references in his diaries and letters to his making additional changes. There are several statements regarding the preparation of the manuscript for publication, which probably refer not to changes in the translation but to the many insertions of punctuation, capitalization, and verse numbering. We cannot identify the handwritings or dates for these small changes, but most were probably made by clerks working under the Prophet's direction" [89, pp. 28-29].

In view of the many statements on record regarding the Prophet's efforts to bring the entire JST into publication, and its appearance in part in a series of Church publications, it seems inaccurate to conclude that "he made no serious effort to publish the new translation" [41, p. 68].

⁷ Though not, in my opinion, invalidating the general conclusion about the priority of Genesis 1-24 in the translation process, a confounding factor makes any precise attempt at quantification impossible. During the course of New Testament translation, the Prophet stopped the practice of writing out the verses in full and instead adopted an abbreviated notation system he had developed for the New Testament. This same process was again used when, following the completion of the New Testament, Old Testament translation was resumed at the end of Genesis 24. Howard notes that this change in process may have naturally led to fewer and briefer revisions ([87, pp. 92-93]; see also [114, p. 80]).

⁸ As these accounts were gradually shared and published, of course, they could have served the same preparatory function for the Prophet's associates.

⁹ See my forthcoming commentary on the book of Moses, *In God's Image and Likeness: Ancient and Modern Perspectives on the Book of Moses*, especially the chapters on Moses 1 and 5-8, and *Excursus 3: An Anticipation of Temple Blessings* and *Excursus 53a: The Mysteries of Aaron, Moses, and Melchizedek*.

¹⁰ Compare Matthew 17:9. Of course, having an understanding of priesthood ordinances is not the same as being authorized to perform them. As Ehat *et al.* have written about the "ordinances whereby men were ordained kings and priests": "These ordinances were not introduced in Kirtland because Elijah had not come to confer the fulness of the priesthood upon the Prophet before he administered the Kirtland Temple ordinances" (in [174, p. 302 n. 9]).

¹¹ [16].

¹² Moses 1:42.

¹³ All this should not be construed to imply that the Prophet did not make serious efforts to prepare the 1833 manuscript of the JST for publication during his lifetime, but only that he might not have been authorized at the beginning to teach everything he had learned during the translation process to others. Regarding the completeness of the JST as we have it, Matthews has written: "...[T]he manuscript shows that the Prophet went all the way through the Bible from Genesis to Revelation. But it also shows that he did not make all the necessary corrections in one effort. This situation makes it impossible to give a statistical answer to questions about how much of the translation was completed or how much was not completed. What is evident, however, is that any part of the translation might have been further touched upon and improved by additional revelation and emendation by the Prophet" [114, p. 215]. In fact, in a few instances Joseph Smith specifically stated that terms that appeared later as part of the book of Abraham were better translations than the corresponding terms used in the earlier book of Moses [176, 5 January 1841, p. 181, 17 May 1843, p. 301].

¹⁴ [45, pp. 147-148]. The accuracy of this statement, however, is questioned by Jackson: "This is a third-hand account that is hard to reconcile with known statements from Joseph Smith. It was published in 1888. I have serious doubts about it" [91; 92].

¹⁵ [20, pp. 24-25]. Cf. [26, p. 18].

¹⁶ Exodus 40:17-19.

¹⁷ Exodus 40:20-21.

¹⁸ Exodus 12:8, 25:30

¹⁹ Exodus 25:31-40, 37:17-24.

²⁰ Exodus 25:18-22, 37:6-9.

²¹ Exodus 40:12-15, [74, 1:51]. Cf. [201]. Rabbinic tradition also saw the human body as a microcosm of creation and of the temple, e.g., "The Temple corresponds to the whole world and to the creation of man who is a small world" (*Midrash Tanhuma-Yelammedenu* 3, cited in [201]).

²² Moses 3:1.

²³ [124, 3:9, p. 35].

²⁴ [103; 144; 184, pp. 112-116, 308-309].

²⁵ [143, p. 135]. See also [86, pp. 17-19].

²⁶ Cf. John 16:28; [101, pp. 258-259; 185, 4, pp. 54, 55; 204, p. 31]. The story of Adam and Eve's expulsion from and return to the Garden parallels a common three-part literary pattern in ancient Near Eastern literature: *trouble at home, exile abroad, and happy homecoming* [72, p. 12]. The pattern is as old as the Egyptian story of Sinuhe from 1800 BCE [154, pp. 18-22] and is replicated in scriptural accounts of Israel's apostasy and return [51; 72; 73; 159] as well as in the lives of biblical characters such as Jacob (Genesis 27-33) and in pseudepigraphal accounts such as "The Hymn of the Pearl" ([129, pp. 177-178]; see also [132, pp. 487-501]). The theme is as ubiquitous in modern literature as it was in those times [67].

Campbell, somewhat controversially, expanded this idea to the level of a universal "monomyth." He characterizes the "adventure of the hero" in general stages of departure, initiation, and return [44, pp. 49-251]. Likewise, Northrop Frye asserted the virtual universality of this theme, writing that there are:

... four primary narrative movements in literature. These are, first, the descent from a higher world; second, the descent to a lower world; third, the ascent from a lower world; and fourth, the ascent to a higher world. All stories in literature are complications of, or metaphorical derivations from, these four narrative radicals... Explicitly for the first eighteen centuries of the Christian era, and implicitly after and long before that, these patterns of ascent and descent have been spread over a mythological universe consisting of four main levels, two above our own, and one below it. The highest level is in heaven, the place of the presence of God... Level two is the earthly paradise or Garden of Eden, where man lived before the fall... Level three is the world of ordinary experience we now live in... Level four is the demonic world or hell, in Christianity not part of the order of nature but an autonomous growth, usually placed below ground. [67, pp. 97-98]

²⁷ [132, pp. 442-443].

²⁸ Moses 3:9.

²⁹ Moses 4:28-31.

³⁰ E.g., [198, p. 212].

³¹ Cf. Daniel 4:20, 22: "The tree... is thou, O king." See also Judges 9:7-21, [49; 184, pp. 89-92, 100-101, 291; 203, p. 170].

³² [203, p. 170]. Cf. 1 Nephi 11:8-22, [24, p. 76; 47, p. 44; 147; 148; 169, p. 50]; cf. *Qur'an* 19:23-26, [14, 6:146]

³³ [186, p. 13]. See also [120].

³⁴ [203, p. 169].

³⁵ Recall also the description in Orson Pratt's remembrance of Joseph Smith's First Vision where, as the light drew nearer, "it increased in brightness, and magnitude, so that, by the time that it reached the tops of the trees, the whole wilderness, for some distance around, was illuminated in a most glorious and brilliant manner. He expected to have seen the leaves and boughs of the trees consumed, as soon as the light came in contact with them" [93, p. 21].

³⁶ [26, pp. 6-7]. As examples of such suggestions, Barker cites several converging traditions [25]. For instance, despite the fact that a menorah was part of the second temple, rabbinic sources promised that the *true* menorah (= the Tree of Life?) would be restored in the time of the Messiah. Moreover, *1 Enoch* said that the tree would be transplanted again to the sanctuary of the temple of the Lord, where it would feed the faithful after the judgment [137, 25:3-6, p. 312]. Finally, in Orthodox Christian churches today one finds menorahs as tall as two meters in the sanctuary.

