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# Joseph Smith and Preexilic Israelite Religion

*Margaret Barker*

Terryl Givens has set Joseph Smith in the religious and cultural context of his time and raised many important issues. I should like to take a few of these issues and set them in another context, that of preexilic Jerusalem. I am not a scholar of Mormon texts and traditions. I am a biblical scholar specializing in the Old Testament, and until some Mormon scholars made contact with me a few years ago, I would never have considered using Mormon texts and traditions as part of my work. Since that initial contact I have had many good and fruitful exchanges and have begun to look at these texts very closely. I am still, however, very much an amateur in this area. What I offer can only be the reactions of an Old Testament scholar: are the revelations to Joseph Smith consistent with the situation in Jerusalem in about 600 BCE? Do the revelations to Joseph Smith fit in that context, the reign of King Zedekiah, who is mentioned at the beginning of the First Book of Nephi, which begins in the “first year of the reign of Zedekiah” (1 Nephi 1:4)? Zedekiah was installed as king in Jerusalem in 597 BCE.

## A Dynamic World of Divine Revelation

Givens raises the companion questions of open canon, ongoing revelation, and prophetic preeminence.<sup>1</sup> As far as we know, there was

no idea of a closed canon in 600 BCE, and ongoing revelation from the prophets was accepted in that day, even if what the prophets said was sometimes very uncomfortable.

One generation before Zedekiah there had been the great upheaval in the reign of King Josiah, something now regarded as the turning point in the history of Jerusalem and its religion. The events are usually described as King Josiah's "reform," the assumption being that everything he did was good and that the biblical texts describing the reform are an accurate and objective account. Other ancient texts had a very different view of Josiah and his work, but since they were eventually not included in the Bible, they are not often considered when the Bible is taught today. Yet here is our first warning: if some of the wickedness in Jerusalem mentioned in the First Book of Nephi (1 Nephi 1:13) included parts of Josiah's temple purges, we should expect to find information relevant to the Mormon tradition in texts outside the Bible. And we do. Moreover, the biblical texts themselves take on new significance if we no longer assume that everyone agreed with Josiah's purge. Jeremiah, a contemporary of King Josiah, has many passages that seem to criticize what has just happened in the city.<sup>2</sup>

Perhaps reflecting these ancient disagreements, some books mentioned in the Old Testament are now lost. 1 Chronicles 29:29, for example, cites as sources for the history of King David the Chronicles of Samuel the seer, the Chronicles of Nathan the prophet, and the Chronicles of Gad the seer. There are several more examples of lost books. Some books found among the Dead Sea Scrolls are clearly sacred texts, but we did not know about them previously. Even the biblical texts found among the Dead Sea Scrolls have significantly different wording from the Masoretic Hebrew text in several places, reminding me of Joseph Smith's vision, when Moroni spoke the words of Malachi but "with a little variation" (Joseph Smith–History 1:36). It can come as a shock to traditional Christians to discover that there were different versions of the Old Testament text in the time of Jesus. We cannot know for certain which Bible Jesus knew, neither the books he regarded as scripture nor the precise text of those books.

It seemed to me, as I began to look at the revelatory traditions of the Latter-day Saints, that Latter-day Saint scholars might have more in common with the more radical elements in contemporary biblical scholarship than with the strictly traditional and conservative people. Bearing this in mind, consider another of Givens's points.

Givens spoke of the scandal that Joseph Smith claimed "direct communication with God."<sup>3</sup> We now recognize that King Josiah enabled a particular group to dominate the religious scene in Jerusalem about 620 BCE: the Deuteronomists. Josiah's purge was driven by their ideals, and their scribes influenced much of the form of the Old Testament we have today, especially the history in 1 and 2 Kings. The Deuteronomists denied that anyone had a vision of the Lord (Deuteronomy 4:12), they denied that anyone had revelations from heaven, and they insisted the Ten Commandments were all that was necessary (Deuteronomy 30:8, 11–14). Nothing more was to be added to them (Deuteronomy 5:22). Prophecies were genuine only if they had already been fulfilled and had no more power (Deuteronomy 18:21–22). The Deuteronomists had no place for angels, and so they did not use the title "Lord of Hosts." These were the minds that eventually led to the closed canon of scripture and the cessation of prophecy. But the prophets *did* have visions of the Lord and the angels, they *did* speak in the name of the Lord, and their unfulfilled prophecies *were* carefully preserved. Not everyone shared the views of the Deuteronomists, but the writings of these other people are often outside the Bible.

