The Temple, the Monarchy, and Wisdom: Lehi's World and the Scholarship of Margaret Barker

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Chapter 16

The Temple, the Monarchy, and Wisdom: Lehi's World and the Scholarship of Margaret Barker

Kevin Christensen

Starting with *The Older Testament* in 1987, Margaret Barker proposes a new reconstruction of religious life and practice in Jerusalem before the exile.[1] Barker is a revisionist biblical scholar from England. As a revisionist, her views stand apart from the mainstream, though her books have been garnering more and more attention. She claims that a "fundamental misreading of the Old Testament" has been "forced upon us by those who transmitted the text,"[2] meaning those who initiated Josiah's reform and their exilic and postexilic heirs, the group that even conventional scholarship identifies as the Deuteronomists—a school of authors or redactors of the biblical books from Deuteronomy through 2 Kings.[3] Thus, according to Barker, the Deuteronomists have superimposed upon the biblical history—in particular, Deuteronomy through 2 Kings—their own particular theological emphasis both in their selection of material to be preserved and in the theological emphasis and interpretation of the history they tell. Barker directs our attention to "the conflicts of the sixth century B.C. when the traditions of

the monarchy were divided as an inheritance amongst several heirs."[4] What makes her work of particular interest to Latter-day Saints is the picture she constructs of First Temple theology and practice based on "the accidents of archaeological discovery and the evidence of pre-Christian texts preserved and transmitted only by Christian hands."[5] That is, based on a wide reading of newly discovered texts and a rereading of familiar texts, she constructs a picture of the religion of preexilic Jerusalem that is strikingly different from the conventional view. Lehi and Nephi offer us another look at the same time and place. How do the pictures compare?

Her model centers on the temple, the monarchy, and the wisdom tradition, all of which were intertwined in the preexilic era but were transformed by reforms initiated by Josiah (2 Kings 22–23), and changes continued during the exile by the Deuteronomic school in response to the destruction of the temple and monarchy in 587 B.C.[6] In comparison, the Book of Mormon begins in "the commencement of the first year of the reign of Zedekiah, king of Judah," Nephi's father Lehi "having dwelt at Jerusalem in all his days," when "there came many prophets, prophesying unto the people that they must repent, or the great city Jerusalem must be destroyed" (1 Nephi 1:4). The young Lehi was a contemporary of Josiah, in whose reign the book of the law was rediscovered during a renovation of the temple dated at 621 B.C. (see 2 Kings 22 and 2 Chronicles 34). The clear Deuteronomic influence in the Book of Mormon plausibly follows from Lehi's experience of Josiah's ten-year reforms and whatever version of their texts Nephi obtained from the plates of Laban.[7] No matter which proposed date we take for Lehi's departure from Jerusalem, most of Lehi's mature life in that city would have been after Josiah's death and, hence, during the period when his reform unraveled.

> The death of Josiah destabilized everything; the power of Egypt did the rest. The king was quickly replaced. The landed nobility was rendered powerless by high taxes. The administration was changed, even if this happened slowly, as we see from the very different groups of people mentioned in the brief accounts of the book of Jeremiah for the period of Jehoiakim and Zedekiah. Even among the priests things changed. The groups that had collaborated in a happy period were soon back at their old rivalries. The single movement was dead; the many parties at court returned.[8]

The Book of Mormon stands in clear contrast with the efforts of these reformers. After reaching the New World, Nephi soon sets about constructing a temple, accepts de facto kingship, consecrates high priests, and demonstrates in his writings elaborate ties to known and surmised wisdom traditions, all stemming from the pre-Josiah era.[9] In claiming roots in Jerusalem at that specific time, Nephi and Lehi give us a look at the other side of the "formidable barrier"[10] that the exile represents. Barker makes her new reconstruction in light of her wide-ranging review of primary sources, including new information from "the accidents of archaeological discovery and the evidence of pre-Christian texts preserved and transmitted *only by Christian hands.*"[11] How does her view compare with what we see among Lehi and his descendants?

In this study, I show that Lehi's first visions provide a direct connection to Barker's reconstruction of the beliefs and practices of preexilic Israel. I explore in greater detail Barker's reconstruction of the First Temple, the monarchy, and the lost wisdom traditions. Under each of these three themes, I show parallels to the Book of Mormon and then give some concluding observations. Because the parallels occur in radically different settings, without collusion, and because both differ dramatically from the common views, each can provide

checks and potential illumination for the other. In order to be significant, any parallels that we find should appear as part of a woven fabric rather than as isolated instances. Any differences should have valid explanations in terms of reasonable historical factors and the nature of available sources. If there is no truth to either account, we should expect the views to have little or nothing in common. If one is accurate and the other false, we should also expect their accounts to have little or nothing in common. If both are accurate, they ought to demonstrate elaborate convergence, which indeed they do.