Although the trees of Eden have been associated with the Garden Room of LDS temples since the time of Nauvoo [52, p. 220; 98, p. 117; 115, pp. 264-265], representations relating to the eschatological Tree of Life are centered on the Celestial Room. For example, the Celestial Room of the Salt Lake Temple is "richly embellished with clusters of fruits and flowers" [185, p. 134]. For more on the symbolism of the menorah, see [19, pp. 90-95].

³⁷ See discussion of the possibility of "three trees" in the Garden of Eden story below.

³⁸ [18, p. 221, see pp. 221-232].

³⁹ [78; 160, pp. 464-466; 188, pp. 429-430].

⁴⁰ [188, p. 429]. Egyptian texts sometimes describe the *ished*-tree from which Osiris was freed (see below) as being an olive tree. According to Nibley: "In early times Ptah, Horus, Seth, and Thoth all enjoyed the epithet, 'he who possesses life beneath his olive-tree'" [132, p. 291]. Extracanonical literature recounts that on his sickbed Adam requested Eve and Seth to return to the Garden to retrieve oil from the "tree of his mercy" (cf. [9, Latin 36:2, p. 40E; 94, 36:2, p. 272 & 9:3, p. 273; 109, 36:1-3, pp. 39-40]). Recalling the story of the dove that returned to Noah's ark with the olive branch in its mouth, one rabbinical opinion gives it that the "gates of the garden of Eden opened for the dove, and from there she brought it" [124, 33:6, p. 351]. Nibley cites a relevant passage from Cyril's lectures on the mysteries: "Having [like Adam] been cut off from the wild olive tree, you are driven (goaded) toward the good olive tree, that you might become sharers in the fatness of the true olive" ([132, 2:3, p. 519]; cf. [54, 2:3, p. 147]). Two days after a revelation on how war was to be "poured out upon all nations," Joseph Smith designated D&C 88, by way of contrast, as the "olive leaf... plucked from the Tree of Paradise, the Lord's message of peace to us" [176, 14 January 1833, p. 18].

⁴¹ [164, p. 205].

⁴² Cf. Moses 3:9. In the symmetrical side panels at the far left and right of the mural, two men climb each of the two date palms. In the Sumerian myth of *Enki and Ninbursag*, Enki was cursed because he ate the carefully nurtured plants of Ninbursag, the mother-goddess [154, 197-219, p. 40]. Date palms, however, were not only depicted as a source of sweet fruit but also, according to texts from many centuries later, they sometimes were climbed to obtain access to a source of wisdom or warning. Notes Visotzky: "For a period of close to five hundred years, stories from Semitic religious communities preserved (in Palestinian Aramaic, *koine* Greek, and rabbinic Hebrew) snatches of the conversation of palm trees. The palms speak in dreams to one another and in broad daylight to those who would transgress against them. What seems to bind the dialogues together is that in every case, the ultimate hearer is a towering religious figure" [192, p. 212].

An example of the theme of warning is illustrated in the *Genesis Apocryphon*, where we find Abram dreaming of a cedar and a date-palm, representing himself and his wife Sarai. It is only through the pleadings of the palm tree that the cedar is spared from the axes of the woodcutters [111, 19:14-17, p. 232]. A similar theme is found in the biography of Mani, where Elchasai the Baptist climbs a date palm and is apparently warned that he should not cut it down for wood [43, pp. 11, 13]. On the other hand, the function of the trees as a source of wisdom is shown in the *Pistis Sophia*, which reports that God spoke "mysteries" to Enoch "out of the tree of gnosis [knowledge] and out of the tree of life in the paradise of Adam" [117, 2:246, p. 205].

⁴³ Cf. Moses 4:31.

⁴⁴ Alma 32:41-42.

⁴⁵ Cf. Moses 3:10, 1 Nephi 11:25.

⁴⁶ [151, p. 28].

⁴⁷ See [162, pp. 49-50].

⁴⁸ Cf. [75, p. 281].

⁴⁹ See references in e.g., [152, pp. 43-45]. The date palm is the sacred tree in Assyrian mythology, and its longevity was a fitting symbol for long life to the Egyptians, being “called *ba*, like the immortal part of the soul,” which could also be represented by a bird ([164, p. 205]; cf. the Mandaean *masiqta* (death rite), where a dove (called *bai* or *ba*) is sacrificed and a fragment of its flesh is used to signify the ascent of the departing spirit ([56, pp. 8, 32]). The Old Testament Deborah rendered judgment as she dwelt under a palm tree (Judges 4:5), and the temples of Solomon and of Ezekiel’s vision were decorated with palms (1 Kings 6:29, 32, 35, 7:36; 2 Chronicles 3:5; Ezekiel 40:16, 22, 26, 31, 34, 37; 41:18-20, 25-26). As a sign of victory and kingship, palm fronds were a central part of the celebration of Christ’s triumphal entry into Jerusalem (John 12:12-13; cf. Revelation 7:9, 14). In Islamic tradition, Muhammad built his home from the palm, it being a symbol of rest and hospitality in the Middle East (cf. Leviticus 23:40-43; Nehemiah 8:13-17). The *Qur’an* also describes the palm as providing shelter and nourishment for Mary, who was said to have borne Jesus in the wilderness beneath such a tree (19:23-26; see also [14, 6:146]). The earliest Mandaean sources also see the primeval Tree of Life as a date palm, whose “fertile union with the wellspring” emanates vines that will themselves become Trees of Life ([164, pp. 203-204, 246-247]; see also [57, pp. 110, 111, 120, 267]). A single one of these important date palm trees “often yielded more than one hundred pounds of fruit per year over a productive lifetime of one hundred years or more. Akkadian synonyms for date palm included ‘tree of abundance’ (*isu masru*) and ‘tree of riches’ (*isu rasu*)—appropriate names for the vehicle of agricultural success and richness” [184, p. 82]. Also of relevance is Visotzky’s collation of ancient sources that refer to the “conversation of palm trees” by which the pious obtained wisdom and warning ([192]; cf. [132, p. 288]).

⁵⁰ 2 Nephi 2:15.

⁵¹ Alma 32:42.

⁵² [77].

⁵³ Genesis 2:4-7.

⁵⁴ Genesis 2:16-17.

⁵⁵ Genesis 2:19-24.

⁵⁶ ([11, p. 83]. See also [10, n. 6, pp. 216-217].

⁵⁷ See [162, pp. 49-50].

⁵⁸ See [169, 199, p. 165]. Cf. [164, pp. 217, 223-224].

⁵⁹ [155, 1:25].

⁶⁰ Moses 4:9, [46, p. 111]. The *Zohar* resolves this simply by saying that the Tree of Knowledge was “not *precisely* in the middle” [113, Be-Reshit 1:35a, p. 220n. 921].

⁶¹ See [126].

⁶² Psalm 104:7-9.

⁶³ [104, p. 7].