The Deuteronomists wrote the history of the kings in Jerusalem, compiling it from written sources about ancient kings and heroes, much as we might compile a history today. Other ancient texts, however, give a different picture of how history was written. Past, present, and future were revealed to prophetic figures. Those three sources mentioned in 1 Chronicles were all prophets: Samuel the seer, Nathan the prophet, and Gad the seer. We find prophetic history also in the Book of Jubilees, parts of which were found among the Dead Sea Scrolls some fifty years ago. The full text of the book had been rediscovered in Ethiopia and published at the end of the nineteenth century, but the Scrolls fragments confirmed that it was

an ancient book.<sup>4</sup> Jubilees describes how the past and the future were revealed to Moses on Sinai and how he was told to write down what he learned (Jubilees 1:4–5).<sup>5</sup> Enoch—of whom I will say more later—saw all the history of his people, past, present, and future, in dream-visions (1 Enoch 83–93). The Christians said that Jesus had revealed the past, the present, and the future,<sup>6</sup> and the Book of Revelation did not reveal only the future. If prophets revealed the past as well as the future, the revelation of history to Joseph Smith is not out of character.

Another enigmatic history in 1 Enoch, known as the Apocalypse of Weeks, implies that Josiah's purge was a disaster. This history makes no mention of the Exodus. How was it possible to have such a history? For the Deuteronomists, the story of Moses leading the Exodus from Egypt was the defining event of their history. In the centuries after Josiah's purge, and after the demise of the monarchy in Jerusalem, legends surrounding Moses made Moses more and more like the ancient kings. By the time of Jesus, even the Egyptian Jew Philo could describe Moses as the God and King of his people.<sup>7</sup> But the people who considered Josiah's legalistic reforms to be a disaster could not also have considered Moses a dominant figure. For many years scholars have suspected that the account of Moses on Sinai receiving the Ten Commandments had been merged with memories of Solomon's Temple, and that a temple ritual when the anointed king brought divine revelation from heaven had been blended with the Moses on Sinai story.<sup>8</sup>

The Apocalypse of Weeks describes how an unnamed person received the "law for all generations" whilst there were "visions of the holy and righteous." Was this perhaps a temple vision scene, where a "God and King" figure received revelation in heaven among the angels and brought it to earth, the same figure later absorbed into Moses? There are many places where memories of the old temple ritual survive; for example, the Son of Man figure and the holy ones in Daniel 7. I wondered about such incidents when I first read Lehi's vision of the open heaven, the angels, and a radiant figure descending to give Lehi a book (1 Nephi 1:8–12).

Most of the summaries of history in the Old Testament focus on Moses and the Exodus but omit the Sinai story. In other words, they are the exact opposite of the *Apocalypse of Weeks*. Scholars have suspected for some time that Sinai and Exodus were originally distinct traditions, joined only after the destruction of the first temple, with Exodus predominating. The earliest fusion in the Bible is in *Nehemiah 9:9–15*, a document from the fifth century BCE. The final form of the Pentateuch may have been compiled even later by people who emphasized Moses and the Exodus rather than temple tradition.<sup>9</sup>

For others, though, a different history of Jerusalem had been summarized in *Enoch's Apocalypse of Weeks* (1 *Enoch* 93)—a vision of history given to Enoch by angels and learned from heavenly tablets. It described Noah, Abraham, the lawgiving, the temple, the disaster in the temple just before it was destroyed, and the scattering of the chosen people. Try to imagine how these different groups might have reacted to discovering their history rewritten, supplemented by the history of their Lord appearing in Egypt and rescuing some people there, or how they might have reacted to *Ezekiel's* claim that the Lord had appeared to his people in Babylon. In the course of time, all these accounts have been absorbed into the tradition of ongoing revelation. The authors of the *Apocalypse of Weeks*, however, saw the people who rebuilt Jerusalem and wrote the biblical histories as apostates, even though we consider those histories as the norm. The *Apocalypse of Weeks*, that tiny fragment of ancient history in 1 *Enoch*, is almost forgotten, or considered rather strange.