Connections with Lehi's Visions

In approaching Lehi's accounts of his visions, we should be aware of contradictory tensions within the Old Testament canon regarding the possibility of vision, as Barker explains:

> This can be demonstrated most easily by comparing Exodus 24.10 and Deuteronomy 4.12. The Exodus text describes the events on Mount Sinai; the elders saw the God of Israel on his throne, presumably in a vision. This is a vision of God exactly like that seen by Isaiah (Is. 6), Ezekiel (Ezek. 1) and John (Rev. 4).[12] The Deuteronomy text wants none of this, and emphasises that there was only a voice at Sinai. The presence of the LORD was not a vision to inspire them, but a voice giving commands that had to be obeyed.
>
> This tension between the word and vision was also a tension between new and old, between the law-based religion and the temple-based religion. It can be traced all through the Bible.[13]

Lehi immediately shows himself as a "visionary man," tied to the older traditions:

> And being thus overcome with the Spirit, he was carried away in a vision, even that he saw the heavens open,

> and he thought he saw God sitting upon his throne, surrounded with numberless concourses of angels in the attitude of singing and praising their God. And it came to pass that he saw One descending out of the midst of heaven, and he beheld that his luster was above that of the sun at noonday. And he also saw twelve others following him, and their brightness did exceed that of the stars in the firmament. (1 Nephi 1:8–10)

Specific elements in Lehi's initial visions (1 Nephi 1:7–14) include the anthropomorphic nature of God, the throne, the numberless angelic hosts, the "One" like the sun at noonday, the twelve others like "stars," the heavenly book (1 Nephi 1:11), and the judgment (1 Nephi 1:13). These themes compare with Barker's explanation that "the pattern of the 'lost' tradition therefore included, as well as the angels and the great judgement, the stars and the foreign kings, the kingship of Yahweh, the Holy Ones, exaltation, sonship and wisdom."[14] Lehi's initial report of his vision does not mention use of the title Holy Ones, nor does it mention sonship. But Lehi's later discourses to his people in 2 Nephi favor the important title Holy One (see 2 Nephi 1:10; 2:10; 3:2),[15] and we shall see that Lehi's blessings to his family and the visions of the tree of life demonstrate many ties to the early wisdom traditions.[16] The important theme of sonship appears later in temple contexts.[17]

Consider particularly the treatment of the stars and of the numberless hosts in the vision Lehi received at the time of his call and factors that lead directly to the three pillars of First Temple religion: temple, monarchy, and wisdom. According to Barker,

> Both constellations and "host" [of heaven, associated with the title Lord of Hosts] had been venerated in Israel, and the personified stars rejoiced at the creation (Job 38.7). The stars in Gen. 1 are defined as no more than lights to rule over the day and night and to determine the seasons, thus reflecting the post-exilic community's attitude to them. The stars were

> associated with royal figures (Isa. 14.12; Num. 25.17) and, most significant of all, were thought to be *bound* by Yahweh in order to serve him (Job 38.31). Hence the characteristic stance of the later apocalypses, which distinguished them from their Hellenistic counterparts; the stars in no way compelled man to act. The wisdom tradition did concern itself with stars (Wis. 7.17ff), and the Jews were known as astronomers.[18]

> Great angelic figures had/were stars: e.g. Num. 24.17, the messianic ruler rises as a star, Isa. 14.12 the king of Babylon is the Day Star, Matt. 2.2 the new star means a new king of the Jews.[19]

In addition to the star passages she cites here, elsewhere in *The Older Testament* Barker explores a number of biblical passages that include these themes; however, the Hebrew has sometimes been corrupted to the point that it no longer reads clearly. She notes enough passages on this theme that have the same kind of textual problems that the situation suggests deliberate hands at work:

> A high proportion of the opaque texts of the Old Testament seem to be dealing with the same subject matter, namely angels, stars, and the elements which surface in later apocalyptic, and we have grounds for taking a fresh look at the Old Testament and those who transmitted it.[20]

Remember that Nephi predicts that the Bible texts will suffer in transmission (1 Nephi 13:26)[21] but that other texts will come forth and restore the plain and precious things that had been lost (1 Nephi 13:40). That loss is especially clear regarding Nephi's experience reliving Lehi's vision of the tree of life, which has been recognized as "apocalyptic" in character,[22] Nephi himself making the connection to the future apocalyptic revelation of John explicit (1 Nephi 14:27). Barker, coming from the other

direction, connects the book of Revelation back to a largely lost tradition that is well represented in the writings of Lehi's contemporary, Ezekiel:

> The Book of Revelation has many similarities to the prophecies of Ezekiel, not because there was a conscious imitation of the earlier prophet, but because both books were the product of temple priests (Ezek. 1.3) and stood in the same tradition. There is the heavenly throne (4.1–8, cf. Ezek. 1.4–28 [cf. 1 Nephi 1:8; Jacob 4:14; Moroni 9:26]); the sealing of the faithful with the sign of the Lord (7.3, cf. Ezek. 9.4 [cf. Mosiah 5:15]);[23] the enthroned Lamb as the Shepherd (7.17, cf. Ezek. 34.23–24 [cf. 1 Nephi 13:41; Alma 5]); the coals thrown onto the wicked city (8.5, cf. Ezek. 10.2 [cf. 1 Nephi 14:15, 17; 3 Nephi 8:8, 24; 9:3, 8, 9, 11]); eating the scroll (10.10, cf. Ezek. 3.1–3 [cf. 1 Nephi 1:11–12; 8:11–12]); measuring the temple (11.1 and 21.15, cf. Ezek. 40.3 [cf. 2 Nephi 5:16]); the seven angels of wrath (16.1–21, cf. Ezek. 9.1–11 [cf. 3 Nephi 9–10]);[24] the harlot city (18.9, cf. Ezek. 26.17–18 [cf. 1 Nephi 14:17]); the riches of the wicked city (18.12–13, cf. Ezek. 27.1–36 [cf. 1 Nephi 13:5–8]); the fate of Gog (19.17–21 and 20.8, cf. Ezek. 39.1–20 [cf. 1 Nephi 11:34–36]); the vision of Jerusalem (21.9–27, cf. Ezek. 40.1–43.5 [cf. 1 Nephi 13:37; 3 Nephi 21:23]); the river flowing from the temple and the tree of life (22.1–2, cf. Ezek. 47.1–12 [cf. 1 Nephi 8, 11]).[25]

At every point in which Barker shows the relationship between Ezekiel and Revelation, I have noted a reference to the same themes in the Book of Mormon, mostly in 1 Nephi. The most conspicuous theme in Lehi's vision in 1 Nephi 8—the tree of life—appears not as an isolated parallel but as one element amid a constellation of related themes. The same explanation for the relationship that Barker gives holds true—these writers all stand in the same temple tradition.

> It cannot be coincidence that amongst the few scraps of information we can glean [from the prophets and Psalms] about the first Temple, we discover trees, cherubim, the throne of God, a mountain cult, life-giving waters, a serpent, and a blurring of the distinction between earth and heaven in the sacred space of the sanctuary. The picture we draw from the Deuteronomic account alone is very different: there is no emphasis upon the supernatural or Eden motifs. The ark is a mere box, there is no mention of the divine throne, nor of the living waters, the mountain setting nor the role of the cherubim. There is no tree of life, no Menorah. In other words, it is possible to fit Ezekiel's Eden into the Temple we can construct from non-Deuteronomic sources, and it is also clear that the myth in which Ezekiel sets his Eden was the myth of the old cult. The ancient Temple was Eden, the mountain of the gods, in which there was the divine throne, and in which judgement took place.[26]

The Book of Mormon contains the tree of life and waters of life (1 Nephi 8:10; 11:25), the righteous as trees (Jacob 5), the cherubim (Alma 42:3), the throne (1 Nephi 1:8), the high mountain of God (1 Nephi 11:1; 17:7; 2 Nephi 4:25), and the judgment (1 Nephi 11:34–36; Jacob 5:77). In the accounts of Lehi's and Nephi's angelic escort (1 Nephi 8:7; 11:11), and later in the experiences of the people with the Lord at the temple (3 Nephi 11–29), the distinction between heaven and earth disappears almost entirely at several points.[27] Barker looks at existing biblical texts, especially in Psalms and the Prophets, and their relation to postexilic noncanonical materials, which, she suggests, is best explained in terms of survivals from the royal cult.

> But there are other sources [besides Samuel and Kings] which give a significantly different view of Solomon's temple and its cult, and it is to these we must turn if we are to call up the ancient kings. The prophets and psalms are full of colourful imagery which may once have been more than mere imagery.

> Many later texts are thought to be bizarre growths upon the purity of the old religion when in fact they are memories of the older ways as they really had been.[28]

> The process rather has been one of following the Enochic stream to its source [the first Temple], and seeing what other waters have flowed from it.[29]

Observing that this recurrence of First Temple themes extended into the Christian era, Barker remarks:

> What gripped the minds and hearts of all sides in these disputes was not the actual temple in Jerusalem, but the ideal, the memory of a temple which was central to the heritage of Israel. It is this ideal, this vision at the heart of the ancient cult which has been lost. How such a thing could have happened is, in itself, an important question. The shadows of the temple fall across the writings of the prophets and the psalms, and from these we have to guess the beliefs which inspired the rituals of the heavenly world which it represented. The writings of the visionaries and the later mystics are also set in this world of the ancient temple. To reconstruct this world we must cast our net wider than just those writings which describe the temple; we must look also at those which are set within it, those in which the golden cherubim on the walls of Solomon's temple become the living creatures of the heavenly sanctuary and the olivewood cherubim overlaid with gold become the chariot throne of God.[30]

Temple

The Book of Mormon does not include passages like those in Leviticus that prescribe sacrificial rituals, like those in Exodus or the *Temple Scroll* that describe the dimensions of the tabernacle or the temple, nor like those in *1 Enoch* with a vision set in the holy of holies. But the text does include extensive temple imagery in the visions and discourses of