⁶⁴ [104, p. 7]. See also [190, pp. 5-6; 202, 8:19, p. 73, 3:9-14, 27, pp. 59-60, 4:26, p. 63]. In Muslim tradition, the primordial mound was located at the site of Mecca rather than Jerusalem: “The first part of the Earth to appear on the face of the water was Mecca, and God spread out the Earth below it. Therefore it was called *Umm al-Qura*, namely the ‘model (= mother) of all towns’” [5, p. 6].

⁶⁵ [105, p. 675].

⁶⁶ [104, p. 45].

⁶⁷ See [110, 2:529-533; 125, pp. 71-72].

⁶⁸ [194, p. 83].

⁶⁹ A second circumambulation is performed near the end of the pilgrimage in order to complete the figurative ritual ascent:

If a man’s pilgrimage has been completed both externally and internally and his realizations are depicted above, then he must once again go seven times around the *Ka’bah*, feeling this time as if he is going around the Throne of God. He is then entitled by God to enter into the station of nearness to the Almighty, Whose vision he achieves. It is to this achievement of direct vision of the Lord that God refers when He says, ‘And he made them drink the purest of drinks’ (*Qur’an* 76:21). This is symbolized externally by the drinking of the water of the holy well *Zamzam* after the completion of the circumambulation. When a person attains to this stage of consciousness, all veils are removed and he talks to the Lord without any veil between them... This *tawaf* symbolizes man’s detachment from the lowest region and his journey to that region which is the highest of the high, his real homeland [13, p. 125].

Note that an upraised veil (*kiswa*) hangs from the gate of the *Ka’bah*. “Such veils are used allegorically by Muslim mystics to stand for ignorance masking the true nature of God” [83, p. 155].

⁷⁰ Greek *empyros* (fiery); derived from *pyr* (fire)—and not to be confused with the unrelated term *imperial*. See [75, pp. 63-65].

⁷¹ See [21, p. 185].

⁷² 1 Nephi 1:8.). Such a pattern was reenacted in ancient prayer circles. Nibley points out: “A concourse is a circle. Of course [numberless] concourses means circles within circles and reminds you of dancing. And what were they doing? Surrounded means ‘all around’... It was a choral dance” ([136, 17, p. 211]; see also [31, pp. 304-306]). On the connection between the earthly and the heavenly realms in the quorum of ten men forming a Jewish *minyan* for prayer, Kogan writes: “On one level, the body that is formed below, the actual *minyan*, is entered by the Shekinah (the supernal holiness), and is thus the point of contact between God and Israel. Simultaneously, the *minyan* formed in the proper manner below unifies the heavenly realm above” (in [34, p. 147]).

⁷³ 3 Nephi 11:8.

⁷⁴ E.g., 2 Nephi 22:6; 3 Nephi 11:8, 21:17-18; cf. Isaiah 12:6; Jeremiah 14:9; Hosea 11:9; Joel 2:27; Micah 5:13-14; Moses 7:69; Zechariah 3:5, 15, 17. See [38, pp. 150-151; 55, pp. 150-151].

⁷⁵ 3 Nephi 17:12, 13.

⁷⁶ 3 Nephi 17:12.

⁷⁷ 3 Nephi 17:24.

⁷⁸ [38, pp. 147-148].

⁷⁹ Matthew 18:4.

⁸⁰ 3 Nephi 17:23.

⁸¹ [207, p. 96].

⁸² [79, p. 325].

⁸³ [74, 5:91 n. 50].

⁸⁴ See [4, 1:106, p. 277; 33, p. 233; 157, pp. 95-102, 98, 167-174; 199, p. 23]. In some Jewish accounts, the Tree of Knowledge is seen as a grape vine entwining the Tree of Life [188, p. 430].

⁸⁵ See [82].

⁸⁶ [207, p. 101, see also p. 96]. See also [74, 1:70, 5:91 n. 50]. Whitlock [200] suggests a possible association with the *Pirke Avot* admonition to make a “hedge” or “protective fence” for the Torah [102, 1:1, p. 13].

⁸⁷ [61, 3:5, p. 92]. Note that the phrase “in the midst” was also used for the heavenly veil in the Creation account (Moses 2:6).

⁸⁷ [61, 3:13-17, pp. 95-96].

⁸⁸ See D&C 76:87, [61, 3:13-17, pp. 95-96]. Cf. Pistis Sophia who “went beyond her ‘degree’ and, becoming ambitious, ‘looked behind the veil’ [and] fell from glory” ([132, p. 443]; see [117, 1:29-30, pp. 33-36]). Sounding a similar theme, a petitioner in the Islamic mystical text *The Mother of Books* is warned by God that if someone were to move “the curtain and the veil the slightest bit [to] make the high king visible... their spirit would leave their body” [28, p. 672].

⁸⁹ [81, p. 30].

⁹⁰ Brock in [60, p. 53].

⁹¹ Brock in [60, p. 52]. Wrote Ephrem:

In the very midst he planted / the Tree of Knowledge, / endowing it with wonder, / hedging it with dread, / so that it might straightway serve / as a boundary to the inner region of paradise. / Two things did Adam hear / in that single decree: / that they should not eat of it / and that, by shrinking from it, / they should perceive that it was not lawful / to penetrate further, beyond that tree... / When the accursed one [the serpent] learned / how the glory of that inner tabernacle, / as if in a sanctuary, / was hidden from them, / and that the Tree of Knowledge, / clothed with an injunction, / served as the veil / for the sanctuary, / he realized that its fruit / was the key of justice / that would open the eyes of the bold / and cause them great remorse. [61, 3:3, 5, pp. 91, 92]

⁹² [30, 110:14, 20, p. 179].

⁹³ [172, 15, p. 21]. See also [170, pp. 568-577, 660-661].

⁹⁴ Revelation 22:1-3, [9, Greek 22:4, p. 62E]. Eden surmises: “No doubt the historical model closest to this is the *apadāna* of the Persian sovereign, the pavilion of the royal palace in which the King of kings sat in his throne to receive his subjects. In some texts of the Jewish tradition the link which ties the description of the divine audience room to the earthly royal one is clearly shown. For instance, in the *Pierkei De Rebbe Eliezer*, an early medieval *Midrash*, we can read: ‘[God] let Adam into his *apadāna*, as it is written: *And put him into the garden of Eden to cultivate it and to keep it*’ [142, 12, p. 82]” [58, p. 22].

⁹⁵ [58, p. 22]; cf. [42, p. 51, see also pp. 42-54; 184, pp. 173, 293]. Writes Barker: “In the account of the life of Adam and Eve written at the end of the second temple period, when God returns to Paradise, the chariot throne rests at the tree of life and all the flowers come into bloom [9, 44(22):3-4, p. 62E]. The synagogue at *Dura-Europos* depicts a king enthroned in a tree [see [76, 9:79-89, 101-104, 11:iv, 73-77, 323]]. The tree was inseparable from the throne itself. Reigning from the tree became a Christian theme, and the subject of controversy with Jews. Justin claimed that they had removed words from Psalm 96:10, which were important for Christians. The verse had originally been: ‘Say among the nations ‘The Lord reigns from the tree,’ but he claimed, ‘from the tree’ had been removed” [22, p. 89].

⁹⁶ [194, pp. 25].