While this dynamic world of prophets and revelations is consonant with the picture presented in the *Book of Mormon*, we may compare that situation with the crisis that has now engulfed biblical scholarship: archaeology simply does not give supporting evidence for a great deal of the “history” in the Old Testament. Scholars are asking themselves: What are we reading? Whose Bible is this?<sup>10</sup> When was it written? Is the Old Testament older than its earliest written deposits found among the *Dead Sea Scrolls*? And why are some of those different from the Old Testament as we have known it?

## An Inviting World of Deification

Let us now consider another of Givens's points: the question of human beings becoming divine and accepting the serpent's invitation to "be as gods."<sup>11</sup> In the later Old Testament tradition, wanting to be as the gods was indeed a sin, but how might such an invitation have been viewed in 600 BCE?

The familiar story of Adam and Eve is the reworking of an older story, after memories of the loss of Eden and the loss of the original temple had merged. The tree that had been originally intended for human food was the tree of life, and the perfumed oil of that tree was to have been used to anoint humans and make them like the angels, sons of God.<sup>12</sup> This was the tradition of the ancient priests, who thought of themselves as angels, messengers from heaven (Malachi 2:7). The tree of life gave wisdom (Proverbs 3:13–18) and eternal life (Genesis 3:22); but the human pair disobeyed and chose knowledge that could be used for good or evil. Only then did they discover that they were barred from the tree of life.

The prophet Ezekiel, who also lived in Jerusalem in 600 BCE, said that the anointed one in Eden became mortal and died because wisdom and perfection had been abused for the sake of power and splendor (Ezekiel 28:11–19). Satan's deception in Eden was to imply that both the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil had the same benefit, both made humans like the angels. It was the disobedience that was the problem,<sup>13</sup> not the state they aspired to, and they had to be barred from eternal life because they had disobeyed. In the Book of Revelation, this is reversed: the faithful Christian is promised access again to the tree of life (Revelation 2:7), which meant access to the angel state. It was not the aspiration but the attitude that was wrong.<sup>14</sup> In 600 BCE the sin would have been pride and disobedience, not the wish to be angels and sons of God.<sup>15</sup> When Isaiah described the sins of Jerusalem, he emphasized pride, rebellion, and the abuse of knowledge. These themes are strongly reflected in the Book of Mormon (1 Nephi 8:36; 12:18; 22:15; 2 Nephi 26:20; 28:15). All these failings are equated with the sins of fallen angels, not with the breaking of the Ten Commandments.<sup>16</sup>

This correction invites us to reexamine a related assumption, that the books in the Old Testament are older than the ancient Israelite books not in the Old Testament. The Enoch texts must be late, it is assumed, because they are not in the Bible. Last year I published a commentary on Isaiah that showed that the original Isaiah of Jerusalem knew the Enoch traditions but was not much concerned with Moses. Instead, Isaiah's world was the world of Enoch's angels.<sup>17</sup> Other scholars are now exploring the possibility that Enoch traditions underlie some of the older stories in Genesis. Enoch traditions could have been very important in 600 BCE, just as the revelation to Joseph Smith implies (1 Nephi 1:8–11; 8:5; 11:14; Jacob 7:5–7; Omni 1:25; Mosiah 3:2; Mosiah 27:11).

The emphasis placed on Enoch's writings should not surprise us, as the Enoch traditions show clearly that human beings who continue their lives on earth can become angels. In the coded language of Enoch's dream-visions, animals represent human beings and "men" are angels. Noah, we read, was born a bull and became a man after an angel taught him a secret (1 Enoch 89:1), and in the Apocalypse of Weeks there are three "men": Noah, Abraham, and possibly Isaiah, but the text is enigmatic (1 Enoch 93:4, 5, 8). The Enoch books are clearly in the same tradition as the Bible, yet there is no quotation from the Bible in them. Those who preserved the Enoch traditions may have had different scriptures.