Nephi and Lehi and enlightening temple discourses at various temples—including those by Jacob at Nephi's temple, by Limhi and Abinadi at Noah's temple, by Benjamin at Zarahemla, and by the risen Jesus at Bountiful. In many ways these temple discourses reflect the appropriate rituals and, indeed, are best appreciated in the context of the temple.[31] In describing the first temple built by the Nephites, Nephi explains that he "did construct it after the manner of the temple of Solomon save it were not built of so many precious things" and that the workmanship was "exceedingly fine" (2 Nephi 5:16).[32]

For Barker, no feature of preexilic Israelite religion was more prominent than the temple. She explains that "the earthly sanctuary, whether it was the tent or the temple, was thought to reflect a heavenly pattern."[33] Further, she observes,

> one of the keys to any understanding of the temple cult is the realization that the rituals and the personnel were also thought to be the visible manifestation of the heavenly reality. The priests were the angels, the high priest was the representative of the Lord.[34]

A number of Latter-day Saint authors have established that King Benjamin's discourse is a complex ritual text, that during the ritual Benjamin functions as the high priest, and that Abinadi's discourse in Noah's temple shows themes appropriate to Pentecost.[35] Indeed, in 3 Nephi 8–29, the line between ritual and history becomes blurred throughout as Jesus enacts the role of the temple high priest in a most dramatic fashion.

Levels of Sacredness

The most obvious aspect of the temple in Jerusalem involved the levels of sacredness, increasing from the inner court to the holy place and to the holy of holies. According to Mircea Eliade, the three parts of the temple at Jerusalem correspond to the

three cosmic regions. The lower court represents the lower regions ("Sheol," the abode of the dead), the holy place represents the earth, and the holy of holies represents heaven. The temple is always the meeting point of heaven, earth, and the world of the dead.[36] Lehi's cosmology saw the world in these three realms (heaven, 1 Nephi 1:8; the earth, 1 Nephi 1:14; and the realm of the dead, 2 Nephi 1:14). King Benjamin, speaking from his temple, also sees the cosmos in terms of heaven, the earth, and the realm of the dead (Mosiah 2:25, 26, 41), with entrance into God's presence as the ultimate joyous state (Mosiah 2:41). Considering 3 Nephi as a whole, we can also find these three distinct levels of sacredness: (1) darkness/separation (3 Nephi 8–10), (2) preparation/initiation (3 Nephi 11:1–17:23; 18:1–37; 19:13; 20:1–28:12), (3) apotheosis/at-one-ment (3 Nephi 17:24; 18:36–39; 19:14, 25–31; 28:10–18).

Creation Themes

Barker explains that "since the temple was a statement about the natural order, it was closely associated with the myth of the creation."[37] All the major temple discourses in the Book of Mormon include significant references to the creation (see Jacob 9:6; Benjamin in Mosiah 2:21, 25; 3:11; 4:9; Abinadi in Mosiah 13:19; 16:3; Jesus in 3 Nephi 9:18; 26:3). Stephen D. Ricks observes that "in Israelite thought, 'the motifs of covenant-renewal, enthronement, and resurrection cannot be kept in isolation from each other.' And with this matrix in mind, it becomes more significant that Benjamin intertwines the themes of dust, kingship, covenant, enthronement, and resurrection throughout his speech."[38] The account of the destruction in 3 Nephi 8–10 alludes to the older myths of creation involving the defeat of hostile forces and uses the Lord's declaration that he is the "light of the world" (3 Nephi 9:18) to introduce a new creation.[39] Further, at one point

he discourses on "all things, even from the beginning" (3 Nephi 26:3), which implies a creation narrative. In all these accounts, the Book of Mormon implies creation as an ongoing process, an approach that appears explicitly in the Moses and Abraham accounts in the Pearl of Great Price. According to Barker, the idea of creation containing conflict and opposition, as well as being a continuing process, is older than the Genesis account.[40]

Temple as Eden and Meeting Point of Heaven and Earth

Barker explains that the ancient temple in Jerusalem was furnished so as to represent the Garden of Eden:

> Descriptions of the *temple,* however, do suggest that it was Eden. Ezekiel described a temple built on a high mountain (Ezek. 40.2), whose courtyards were decorated with palm trees (Ezek. 40.31, 34). The interior was decorated with palm trees and cherubim (Ezek. 41.17ff.), and from the temple flowed a river which brought supernatural fertility (Ezek. 47.1–12). Ezekiel did not invent these Eden-like features; each is mentioned elsewhere in the Old Testament. The temple on a high mountain was the theme of Isa. 2.2–4 and Mic. 4.1–3; the righteous were described as the trees of the house of the Lord (Ps. 92.13), a metaphor which would have been pointless had there been no trees there; 1 Kings 6.29 described the palm trees, cherubim and flowers carved on the temple walls; and several prophets looked forward to the day when waters would flow from the temple (e.g. Zech. 14.8; Joel 3.18). Hezekiah had removed a bronze serpent from the temple (2 Kings 18.4),[41] and the seven-branched candlestick, as we shall see presently, was remembered as the tree of life. Ezekiel, it seems, had a vision of a garden sanctuary like those known elsewhere in the ancient Near East, but it was also an accurate description of the temple he had known in Jerusalem.[42]