⁹⁷ Following a brief analysis of Qur’anic references, Ryen concludes the probability of a Tree of Life separate from the Tree of Knowledge in Islamic tradition [164, p. 220]. He associates the former tree with *Sidrat-Al-Muntaha* located in the seventh heaven, from under whose branches Muhammad received one of his revelations (see *Qur’an* 53:14). In another Muslim tradition that assumes two special paradisiacal trees, Enoch was said to have avoided death by seizing branches of the Tuba tree that hung over the wall of Paradise. This tree, “which is planted in the midst of the garden, and is known to be after *Sidrat Almuntaha*, the most beautiful and tallest tree of paradise” [194, p. 53].

Brinner identifies the *Sidrat* (= lote-tree) as one of a “varying species of a tree found in the Middle East and North Africa of the genus *Ziziphus*, bearing fruits used for food and medicinal purposes” [5, p. 28 n. 44]. Significantly, Wikipedia notes that “[t]he mythological lotus tree is often equated with *Z. lotus*, though the *Date Palm* is also a possible candidate” ([1]; italics mine; see [56, pp. 7-8] for a similar argument in favor of identifying the Mandaean *sindirka* as a date palm). The term *Al-Muntaha* (= the farthest boundary), signifying the location of the Tree of Life, “is in Sufism a symbol of the point to which knowledge can take the mystic, beyond which true experience lies” [5, p. 28 n. 44]. The idea also evokes the image of the temple veil as “‘the last barrier,’ where ‘he who grasps the mysteries’ at last receives the crown” [132, p. 436].

Ryen associates the Tree of Knowledge with the one from which Adam and Eve were forbidden to partake (*Qur’an* 2:35, 7:19ff.). In addition, Ryen notes the mention of a curious tree springing out of Mount Sinai which produces oil (*Qur’an* 23:20), suggesting the idea of a separate olive tree.

Finally, Ryen notes two other special trees in Islamic tradition: the tree of Zaqqum in hell (e.g., *Qur’an* 37:62, 56:52), and the later tradition of the *Tuba* tree in the heart of the paradisiacal garden (e.g., [29, p. 687]).

⁹⁸ [157, front slipcover, pp. 96ff.].

⁹⁹ Genesis 9:19; see [157, p. 95-102]. This representation also concords with other Manichaean ideas which see the Tree of Life as extending “over *three* regions of the cosmos—east, west, and north,” while the Tree of Death “exercises dominion over the south, a quarter depicted as the region *below* the Kingdom of Light” [157, pp. 98, 167-174].

¹⁰⁰ Genesis 9:1-77, cf. JST Genesis 9:1-25.

¹⁰¹ Genesis 9:20. Hamilton observes: “That Noah even was able to plant a vineyard that produced lush growth is testimony to the lifting of the curse on the ground (Genesis 8:21). Noah is not pictured as eking out a miserable, hand-to-mouth existence as he works among thorns and thistles. Of course, in order for the vineyard to grow, there had to be rain. But the rain has been a life-producing one, not like the earlier life-taking one” [84, p. 321].

¹⁰² Genesis 9:21-27.

¹⁰³ Nibley cites an account recording that Noah's planting of the grape vine was commanded by the Lord:

In the very old Christian Apocalypse of Baruch [70, 4:13-15 (Greek), pp. 667, 669], we are told that Noah after the Flood hesitated to plant the vine, "for Adam was destroyed by it"—the grape being the forbidden fruit in many old Adam accounts [see e.g., [74, 1:168; 108, 9:20, p. 45; 132, p. 308]]; so he prayed for forty days with tears streaming down (an Enoch motif), until an angel appeared to reassure him: "Arise Noah, plant the vine; its bitterness shall be changed to sweetness, and its curse shall be changed to a blessing. What it yields shall be the blood of God" (see [70, 4:15 (Greek), p. 669]). [134, pp. 155-156]

Cohen, having explored the "symbolic meaning of wine in ancient cultures," concludes that Noah's actions in this regard have been completely misunderstood, the result of "biblical scholarship's failure" in explaining the meaning of the enigmatic incident [85, p. 188]. Summarizing Cohen's view, Haynes writes:

Cohen explores Israelite and other traditions to elucidate a complex relationship between alcohol, fire, and sexuality. Drawing on this connection, he surmises that Noah's drunkenness is indicative not of a deficiency in character but of a good-faith attempt to replenish the earth following the Flood. Indeed, Noah's "determination to maintain his procreative ability at full strength resulted in drinking himself into a state of helpless intoxication." How ironic, Cohen notes, that in acceding to the divine command to renew the earth's population, Noah suffered the opprobrium of drunkenness. In Cohen's view, he "deserves not censure but acclaim for having played so well the role of God's devoted servant" [50, pp. 8, 12]. [85, pp. 188-189]

¹⁰⁴ Brodie insightfully observes:

There is no moral condemnation of [Noah's] drunkenness and nakedness—any more than of [Adam and Eve's] nakedness. The trouble starts therefore (both in Eden and here) not with the nakedness but with an intrusive visitor—the serpent... and now Ham...

Then the intrusive visitors, the serpent and Ham, spoke to others, enticing them. But the reactions are diverse. While the tree's looks caused the couple to give way to the serpent, the two brothers, Shem and Japheth, resisted Ham/Canaan and his invitation to look....

As in the garden, so here the emphasis on nakedness is followed quickly by judgment. [36, p. 192]

Though a variety of speculations have arisen to explain the severity of the condemnation received by Ham/Canaan, "there is no clear evidence that Ham actually did anything other than see the nakedness of his uncovered father" (Ross in [35, pp. 397-398]). So concludes Hamilton:

We are on much safer ground in limiting Ham's transgression simply to observing the exposure of the genitalia and failing to cover his naked father. Otherwise, the two brothers' act of covering their father's nakedness becomes incomprehensible. We deliberately entitled this section "The Nakedness of Noah" rather than "The Drunkenness of Noah." Noah's drunkenness is only circumstantial to his nakedness. It is Noah's nudity, not his inebriated state, which Ham saw, and then passed on to his brothers. His sin would have been equally reprehensible had his father been sober. [84, p. 323]

Nibley cites ancient accounts arguing that Ham's disregard for this father was part of an effort to steal Noah's priesthood garment and authority [127, pp. 168-170; 128, p. 366; 130, pp. 128-131; 132, p. 309]. Because of the faithfulness of Shem and Japheth, they received the reward of special garments themselves (see Numbers 15:37-41, [123, 36:6:1B, p. 31; 130, p. 129; 155, 9:23, 1:97]).

¹⁰⁵ By way of contrast, Ham's brothers entered their father's presence facing backward as they properly restored his covering.

In a temple context, there are important associations between the veil as the covering of the tent and the garment as the covering of the body [69, p. 71]; see also [141; 195]. By way of contrast with Ham, the Armenian *Descendants of Adam* says that the righteous Enoch did not eat of the:

... tree of meat [= tree of knowledge]... And he drew linen over his face, and did not look at the heavens, on account of the sin of Adam. And he said, "When of the servant, there is trouble, the servant does not to look at the crown. And he quickly becomes sweet. And I, on account of the sin of Adam, I dare not look at the heavens, that God may have mercy upon Adam." And God had mercy upon Enoch and transferred him to immortality. ([182, 14-22, p. 85]; for a discussion of a redemptive role attributed to Enoch, see [140])

¹⁰⁶ [176, 14 May 1843, p. 331]; cf. D&C 130:18-19.