Isaiah, who prophesied in the years before 700 BCE, spoke also of a female figure and her son and also of a great tree that had been cut down but had sacred seed surviving in the stump (Isaiah 6:9–13). His contemporary, the prophet Micah, spoke of a woman in travail who had gone out of the city but would give birth to the great Shepherd of Israel (Micah 4:10; 5:3–4). Who was this Mother? What was the great tree? Piecing together other contemporary evidence, we could conclude that she was Wisdom, the one whom Josiah eventually purged from the temple but whose symbol, the tree of life, had also been removed in the time of Isaiah (2 Kings 18:4) and later replaced. In the time of Josiah, her tree—the Asherah, the menorah—was finally removed from the temple, burned, beaten to dust, and cast on the common graves (2 Kings 23:6). It was utterly desecrated. Why such



hatred? Hostility to Wisdom was a hallmark of the Deuteronomists, and due to their influence, the Mother and her tree have been almost forgotten—but not in the Book of Mormon.

Her son was the Lord.<sup>18</sup> We can deduce this from the Dead Sea Scrolls version of Isaiah's Immanuel prophecy: "Ask a sign," said the prophet, "from *the mother* of the LORD your God.<sup>19</sup> . . . Behold the Virgin shall conceive and bear a son and call his name Immanuel" (Isaiah 7:10–14). And angels attended her, the Host of heaven whom the Deuteronomists tried to obscure. Each time the Lady was driven from the temple, so too were the angels, the holy ones, a word very similar to the word for prostitutes, which is how it is often translated.<sup>20</sup> The divine Son, the priest of the order of Melchizedek, was born in the glory of these "holy ones," or so it seems. Psalm 110 is an enigmatic text, but it seems to describe the birth of an angel priest after the order of Melchizedek in the Holy of Holies of the temple, which represented heaven, which evokes related ideas in Alma 13:1–16 in the Book of Mormon.

### **White Fruit and a Guiding Rod**

The tree of life made one happy, according to the Book of Proverbs (Proverbs 3:18), but for detailed descriptions of the tree we have to rely on the noncanonical texts. Enoch described it as perfumed, with fruit like grapes (1 Enoch 32:5), and a text discovered in Egypt in 1945 described the tree as beautiful, fiery, and with fruit like white grapes.<sup>21</sup> I do not know of any other source that describes the fruit as *white* grapes. Imagine my surprise when I read the account of Lehi's vision of the tree whose *white fruit* made one happy, and the interpretation that the Virgin in Nazareth was the mother of the Son of God after the manner of the flesh (1 Nephi 11:14–23).<sup>22</sup> This is the Heavenly Mother, represented by the tree of life, and then Mary and her Son on earth. This revelation to Joseph Smith was the ancient Wisdom symbolism, intact, and almost certainly as it was known in 600 BCE.

Consider as well the mysterious rod of iron in this Book of Mormon vision (1 Nephi 8:20; 11:25). In the Bible, the rod of iron is mentioned four times as the rod of the Messiah. Each mention

in the King James Version says the Messiah uses the rod to “break” the nations (Psalm 2:9) or to “rule” them (Revelation 2:27; 12:5; 19:15). The ancient Greek translation (the Septuagint) is significantly different; it understood the Hebrew word in Psalm 2:9 to mean “shepherd” and it reads, “He will shepherd them with a rod of iron.” The two Hebrew verbs for “break” and “shepherd, pasture, tend, lead” look very similar and in some forms are identical. The Greek text of the Book of Revelation actually uses the word “shepherd,” *poimanei*, of the Messiah and his iron rod, so the English versions here are not accurate. The holy child who was taken up to heaven (Revelation 12:5) was to “shepherd the nations with a rod of iron.” The King James Version of Micah 7:14 translates this same word as “*Feed* thy people with thy rod,” where “guide” would be a better translation. Psalm 78:72 has, “He *fed* them . . . and guided them,” where the parallelism of Hebrew poetry would expect the two verbs to have a similar meaning: “He *led* them . . . he guided them.” Lehi’s vision has the iron rod *guiding* people to the great tree—the older and probably the original understanding of the word.<sup>23</sup>