We do not have formal descriptions of the Book of Mormon temple furnishings. However, references to the fall of Adam and to Eden are explicit in several temple discourses. And the key imagery of the tree of life and the fountain of living waters appears in the visions of Lehi and Nephi. Lehi's discourse to his son Jacob in 2 Nephi 2 includes not only a discussion of Eden and the creation, but also the fall of Adam. Lehi mentions Jacob's own vision, the fallen angels, the atonement of the Messiah, the Holy One, and the coming judgment. These all show affinities with Barker's reconstruction and are apt considering Jacob's later role as a temple priest. Jacob 5 quotes at length the allegory of the olive tree, in which both the righteous and the wicked are described as trees, and which includes "harvest as judgment" themes that are conspicuous in Barker's view. Jeremiah, $Nephi_1$, and $Nephi_2$ allude to the bronze serpent story about Moses (Jeremiah 8:17–19;[43] 2 Nephi 25:20; Helaman 8:14–15). The temporary tents or tabernacles in the Mosiah account of Benjamin's discourse (Mosiah 2:6), besides functioning as reminders of Israel's wandering in the desert, may also bring to mind the palms that decorated the First Temple and also suggest Eden. "The temple was Eden and its rituals will have interacted with this fundamental belief about the creation. The temple itself, like Eden, was between heaven and earth with access to both the divine and material worlds."[44] The 3 Nephi account of Jesus at the temple demonstrates, in a very literal fashion, the access to both the divine and material worlds.

Priests

The Nephites did not have any Aaronic or Levitical priests, but this was in keeping with their descent from Joseph (1 Nephi 5:16)[45] and was evident in their ties to the older temple traditions. According to Barker,

> The anointed high priest of the first temple cult was remembered as having been different from the high priest of the second temple cult since the latter was described simply as the priest who "wears many garments," a reference to the eight garments worn by him on Yom Kippur: "And who is the anointed [high priest]? He that is anointed with the oil of unction, but not he that is dedicated with many garments." (m. *Horayoth* 3.4). It was also remembered that the roles of the anointed high priest and the high priest of many garments differed in some respects at Yom Kippur when the rituals of atonement were performed. The anointed high priest, they believed, would be restored to Israel at the end of time, in the last days.[46]

Further, Barker explains,

> Melchizedek was central to the old royal cult. We do not know what the name means, but it is quite clear that this priesthood operated within the mythology of the sons of Elyon, and the triumph of the royal son of God in Jerusalem. We should expect later references to Melchizedek to retain some memory of the cult of Elyon. . . . The role of the ancient kings was that of the Melchizedek figure in 11QMelch.[47]

The first explicit discussion of priesthood in the Book of Mormon comes from Jacob. He makes associations with the temple and reports the same obligations as does Ezekiel:

> Wherefore I, Jacob, gave unto them these words as I taught them in the temple, having first obtained mine errand from the Lord. For I, Jacob, and my brother Joseph had been consecrated priests and teachers of this people, by the hand of Nephi. And we did magnify our office unto the Lord, taking upon us the responsibility, answering the sins of the people upon our own heads if we did not teach them the word of God with all diligence; wherefore, by laboring with our might their blood might not come upon our garments;

> otherwise their blood would come upon our garments, and we would not be found spotless at the last day. (Jacob 1:17–19; cf. Ezekiel 3:17–21; 18:21–30; 33:2–20)

Later, Alma explains that the Book of Mormon prophets and priests operate under the Melchizedek priesthood (Alma 13:1–14).

Fallen Angel Myths

Lehi, Benjamin, and Alma—all high priests—demonstrate their awareness of an Eden story, but one with several significant differences from the traditional Genesis account (see 2 Nephi 2; Mosiah 2–5; Alma 9–13).[48] All emphasize the fallen angels, their importance, and the atonement "prepared from the foundation of the world" (Mosiah 4:6, 7). Barker emphasizes that the crucial importance of the fallen angel stories is prominent in the Enoch literature, virtually absent in the Deuteronomic portions of the Old Testament, but assumed everywhere in Isaiah and the New Testament.[49] For example, Barker shows that certain of the fallen angels were associated with particular maladies:

> There are significant word patterns in [Isaiah] 35.5–6: the blind, the deaf, the lame and the dumb are healed in the renewal of the creation, but the names of these four are also those of four types of angel. . . . How these supernatural beings were connected to these disabilities is not clear, but it is surely no coincidence that Jesus used the curing of these four types as his sign. John the Baptist asked if Jesus was the one expected (Luke 7.20ff), and the reply was an amalgam of these verses and Isa. 61.1. . . . In the Gospels, the defeat of what these creatures represented is seen as a sign of the kingdom of God.[50]

The Messiah was expected to demonstrate his power over these fallen angels. These associations appear consistently in Book of Mormon prophecies of the coming of the Messiah and

in the depictions of their fulfillment in 3 Nephi. For example, Nephi's vision associates healings and the casting out of devils.