¹⁰⁷ [174, 14 May 1843, p. 200, spelling and punctuation standardized]. Reinforcing this linkage between knowledge and salvation, an Islamic story tells of how Adam, before the Fall and after having been given instruction by God, was directed to recite a series of secret names to the angels in order to convince them that he was worthy of the elevated status that had been bestowed upon him (*Qur'an* 2:30-33; cf. the idea of the naming as a test for Adam (vs. Satan) in [4, 1:97, p. 269; 32, 3, 1:6-7; 74, 1:62-64, 5:84-86 n. 35; 112, p. 148 and n. 35; 124, 17:4:2, p. 183; 142, 13, pp. 87-88]). Zilio-Grandi comments that: "While in the Bible God lets Adam choose the names of things, in the *Qur'an* it is God who teaches—who reveals therefore—the names to Adam.... Extremely high value is attributed to knowledge... Indeed, it is not by obedience that the ability to represent God in the governance of the world is measured, but by knowledge" ([206, pp. 84, 87]; cf. D&C 107:18-19, 130:18-19, 131:5-6; [176, 5 October 1840, pp. 166-167]; [176, 10 April 1842, p. 217]; [176, 8 April 1843, p. 288]; [176, 14 May 1843, p. 297]; [175, 17 May 1843, 5:392; 176, 21 May 1843, pp. 305-306]; [176, 11 June 1843, p. 309]; [175, 27 August 1843, 5:555]; [176, 9 October 1843, pp. 324-326]; [176, 21 January 1844, pp. 329-331]; [176, 7 April 1844, pp. 344-350, 354, 357]; [176, 16 June 1844, p. 371])

With respect to Adam's premortal accomplishment, *Qur'an* commentators themselves "dispute which particular names were involved; various theories [taking the position that] they were the names of all things animate and inanimate, the names of the angels, the names of his own descendants, or the names of God." Al-Mizan concludes that this was not a simple dictionary recital showing off the power of Adam's memory, but rather "something totally different from what we understand from the knowledge of names" [14, 1:163]. Alusi concludes that Adam's saying of these names is "in the end, like saying *the names of God*, for power concerns God Himself in His ruling of the world" [206, pp. 86-87].

¹⁰⁸ Cf. [184, p. 231].

¹⁰⁹ Moses 4:28-31; Alma 12:23, 42:2-3.

¹¹⁰ Alma 12:23-24. Rasmussen gives an alternative explanation for Satan's actions: "Apparently [the devil] did not know the divine plan of redemption as we know it (2 Nephi 9:5-10). For his own purposes, therefore, Satan sought to persuade the ancestors of the family of humankind to do a deed that would separate them from the presence of God in spiritual death and later separate their spirits from their bodies in physical death; then they would be like his unembodied spirit followers and be subject to him (2 Nephi 9:8)" [156, p. 14].

¹¹¹ If we can trust the accuracy of a retrospective summary of a discourse by the Prophet from the journal of George Laub, it may help to clarify some of the differences between Satan's premortal proposal and the Father's plan: "Jesus Christ... stated [that] He could save all those who did not sin against the Holy Ghost and they would obey the code of laws that was given" [59, discourse apparently given 7 April 1844, p. 22, spelling and punctuation standardized]. From this statement, it seems that the kind of salvation promised by Jesus Christ was that all men, except the sons of perdition, would be "resurrected to [at least] a celestial glory, escaping the second, i.e., spiritual death" ([116, pp. 271-275]; cf. D&C 76:43-44, [176, 10 March 1844, p. 339; 177, p. 434]).

Satan, on the other hand, was reported in Laub's account of the Prophet's statement to have countered with an absurdly unconditional proposal: "Send me, I can save all, even those who sinned against the Holy Ghost" [59, p. 22]. Apparently trying to do away with the need for an atonement, Satan instead "sought... to redeem... all in their sins" ([153, p. 288]; cf. [53, p. 6], Helaman 5:10-11). It is at the very least questionable whether or not such a "redemption" really would "save" anyone in any sense of the word worth caring about. Be that as it may, however, it is certain that without the empowering atonement, none could hope to ever attain the degree of righteousness and virtue required for *exaltation*—for, as President Brigham Young said, "if you undertake to save all, you must save them in unrighteousness and corruption" [205, p. 282].

¹¹² Moses 4:6.

¹¹³ [81, p. 30].

¹¹⁴ [84, pp. 187-188].

¹¹⁵ See below; also Moses 1:19; D&C 50:2-3; 52:14; 128:20; 129:8; cf. [9, 44:1-2a, p. 51E; 75, pp. 85-88].

¹¹⁶ [139, p. 168]. In explaining how Satan deceived Eve through the serpent, the *Cave of Treasures* cites the example of teaching parrots to speak through the use of a mirror. Their trainer "bringeth a large mirror and placeth between himself and the bird. He then beginneth to talk to the bird, and immediately the parrot heareth the voice of the man, it turneth round, and when it seeth its own form reflected in the mirror; it becometh pleased straightway, because it imagineth that a fellow parrot is talking to it... In this manner... did Satan enter in and dwell in the serpent, ... and when he saw Eve by herself, he called her by her name. And when she turned round towards him, she saw her own form reflected in him, and she talked to him..." [39, pp. 63-64]. Compare Ephrem the Syrian's *On the Fall* [62, 4, p. 101], where Satan makes himself a dove to resemble Eve, who is also portrayed as a dove.

¹¹⁷ 2 Nephi 25:20; Alma 33:19; Helaman 8:14-15.

¹¹⁸ [55, p. 43]. See John 5:25-26; 2 Nephi 9:3-26.

¹¹⁹ [55, pp. 42, 150-151].

¹²⁰ [61, 3:5, p. 92].

¹²¹ 2 Nephi 9:41. This, then, becomes a type for the scene to which Paul alludes in his description of events that were to precede the second coming of Christ: "for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God" (2 Thessalonians 2:3-4).

¹²² [194, p. 26]. The Egyptian and Islamic accounts recall an incident in the *Gospel of Thomas* where "Jesus reveals three words" to Thomas "which must have been the three words of the secret Name [100, 13, pp. 127-128]" [26, p. 42].

Later, after the Fall, Islamic writings recount that "Adam received (some) words from his Lord" that enabled him to repent and return to good standing with God (*Qur'an* 2:37), and eventually return to the Garden of Eden ([5, p. 59]; cf. [3, p. 60]). Ayoub writes: "Much disagreement has arisen among commentators regarding the words that Adam received from his Lord... Ibn 'Arabi says that these were 'lights and states [*ahwal*] or stations [*maqamat*] of the realm of dominion and power and the realm of the subtle [*mujarradah*] spirits... It may also be that Adam received from God gnoses, sciences, and truths" [15, pp. 84-85]. Al-Mizan declines speculation about what specific words were revealed but rather elaborates on their function: "It was this learning of the words that paved the way for the repentance of Adam... Probably, the words received at the time of repentance were related to the names taught to him in the beginning.... There must have been something in those names to wipe out every injustice, to erase every sin and to cure every spiritual and moral disease;... those names were sublime creations hidden from the heavens and the earth; they were intermediaries to convey the grace and bounties of Allāh to His creation; and no creature would be able to attain to its perfection without their assistance" [14, 1:188-189, 211]. See also [132, p. 451; 141, pp. 8-10; 150, pp. 501-504].