### Forgotten Memories of the Temple

There can also be no doubt that teachings from the time of the first temple have been lost, or rather, are now to be found only in texts outside the Bible. Jewish tradition says that all the sacred texts were lost when Jerusalem was destroyed and that Ezra the scribe restored them, inspired by God Most High to dictate ninety-four books (2 Esdras 14). Only twenty-four of them could be revealed; the rest were to be kept secret. This story may refer to the destruction of Jerusalem in 597 BCE or to the second destruction in 70 CE; either way, it was recognized that the original scriptures had been lost and that only a fraction of those restored became the public canon. Justin Martyr, a Christian writer in the middle of the second century CE, claimed that the Jews had been altering the scriptures.<sup>24</sup> An Aramaic document from the same period, known as the Scroll of Fasting,<sup>25</sup> lists the anniversaries of great events in the second temple period as days on which it was forbidden to fast. On the third of Tishri it

was forbidden to fast because “the memory of the documents was removed” or “the memory was removed from the documents.” Some records had been destroyed, and this was a cause for celebration. It would be interesting to know what these were!

The Book of 1 Enoch records that lying words had been written, perverting the eternal covenant. Sinners had altered the truth as they made copies, made fabrications, and written books in their own name (1 Enoch 98:14–99:2; 104:10–11). The Qur’an also tells of people who had altered the meaning of texts (2:75), had composed texts they claimed as scripture (2:79), and had accepted only part of the sacred text (2:85). One passage describes how some of the people of the Book threw it away and chose instead to follow evil teaching from Babylon (2:101–2). This could easily be describing the people who returned from Babylon and built the second temple, people whom Enoch called the apostate generation. There are many similar references in the Qur’an, for example, to people who look for allegorical and hidden meanings rather than the plain meaning of the text (3:7) and who twist the words of scripture (4:46).<sup>26</sup> The Qur’an also mentions the Book of Abraham and the Book of Moses, described as “the Books of the earliest (Revelation)” (53:36–37; 87:18–19).<sup>27</sup> These were prophecies in Arabia in the seventh century CE. They resonate with the words of Nephi about “plain and precious things taken away from the book” (1 Nephi 13:28), as well as Joseph Smith’s revelation of texts called the Book of Moses and the Book of Abraham.

Along the same lines, the extraordinary similarity between the History of the Rechabites (the Narrative of Zosimus) and the story of Lehi leaving Jerusalem has already been studied by Mormon scholars.<sup>28</sup> This ancient text, which survives in Greek, Syriac, and Ethiopic, tells the story of some people who left Jerusalem about 600 BCE and went to live in a blessed land. They did not drink wine. They were called the sons of Rechab, which could mean that he was their ancestor, or it could be the Hebrew way of saying they were temple servants, priests who served the divine throne.<sup>29</sup> In their blessed land, angels had announced to them the incarnation of the Word of God from the Holy Virgin who is the Mother of God.<sup>30</sup> Nobody can explain this text. The Jerusalem Talmud, compiled in Palestine

perhaps early in the fifth century CE, remembers a similar tradition: that a large number of priests fought with the Babylonians against Jerusalem after Josiah's purges and later went to live in Arabia, the country into which Lehi and his family departed.<sup>31</sup>