> And he spake unto me again, saying: Look! And I looked, and I beheld the Lamb of God going forth among the children of men. And I beheld multitudes of people who were sick, and who were afflicted with all manner of diseases, and with devils and unclean spirits; and the angel spake and showed all these things unto me. And they were healed by the power of the Lamb of God; and the devils and the unclean spirits were cast out. (1 Nephi 11:31)

The presence of the fallen angel accounts in the Book of Mormon (and in other Latter-day Saint accounts) becomes very important when we look at Barker's reconstruction. She explains:

> There was a whole spectrum of ideas as to the nature of sin and evil. . . . At one end, sin was disobedience, an individual's transgression of one of the laws, and at the other sin was also disobedience, but the disobedience of the angels who misused their divine knowledge and brought calamity to the earth as a result. Somewhere between these two extremes, we can place the two spirits at work to influence man's actions, a position which seems to be a compromise between the "external influences" view of 1 Enoch, and the "intentional disobedience" view of later Judaism. Looking at these two extremes, we should expect to find the latter within a system which gave prominence to the role of the heavenly powers. If these two systems both developed from Israel's more ancient religion, it should be possible to find in the Old Testament evidence for the roots of both, or else to find evidence in the "intertestamental" period for the origin of one or the other. If the post-exilic period was the time when the era of the Law was becoming established, and the era of the angel mythology being eclipsed, it is there that we should expect to find

> evidence of both, and perhaps some relationship between them, at the time when both systems were current.[51]

The emphasis in the Book of Mormon on the fallen angel stories as part of the explanation of evil is central, and Lehi's fusion of them with the Genesis Eden story in 2 Nephi 2 fits nicely into Barker's suggestion of a time when both systems were current, though it does so just before the exile. She sees the Adam story as exilic.

> And I, Lehi, according to the things which I have read, must needs suppose that an angel of God, according to that which is written, had fallen from heaven; wherefore, he became a devil, having sought that which was evil before God. And because he had fallen from heaven, and had become miserable forever, he sought also the misery of all mankind. Wherefore, he said unto Eve, yea, even that old serpent, who is the devil, who is the father of all lies, wherefore he said: Partake of the forbidden fruit, and ye shall not die, but ye shall be as God, knowing good and evil. (2 Nephi 2:17–18; cf. 2 Nephi 9; Alma 12:22–36)

In the Book of Mormon and other Latter-day Saint scriptures, human sin does not explain the origin of evil. However, the presence of evil beings provides a context in which humans can choose between good and evil and in which the fall of mankind is not a catastrophe, but our entrance into a place of probation and testing, where there is opposition in all things. Barker's explanation of the older view also resonates with Lehi's teachings: "There *was* a mythology in which heavenly beings were held responsible for the origin of evil. A movement which sought to remove these beings also lost the benefit of their mythology and its explanation of evil."[52]

Barker remarks, "It has been suggested that the fallen angel themes of 1 Enoch were in fact an attack upon the corrupt

priesthood of the second temple period."[53] Similarly, the account of Amulon's wicked priests shows the use of allusions to the fallen angel myth to interpret that story.[54] The arch sin of the fallen angels in the Enoch accounts was pride, and in consequence of their fall, they spread a corrupt form of wisdom. In the Enoch accounts, the fallen angels intermarried with human women, and their offspring were destroyed in the time of Noah.[55] In the Book of Mormon, Amulon's priests are described from the beginning as proud (Mosiah 11:5–13); they also pervert sacred knowledge for gain (Mosiah 11:5–6; 12:28–29) and take wives they should not have (Mosiah 20:1–5). Amulon's priests teach the Lamanites to be cunning and wise "as to the wisdom of the world" (Mosiah 24:7; see 23:31–35; 24:1–7). Finally, their descendants from the union with the stolen wives become "hardened" and meet with destruction (Alma 25:4, 7–9).

With respect to the Genesis 2–3 account and Lehi's version of the Garden story, we should compare and contrast Barker's reading of the evidence from this period with that of Bruce Pritchett.[56] Where Barker says that "there is neither reference nor allusion to this passage in any other part of the Old Testament,"[57] Pritchett argues that "though there are numerous biblical passages that mention Adam, Eden, or various doctrinal points deriving from the Paradise narrative, four biblical passages refer to the fall account in ways that particularly illuminate Lehi's doctrine: Psalm 82:7, Hosea 6:7, Job 31:33, and Ezekiel 28:11–19."[58] Once past that initial disagreement about preexilic references to Adam, the views that Barker and Pritchett present converge beautifully. For example, Barker convincingly argues that the connections between Ezekiel 28 and Isaiah 14 are closer than those between Ezekiel and Genesis 2–3:

> We can deduce more about the older Temple from other texts. Jer. 17.12, Isa. 6. and Ps. 11.4 all link the sanctuary to

> the glorious throne in heaven. Isa. 6 and Dan. 9 link the sanctuary to the host of heaven, and Daniel, even at that late date, links it specifically to the heavenly power struggle, i.e. to the myth of Isa. 14 and Ezek. 28. In the Temple there was also a bronze serpent (2 Kings 18.4).[59]