¹²³ [194, p. 30].

¹²⁴ [135, p. 63].

¹²⁵ [133, p. 92]. Ephrem describes the moment of transgression. When "Adam snatched the fruit, casting aside the commandment... he beheld that Glory within, shining forth with its rays... Adam made bold to touch and was smitten like Uzziah: the king became leprous, Adam was stripped... both kings fled and hid in the shame of their bodies... [The trees] all blushed at Adam, who was suddenly found naked" [61, 3:13-15, pp. 95-96].

¹²⁶ [23, p. 2].

¹²⁷ [6, 20:120, p. 624]; cf. [5, pp. 50-51].

¹²⁸ [6, p. 20 n. 62].

¹²⁹ [179 2:1307]; see [37, p. 137].

¹³⁰ Moses 4:12.

¹³¹ [165, p. 61].

¹³² 2 Corinthians 11:12-15; 2 Nephi 9:9; D&C 128:20, 129:4-7; [75, pp. 85-88, see also p. 234; 141, p. 6; 176, 1 April 1842, pp. 204-205].

¹³³ Moses 4:14.

¹³⁴ "au milieu de l'arbre du jardin"; see [48, p. 22; 207, p. 123].

¹³⁵ [96]. For literary parallels to the motif of a soul being shut up in a tree, see e.g., Ariel in *The Tempest* [171, 1:2:275-293, p. 1615], Fradubio in *The Faerie Queene* [180, 1:2:42, see n. Stanza 42, 8-9, p. 52], Polydorus in the *Aeneid* [191, 3, pp. 70-71], and Pier delle Vigne in the forest of suicides in the *Divine Comedy* [7, 13]. Similar themes appear in stories about Osiris, Adonis, Attis, and Dionysus (see convenient summaries in e.g., [65], though Frazer's inferences are not always to be trusted).

¹³⁶ [80].

¹³⁷ [132, p. 309].

¹³⁸ [132, p. 289, see also pp. 288-293]. In marked similarity to the *protoevangelion*, Nibley notes that “the cat who split the *ished*-tree and released the god also beheads the god’s mortal enemy, the Apophis-serpent, beneath the same *ished*-tree.” The cat’s paw rests heavily on the head of the serpent in accompanying illustrations (e.g., [132, pp. 311-312]).

¹³⁹ [132, p. 290].

¹⁴⁰ Wahab b. Munabbih in [199, p. 25].

¹⁴¹ [5, p. 557 & n. 15]; cf. [99, 5:1-14, pp. 163-164, see also pp. 146-147].

¹⁴² [99, 6:1-11:43, pp. 164-176]. Perhaps the symbolism of death and rebirth is behind an enigmatic assertion in the *Sepher Rezial Hemelach*. After stating that “Adam and his wife are concealed in the middle of the tree in the garden,” the text adds: “It is not a cemetery” [168, In the beginning, para. 7, p. 63].

¹⁴³ Regarding the appearance of this motif in the New World, Norman notes the “‘broken tree trunk’ symbol” connected with the explanation of the origin of some tribes, including the Mixtecas. This idea can be seen in a “Tamoanchan pictograph or hieroglyph depicting a man emerging from a split tree trunk in symbolic birth.” The “tree of the Mixtec codices is a Tree of Life or World Tree extending above and below this earth, but principally a ‘tree of the heavens’ in Omeyocan guarded by the creator couple where it gives birth to humanity. It can be stated simply that in ancient Mexico the broken tree represents a birth, death, or migratory transition for man” ([138, p. 202], cited in [68, 1:168]).

¹⁴⁴ [63, p. 112].

¹⁴⁵ [63, p. 9].

¹⁴⁶ Nibley writes:

At least from the beginning of the New Kingdom, every major city in Egypt had a tomb of Osiris that was sheltered by a tree, which was represented as the cedar of Byblos sheltering the coffin of Osiris in that city... From the long Book of Breathings, we learn that there was a cave beneath the *ished*-tree. According to the well-known legend, Osiris was actually shut up in the cedar tree and had to be liberated from it in order to be resurrected. Joseph’s grave was an *Urhügel* at Shechem, sheltered by a tree, in Egyptian fashion [cf. the palm tree over “Adam’s grave” at Machpelah ([12, p. 13]). [132, p. 290]

¹⁴⁷ Although some aspects of Nibley’s analysis of parallels between Egyptian religious texts and LDS temple concepts are now dated, Petersen cites Gee’s assessment that his “scholarship on Egypt has been vindicated in one significant way”: “Hugh argued in *The Message of the Joseph Smith Papyri* that the *Book of Breathings* and other Egyptian documents are ritual texts that were used to induct a novice into the religion. Gee stresses that few if any Egyptologists at the time read these texts as Hugh did but that is no longer the case. Egyptologists have discovered that the texts show up in temples as well as tombs and what were once classified as funerary objects actually have a broader cultic function” (John Gee, conversation with Boyd Petersen, 7 March 2002, cited in [146, p. 369]).

¹⁴⁸ See a Muslim parallel in [122, B&W plate 2].

The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that Adam received the First Presidency and its keys (i.e., the keys necessary to direct the Kingdom of God on the earth) “before the world was formed” [174, before 8 August 1839, p. 8]. Similarly, the *Book of the Cave of Treasures* records that immediately following his creation, “Adam was arrayed in the apparel of sovereignty, and there was the crown of glory set upon his head, there was he made king, and priest, and prophet, there did God make him to sit upon his honorable throne, and there did God give him dominion over all creatures and things” [39, p. 53]; cf. [187, pp. 198-199]).

A medieval Ethiopian Christian text similarly portrays Adam in the Garden of Eden being commanded by God to enact a series of covenantal gestures in order to “become associated with the Surafel (i.e., the Seraphim) in the mysteries.” Afterward, God gloriously clothed him:

... He arrayed Adam in apparel of light which resembled the flower of the rose, and He bound on his head a magnificent crown one part of which resembled a flame and the other the sun. And he made for him a tunic of light and girded it about his body: and he made a helmet of iron for his skull (*or*, forehead). And God had an elephant brought and He mounted Adam thereon, and He gave him a spear in his hand, and He made sandals of gold for his feet. ([119, pp. 21-22]; cf. [3, pp. 28-29])

In this manner, Adam and Eve, “though naked, [were] still clothed” [60, Hymns on Faith (The Pearl), 133:2, p. 71].

¹⁴⁹ [11, p. 127]. Thus, Adam and Eve received two “garments” of skin: the first when they were clothed with mortal flesh, and the second when they were clothed by God in coats of animal skin. Confusion in many commentaries has resulted from the conflation of these two events. Moreover, rabbinical wordplay equated the coats of skin (*or*) with garments of light (*ur*) [124, 20:12, p. 227], which, notes Nibley, has also led to “a great deal of controversy” ([130, p. 124]; see also [161, pp. 706-708; 189, pp. 651-654]).