### Jehovah and Jesus

Givens spoke of Joseph Smith's "thoroughgoing endeavor to overturn the most sacred tenets of cultural Christianity,"<sup>32</sup> and one of these must be the identity of Yahweh (Jehovah), the Lord, who appears in the Old Testament as the God of Israel. New Testament scholars agonize over why the first Christians applied Yahweh texts to Jesus. And how, they ask, could all of the early Christian teachers have found Jesus in the Old Testament? When I wrote a book setting out all this rather obvious evidence,<sup>33</sup> it was regarded as strange and hopelessly radical. Another example: the Jerusalem Bible, the translation prepared by the Roman Catholic Church, leaves the name Yahweh in the Old Testament, instead of using the customary form, the Lord, and then has "the Lord" in the New Testament. With one editorial decision, they broke the link between the Old Testament and the New and obscured the fundamental proclamation of the first Christians: Jesus is the Lord, Jesus is Yahweh. A third example: the new English translation of the Targum, the Aramaic version of the Old Testament, does not use the term Messiah in the Psalms when translating the Hebrew word *msyh*, which means Messiah. The reason given is, "It does not seem appropriate to use words like Messiah and 'messianic'" in connection with the Hebrew text of the Old Testament.<sup>34</sup>

It was my challenge to assumptions such as these, which simply ignore the evidence of both the Hebrew Bible and of early Christian writings, that led to my first contact with Mormon scholars. The original temple tradition was that Yahweh, the Lord, was the Son of God Most High, and present on earth as the Messiah. This means that the older religion in Israel would have taught about the Messiah. Thus finding Christ in the Old Testament is exactly what we should expect, though obscured by incorrect reading of the scriptures. This is, I suggest, one aspect of the restoration of "the plain and precious things, which have been taken away from them" (1 Nephi 13:40).

The Jehovah of the Old Testament is the Christ of the Book of Mormon (Mosiah 3:8; 3 Nephi 15:5).

### **Yearning for the Temple**

With the destruction of Jerusalem shortly after 600 BCE, the greatest loss was without doubt the temple, its angels, and everything they represented. There can also be no doubt that the central theme of Jesus' teaching was the restoration of the true temple and what it meant.<sup>35</sup> He was proclaimed as the Melchizedek priest (Hebrews 7)—the expected Messiah described in the Melchizedek text found among the Dead Sea Scrolls (11 Q Melch).<sup>36</sup> But what had happened to the Melchizedek priesthood? One of the great moments in my own journey of discovery was reading an article published in 1980,<sup>37</sup> showing that the religion of Abraham must have survived until the time of King Josiah because that was part of what he purged from his kingdom. In 600 BCE, the religion of Abraham was not just a distant memory. This suggests that the Melchizedek priesthood also survived until the time of Josiah, who was associated with the monarchy, as Psalm 110 makes clear. It was superseded in Jerusalem by the Aaronic priesthood very much later than we often suppose. It is likely that Aaron's family came to prominence in Jerusalem only when Moses did, as a result of King Josiah's changes around 600 BCE. We must remember that it was the Deuteronomists who wrote the major history of these times.

There were long memories of the lost temple. In the time of the Messiah, it was said, the true temple would be restored: the Spirit, the fire, the cherubim, and the ark, but also the anointing oil and the menorah.<sup>38</sup> This is strange, because there *was* a seven-branched lamp in the second temple—but maybe it did not represent what the original had represented. It was not the tree of life. Down until the times of the New Testament, the era of Melchizedek was linked to memories of the temple, the Spirit, the fire, the anointing oil, and the lamp representing the tree of life. It should not go unnoticed that these memories are also linked to coming of the Messiah in the texts of the Book of Mormon.