Again, the themes that Barker ties to the First Temple appear conspicuously in the Book of Mormon, with the same associations. Barker sees the fallen angel stories as primary and the Genesis story as a later derivative in which "we can detect the earlier myth, but the whole structure has been brilliantly realigned so as to make human disobedience and the hankering after divine wisdom replace divine disobedience and the corruption of wisdom."[60] Pritchett, though he did not refer to Barker's then recently published studies, agrees that the existing Genesis account is a late redaction and variant of earlier themes and, in discussing Lehi's version, refers to many of the same passages that she does. Consequently, Pritchett encounters the essential themes of the fallen angel stories:

> Whether those receiving judgment were gods or humans themselves, the important point is that Psalm 82 shows a belief that God's sentence involved losing immortality, which Psalm 82:7 illustrates with two parallel images: Adam's loss of immortality and the *sārîm*'s loss of immortality. Since this punishment comes as a result of sin (failure to judge righteously or defend the helpless, Psalm 82:2–4), it can be reasonably inferred that at the time of this psalm's writing, the ancient Israelites believed that Adam's loss of immortality, as the *sārîm*'s loss of immortality, resulted from some sin and, as suggested by the fact that many translators see here a reference to mankind in general, that mankind universally inherited death from Adam.
>
> The psalm indicates the disobedience of those "said [to be] gods" (Psalm 82:6) by using, in parallelism, two mythological

> types of rebellion that run throughout the Old Testament—not only the fall of humans (Genesis 3), but the fall of certain divine beings as well (Genesis 6:1–4; cf. Isaiah 14:12–15). Interestingly enough, Lehi also mentions both these elements in his discourse on the fall (2 Nephi 2:17–27).[61]

For Barker, one of the most important aspects of Enoch accounts of the fallen angel myth is that they provide keys to understand the atonement.

> *1 Enoch* 10 describes the judgement; the four archangels are sent out to bind Azazel and imprison him and then to destroy the fallen angels and their children. They then heal the earth, purify it from all defilement, oppression and sin and inaugurate an era of righteousness and fertility: "And he will proclaim life to the earth that he is giving life to her" (*1 En.* 10:7). *Here, at last, is a text which gives the meaning of atonement; it was the process by which the effects of sin were removed so that the earth could be healed and restored.* It was a rite of re-creation when the Lord came forth from his holy place and established his kingdom.[62]

3 Nephi 9–28 follows the same pattern: a renewal of the creation, the appearance of the Lord, and the establishment of his kingdom.[63] Further, the name of Azazel in the Enoch account has connections to the scapegoat ritual of the Day of Atonement.

> There is a desert demon in Leviticus 16.6–10 with a similar name—Azazel. The ancient ritual of the scapegoat required that a goat be sent into the wilderness to Azazel. The goat carried all the transgressions and sins of Israel into the wilderness, to Azazel (Lev. 16.20–22). The Old Testament tells us nothing more about Azazel, or why he was in the wilderness. He must have been important, as he is the only one apart from God to whom a sacrifice is to be offered, and it was thought appropriate to send sins to him, out in the desert. In Enoch, we find that Asael, the fallen leader of the angels, is imprisoned in the wilderness. Enoch tells us how he got there, and who he really was.[64]

Terrence L. Szink and John W. Welch have explained how King Benjamin actually enacts the Day of Atonement ritual during his discourse, including the scapegoat ritual, "And again, doth a man take an ass which belongeth to his neighbor, and keep him? I say unto you, Nay; he will not even suffer that he shall feed among his flocks, but will drive him away, and cast him out. I say unto you, that even so shall it be among you if ye know not the name by which ye are called" (Mosiah 5:14). Szink and Welch observe that "had Benjamin said that the sinner would be driven out like a goat instead of an ass, these connections with the Day of Atonement would have been more direct. But in fact, the kind of animal used in such settings was not critical among Israel's neighbors in the ancient Near East."[65]

Further Temple Imagery

Certain preexilic furnishings of the temple are neither described nor alluded to in the Book of Mormon, such as the cherubim design for the divine throne and the ark of the covenant in the holy of holies. Whether they were not part of the tradition that Lehi knew because of Josiah's reform or because of reticence on the part of the Book of Mormon authors and editors, we cannot say. In some cases, we may be blinded by our own preconceptions in considering the terminology. For instance, since in the First Temple "Ark and Throne are the same symbol,"[66] Lehi's vision of the throne may imply more than we realize. However, enough First Temple imagery does appear to establish a consistent position.

Bread of the Presence. For example, Barker explains, "The bread of the Presence was twelve loaves set out each sabbath in two rows of six on the golden table. . . . The bread was treated as a grain offering, sprinkled with pure frankincense and later eaten by the priests 'in a holy place' (Lev. 24.5–9)."[67]

If we read the 3 Nephi account from the Israelite expectation, rather than from a Christian view of the sacrament, we can perceive the bread of the Presence there. "And when the disciples had come with bread and wine, he took of the bread and brake and blessed it; and he gave unto the disciples and commanded that they should eat" (3 Nephi 18:3). Note that there are twelve disciples, that the bread is given in remembrance of one who was actually present, and that the word bread occurs exactly twelve times in 3 Nephi.