The *Book of the Rolls* describes Adam and Eve being “clothed with flesh” as follows: “After the clothing of fig-leaves they put on clothing of skins, and that is the skin of which our bodies are made, being of the family of man, and it is a clothing of pain” [71, p. 113].

¹⁵⁰ [2, #175].

¹⁵¹ [9, Latin 34:2, p. 38E].

¹⁵² Cf. [8, 30:8-9, p. 150].

¹⁵³ [97, Reuben 2:1-9, p. 782].

¹⁵⁴ [132, p. 178]; cf. [9, Georgian version, 34(8):2, p. 38; 11, p. 127].

¹⁵⁵ [136, 19, p. 253].

¹⁵⁶ [109, 1:46, p. 50, see also 1:59, p. 66].

¹⁵⁷ [9, Latin, 40:1, 41:2, p. 44E]. Versions of the story in the Adam literature differ in several respects that I gloss over here. For Islamic versions of the story, see [3, pp. 78, 82-83; 5, pp. 60-62; 199, p. 33]. Nibley summarizes the story as follows:

[W]hen at the end of his life Adam felt the accumulating effect of these mortal blows upon him and sensed the approach of death, he implored Eve, “Go with my son Seth near to paradise... and pray god to... send his angel to paradise, and give me of the tree out of which the oil floweth, and bring it me, and I shall anoint myself and shall have rest from my complaint” [see [9, pp. 39E-40E; 94, 9:3, p. 273]]. He was asking for the “oil of mercy,” which alone could reverse the seven “blows of death” inflicted as a result of the fall [[9, p. 44E; 94, 40:1, p. 274]; see the overview of Moses 4, 5:29n. *Swear unto me*, 5:47n. *wounding*]. For the ultimate healing of the oil of mercy was not to be given to men until the coming of the Messiah, as Eve and Seth were informed by an angel who met them on the way back to the garden to fetch the oil for Adam [[9, pp. 44E-46E; 94, 40:1-43:3 and n. 42a, p. 274]]. When the Messiah did come, according to the *Clementine Recognitions* ([163, 1:45:5, 8:89]; cf. [95, 1:45:5, p. 77]), he provided that all who come to his kingdom should be anointed with the oil of the tree of life, the very oil with which the Father had anointed him to be the *initium omnium* (i.e., first of all; [163, 1:45:4-5, 8:89]; cf. [95, 1:45:4-5, pp.

76-77)). The final culmination of the whole plan of salvation, according to a very old Judeo-Christian writing, will be when Michael opens the gates and bestows the healing oil on the righteous as “the hundred-fold reward of those who have worked and toiled diligently” [70, 15:1-2, p. 676]. [132, p. 174]

¹⁵⁸ Although most Christian sources see the branch as coming from the Tree of Knowledge, some Gnostic sources see the cross as a Tree of Life. Ryen writes: “The tree motif is found about 80 times in the Nag Hammadi codices, and quite many of these examples talk about the *cross* as a ‘tree.’ But only [145, 106:21-23, p. 390] says the cross is a Tree of Life. The Tree of Life is here connected to Christ who again is identified with wisdom (cf. Proverbs 3:18, 1 Corinthians 1:30)” [164, pp. 216-217]. Ryen sees another possible example in [88, 73:15-19, p. 153].

Although the rubric to illustration 23 supplied by Halford in her book on Lutwin’s account of the incident indicates that “Seth... receives... a branch of the tree of knowledge instead of the oil of mercy” [82, p. 281], the fact that the branch in question is an olive branch that will eventually bear oil-rich fruit clearly implies that it was meant to represent a kind of Tree of Life. Likewise, in Islamic tradition, Al-Kisa’i recounts that “[w]hen Seth had grown and come of age, God sent him a twig of the heavenly lote-tree (which is made of pearl), which had a fragrance like musk” [3, p. 78, comp. pp. 82-83]. “This tree, said to stand in the seventh heaven on the right hand of the Throne of God, is called *al-muntaha*, ‘of the limit,’ because it is the boundary beyond which even the angels do not pass. ‘Pearl’ (*jawhar*) can also be rendered ‘substance, essence (*ousia*)” [3, p. 347 n. 63]. One Muslim source recounts that Adam desired “the fruit of Paradise,” but that his sons returned empty-handed (*Ibn Damrah al-Sa-di* in [199, p. 33]).

¹⁵⁹ In some early Christian traditions, the idea of “reversing the blows of death” was also represented by a special anointing with the “oil of mercy” prior to (or sometimes after) baptism or washing, as the candidate is signed upon the brow, the nostrils, the breast, the ears, and so forth ([132, p. 174; 141, p. 2]; cf. [54, 21:1-6, 7:149-150; 132, 3:1-6, pp. 516-517; 193, pp. 10-11, 13, 28-29]). A related pattern is still preserved among Armenian Christians—first, the anointing with olive oil “in the different parts of the body,” then baptism, then the dressing of the “new Adam,” then, following prayer, an anointing with perfumed oil representing “the seal of the covenant” [183, p. 125]. See also Stone’s discussion of 2 Enoch 22:8-9 ([183, pp. 126-127]; see [8, pp. 138-139]) and Nibley’s discussion of the Egyptian rite of the Opening of the Mouth [132, pp. 164-182]. For a comprehensive survey of early and medieval baptismal liturgies, see [181].

The title “Christ” is explained in Clement’s *Recognitions* 1:45:2 as an anointing of oil from the tree of life: “Although indeed He was the Son of God, and the beginning of all things, He became man; Him first God anointed with oil which was taken from the wood of the tree of life: from that anointing therefore He is called *Christ*” ([163, 8:89]; cf. [95, pp. 76-77]). One may also see these symbols of the atonement in Christ’s miracles of healing and forgiveness (e.g., His driving out of evil spirits and His use of oil in blessing the sick (Mark 6:13), the gesture of touching of the eyes of the blind (Matthew 9:29; Mark 8:23-25) and in His story of the Good Samaritan, where the “half dead” victim was administered to by having oil and wine poured in his wounds (Luke 10:30, 34) [132, pp. 175-77; 196; 197].

¹⁶⁰ [11, p. 130]; see also [19, pp. 113-114; 141, p. 3; 161, p. 709; 193, pp. 11-12], Romans 6:3-4, 1 Corinthians 15:53.

¹⁶¹ [149, pp. 167-169].

¹⁶² [149, p. 168].

¹⁶³ The theme of three special trees also appears in other sources, though without explanation. For example, in some Eastern Christian sources, three trees (pine, cedar and cypress) originating in Paradise are said to have grown at the spot of Adam’s grave, and Abraham’s nephew, Lot, is sometimes shown as tending them.