## Notes

1. See Terryl L. Givens, “Joseph Smith: Prophecy, Process, and Plenitude,” in this volume, 56–57, 59.
2. Private communication with Kevin Christensen about his work in progress.
3. Givens, “Joseph Smith: Prophecy, Process, and Plenitude,” 57.
4. An edition was published in 1895. There are fragments of Greek and Latin text also, the Latin published in 1861. Details in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, ed. James H. Charlesworth, 2 vols. (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1983–85), 2:41–42.
5. The Apocalypse of Abraham, which has survived only in Old Slavonic, even though a Hebrew original is likely, describes Abraham seeing all history in a vision.
6. Clement of Alexandria, *Miscellanies* 6.7.
7. Philo, *Moses* 1:158.
8. Sigmund Mowinckel, *Le Décalogue* (Paris: Félix Alcan, 1927).
9. See Gerhard von Rad, *The Problem of Hexateuch and Other Essays*, trans. E. W. Trueman Dicken (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1966).
10. See Philip R. Davies, *In Search of “Ancient Israel”* (Sheffield, England: JSOT Press, 1992).
11. Givens, “Joseph Smith: Prophecy, Process, and Plenitude,” 58, citing Genesis 3:5.
12. See Margaret Barker, *The Great High Priest: The Temple Roots of Christian Liturgy* (New York: Clark, 2003), 129–36.
13. Cf. Isaiah 1:12; 14:12–21, the Lord’s judgments on pride.
14. John Milton, *Paradise Lost* 5:519–43, captured this well; the human pair would be happy like the angels only for as long as they were obedient like the angels.
15. It is interesting that the Targum to the Psalms renders the Hebrew “begotten” with the Aramaic “anointed;” the anointed ones were remembered as sons of God—angels.
16. See Margaret Barker, *The Older Testament* (London: SPCK, 1987), 128–32.
17. In James D. G. Dunn, ed., *Eerdmans Commentary on the Bible* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2003).
18. Barker, *The Great High Priest*, 229–61.
19. 1Q Isaa has *’m*, “mother;” where the Masoretic Text has *cm*, “with.”
20. Cf. 1 Kings 15:12–13; 2 Kings 23:6–7.
21. *On the Origin of the World*, in *The Nag Hammadi Library in English*, ed. James M. Robinson (New York: Harper and Row, 1977), 2.5.110, page 169.
22. Discussed by Daniel C. Peterson, “Nephi and His Asherah,” *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 9, no. 2 (2000): 16–25.
23. See Margaret Barker, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ* (New York: Clark, 2000), 305–6.

24. Justin Martyr, *Dialogue with Trypho* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2003), 71.

25. Text in Joseph A. Fitzmyer and Daniel J. Harrington, *A Manual of Palestinian Aramaic Texts* (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1978), 185–87.

26. See also: 1 Enoch 3:48; 3:79; 3:81; 4:54; 4:113; 5:110.

27. *The Holy Qur'an*, translation and commentary by Abdullah Yusuf 'Ali (Birmingham, England: IPCI, Islamic Vision, 1934), capitalization and parentheses in this source. By the Books of Moses, the text means “apparently not the Pentateuch, or the Tawrat [Torah], but some other book or books now lost,” 1570 n. 5110. Note 5111 on the same page states, “No original Book of Abraham is now extant.” See also 1846 n. 6094, “No Book of Abraham has come down to us. . . . There is a book in Greek, which has been translated by Mr. G. H. Box, called The Testament of Abraham.”

28. John W. Welch, “The Narrative of Zosimus (History of the Rechabites) and the Book of Mormon,” in *Book of Mormon Authorship Revisited*, ed. Noel B. Reynolds (Provo, Utah: Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies [FARMS], 1997), 323–74; Jeffrey P. Thompson and John W. Welch, “The Rechabites: A Model Group in Lehi’s World,” in *Glimpses of Lehi’s Jerusalem*, ed. John W. Welch, David Rolf Seely, and Jo Ann Seely (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 2004), 611–24.

29. The throne was in the form of a chariot, 1 Chronicles 28:18; and *recheb*, one word for chariot, is identical in written form with *rechab*.

30. *History of the Rechabites* 12:8–9, in Charlesworth, *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 2:457.

31. *Jerushalmi Ta’anit* 4:5.

32. Givens, “Joseph Smith: Prophecy, Process, and Plenitude,” 57.

33. Margaret Barker, *The Great Angel: A Study of Israel’s Second God* (Louisville: Westminster, 1992).

34. David M. Stec, *The Targum of Psalms*, in *The Aramaic Bible*, vol. 16 (Collegeville, Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 2004), 30.

35. See Margaret Barker, *Temple Theology: An Introduction* (London: SPCK, 2004).

36. See Barker, *The Great High Priest*, 34–41.

37. John Van Seters, “The Religion of the Patriarchs in Genesis,” *Biblica* 61 (1980): 220–33.

38. *Numbers Rabbah* 15.10; Babylonian Talmud, *Horayoth* 12a.