¹⁶⁴ [30, 111:1-7, p. 179]; see also [164, pp. 214-215, 221]. The text clearly distinguishes among three trees:

Then justice created Paradise. Paradise is beautiful and is outside the circuit of the moon and the circuit of the sun in the land of pleasure [i.e., Eden = “luxuriance” [167, p. 18] or “abundance” [184, pp. 257-261]; cf. “Bountiful” (e.g., 1 Nephi 17:5, Alma 22:29-31)], which is in the east in the rocky region [lit. “in the midst of the stones” [30, 110:15-16, p. 178]]. Desire dwells in the middle of the beautiful, stately trees. The tree of life eternal, as it appeared by the will of god, is in the north of paradise to give immortality to the souls of holy people [lit. “to make eternal the souls of the pure” ([30, 110:10-11, p. 178]), who will leave their poor modeled bodies at the end of the age. The tree of life looks like the sun, and its branches are lovely. Its leaves are like the leaves of the cypress, its fruit is like a cluster of white grapes [cf. [24, p. 76; 121, p. 107; 137, 32:4, p. 320]; see also [178, pp. 297-298], 1 Nephi 8:11], and its height reaches the sky.

Next to it is the tree of knowledge [i.e., *gnosis*], which is endowed with the power of God. It is glorious as the moon shining brightly, and its branches are lovely. Its leaves are like fig leaves and its fruit is like a bunch of good, delicious dates. The tree of knowledge is in the north of paradise to arouse the souls from demonic stupor, so that they might come to the tree of life, eat its fruit, and condemn the authorities and their angels [i.e., the divine forces who had forbidden this fruit to Adam and Eve. These forces were seen by Gnostics as wicked and envious]....

After this the olive tree sprouted, and it was to purify kings and high priests of justice [i.e., righteousness; see Hebrews 7:2] who were to come in the last days. The olive tree appeared through the light of the first Adam [i.e., the highest god, seen by Gnostics as benevolent] for the sake of the oil of anointing that kings and high priests would receive. ([118, 110:2-111:8, pp. 210-211]; see also [164, pp. 214-215, 221])

The *Gospel of Philip* seems to paint a similar picture of the olive tree as a secondary Tree of Life, associated with anointing and separate from the original Tree of Life: “... the tree of life is in the middle of the garden. However, it is from the olive tree that we get the *chrism* [anointing], and from the *chrism*, the resurrection” [88, 73:15-19, p. 153]. While Tvedtnes favors an interpretation that sees only one tree in this passage [188, p. 429], Ryen’s view of two distinct trees seems more consistent with the text, since “it is not... said that the oil comes from the Tree of Life, but from the olive tree” [164, p. 214]. Nevertheless, because the olive tree is seen as the source of resurrection, it “may therefore be correct to say that the olive tree is a tree of life as well” [164, p. 214].

¹⁶⁵ [139, pp. 176, 178, 186, 188, 192-193]. O’Reilly concludes that these trees “serve to identify the cross with the Tree of Life not only in Eden but in the heavenly paradise, where it is rather ambiguously described in twofold aspect planted either side of the river of the water of life (Revelation 22:2)” [139, p. 176]: “Then he showed me the river of the water of life, sparkling like crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb down the middle of the city’s street. On either side of the river stood a tree of life” [166, Revelation 22:2, p. 332].

Barker describes various approaches to the translation difficulties that surround the strange idea of a twofold Tree of Life in heaven:

One solution might be that the tree bears its fruits “on one side and the other,” but it is more likely that the branches of the tree extend a great distance, or that the tree has its roots in the river, as did Ezekiel’s great tree. The gist would then be that the

tree stands in the middle of the city square and the river flows through the square and round the roots of the tree: “The tree of life is in the midst of the square with the river [which flows all round it] on this side and that, bearing twelve fruits...” Or perhaps the picture is of a huge tree in the midst of the river spreading out its branches on this side and that. Other first-century CE descriptions of the tree still emphasize the extent of its branches. [20, p. 330]

¹⁶⁶ [17]; see also [88, 73:15-19, p. 153; 164, pp. 214-215, 221]. A branch from the Tree of Knowledge—or more rarely, as in Lutwin [82, pp. 281-282], the Tree of Life—was said to have been planted on the gravesite of Adam. Over one traditional site of “Adam’s Grave,” at the Tomb of the Patriarchs in Hebron, grows a date palm [12, p. 13]. Eventually, according to legend, the wood of the saving cross of Christ was to be hewn from this selfsame tree. Restoring such a branch to its mother tree is the theme of Zenos in the Book of Mormon (Jacob 5; see [68, 2:520-553]).

Jewish, Christian, and Muslim texts assert that Adam possessed a staff made from the Tree of Knowledge that was passed down through the patriarchs, and eventually came to Moses. The staff was said to be the instrument by which Abraham smashed the idols in his father’s house, and later to have become the rod that Moses and Aaron used before Pharaoh (see [3, p. 222, cmp. pp. 78, 82-83, 347 n. 63; 4, 460-461, 464-465, 3:45, 50; 5, p. 294; 109, pp. 217-218 n. 30; 142, 40, p. 251; 158, pp. 187-199; 172, 17, p. 24]; Exodus 7:9-12; cf. the priestly staff of the Mandaeans [164, pp. 251-252]). Though missing from the second temple, the staff was expected to reappear at a crucial moment in the last days: “Post-talmudic midrashim envision the royal Messiah engaged in a triumphal march to Jerusalem, endowed with the staff of Moses [66, Numbers 18:23, 6:744], and the *Qur’an* affirms that divine approval of royal leadership will be expressed in the miraculous manifestation of the ‘ark (of the covenant)... and the relics (*baqiyya*) of Moses and the family of Aaron” (2:247-248), among which is numbered the marvelous staff (see Tabari’s commentary *ad loc.*)” ([158, p. 187, see also pp. 198-199]; cf. Numbers 17:8, 24:17, Psalm 110:2). The “Masoretic text of Isaiah 11:4b also mentions a ‘staff’... which the anticipated scion of ‘the stem of Jesse’ (11:1) will use to smite the earth and to slay the wicked. The textual evocation in these particular passages of imagery conjoining messianic deliverance with a ‘staff’ readily encourages the ancillary idea that the future agent of deliverance, mirroring his ancient Mosaic prototype, will come equipped with a wonder-working ‘staff,’ perhaps even the very effective one previously wielded by Moses” ([158, pp. 198-199]; see also Genesis 49:10). In the meantime, the staff’s concealment and later revelation is associated with Elijah [158, pp. 197-198]

¹⁶⁷ E.g., Jacob 5:1-77, Isaiah 5:1-7, Romans 11:16, 24; see also [68, 2:520-556].

¹⁶⁸ See Genesis 22:18.

¹⁶⁹ [107, p. 142]. Of this calling, Truman G. Madsen writes:

[O]ne of the profound meanings of that long, laborious allegory in the Book of Mormon, Jacob’s allegory of the tame and wild olive tree [is that if] you take a wild branch and graft it into a tame tree, if it is strong enough it will eventually corrupt and spoil the tree all the way to the roots. But if you take a tame branch and graft it into a wild tree, in due time, if it is strong enough, it will heal and regenerate to the very roots. You will then have been an instrument in the sanctification even of your forebears...

To be that kind of branch and achieve that kind of transformation backward and forward is the greatest achievement of this world. But to do it... one must be linked, bound to the Lord Jesus Christ.” [106].

¹⁷⁰ Hebrews 1:9.

¹⁷¹ 2 Nephi 9:41.