Tree of Life. Barker observes that the menorah lamp was imagined as a tree of life and that the tree represented the Lord and had associations with the King.

> On the south side of the *hekal* was the great lamp, made of solid gold, which had to be fuelled with pure olive oil (Exod. 27.20). It was made like a seven-branched tree, decorated with almonds and flowers (Exod. 25.31–7). At the top of each branch was a lamp; it was these seven lamps which Zechariah saw in his vision and recognized as the eyes of Yahweh (Zech. 4.10). The sevenfold lamp will prove to be important evidence for understanding the temple cult; the Lord was not singular but plural. In the older cult, the manifold Lord was present in the temple, whereas in the "reformed" worship the Lord was One (Deut. 6.4), and only his Name was in the temple (Deut. 12.11). . . . [T]he lamp represented the Lord and . . . the lamp represented the tree of life.[68]

Several studies have shown how central the tree of life is in the Book of Mormon.[69] Lehi's vision leads to Nephi's vision of the tree of life (1 Nephi 11:2–3).[70] And the interpretation of the vision is consistent with the time and place of its origin.[71] "As early as Zechariah and as late as Josephus, the lamp was linked to the angelic tradition extant now in the extra-canonical apocalypses. Both the lamp and the apocalypses were forbidden."[72]

Lehi's and Nephi's visions have been linked with the apocalyptic genre. Barker has insisted that the apocalypses point back to the preexilic tradition.[73] She also discusses how "Wisdom, which was the feminine aspect of the Lord, was also described as a tree of life (Prov. 3.18)."[74] Daniel C. Peterson's essay on "Nephi and His Asherah" shows how these same associations underlie Nephi's vision of the tree of life.[75]

Fountain of Living Waters. Barker writes that "in the traditions of the ancient Near East there is 'a garden of paradise' where a gardener supervises the Tree of Life growing at the Water of Life. . . . The Testament of Judah describes the Messiah as, 'This Branch of God Most High, And this fountain giving life unto all' (Test. Jud. 24.4). Note that the royal figure is both Tree and Fountain."[76] Accordingly, in the Book of Mormon, in answer to a question about the meaning of the tree of life (1 Nephi 11:9–11), Nephi is granted a vision of "the Lamb of God, yea, even the Son of the Eternal Father" (1 Nephi 11:21; compare Proverbs 3:13–18). After viewing this, Nephi realizes that (among other things) the tree represents "the love of God" (1 Nephi 11:22) along with the "fountain of living waters, or . . . the tree of life; which waters are a representation of the love of God" (1 Nephi 11:25).

The Veil. The veil setting off the holy of holies was an essential part of the temple; what the veil itself symbolizes is the important thing.

> Inseparable from the veil were the vestments of the high priest, elaborately woven and embroidered in almost the same way as the veil. Veil and vestments were complementary imagery; the veil symbolized all that stood between human perception and the vision of God, and the vestments symbolized the clothing of the divine in that same material world which also concealed it.[77]

While the Book of Mormon never describes the temple veil, two stories use veil imagery to describe the reality that the temple veil symbolizes. These are the stories of Lamoni and the brother of Jared. Lamoni is a Lamanite king whose near-death experience is described this way:

> Now, this was what Ammon desired, for he knew that king Lamoni was under the power of God; he knew that the dark veil of unbelief was being cast away from his mind, and the light which did light up his mind, which was the light of the glory of God, which was a marvelous light of his goodness—yea, this light had infused such joy into his soul, the cloud of darkness having been dispelled, and that the light of everlasting life was lit up in his soul, yea, he knew that this had overcome his natural frame, and he was carried away in God. (Alma 19:6)

It is significant that, in this account, Lamoni's experience[78] beyond the veil points directly to the reality that the high priest's actions behind the temple veil (the atoning Christ) were intended to symbolize.

> And it came to pass that he arose, according to the words of Ammon; and as he arose, he stretched forth his hand unto the woman, and said: Blessed be the name of God, and blessed art thou. For as sure as thou livest, behold, I have seen my Redeemer; and he shall come forth, and be born of a woman, and he shall redeem all mankind who believe on his name. Now, when he had said these words, his heart was swollen within him, and he sunk again with joy; and the queen also sunk down, being overpowered by the Spirit. (Alma 19:12–13)

Redeemer as it is used here points to the atonement. Nephi's earlier vision, which provides the traditional context for this experience, associates the Redeemer, the tree of life, and the

woman with both the tree of life and wisdom. These are all temple themes.

M. Catherine Thomas has discussed the experiences of the brother of Jared at the veil, noting the temple implications.[79] While the language of the 3 Nephi account of the risen Lord does not refer to the "veil" directly, it does demonstrate the appropriate reality to which the veil symbolism points. For example, Barker explains:

> The veil was the boundary between earth and heaven. Josephus and Philo agree that the four different colours from which it was woven represented the four elements from which the world was created: earth, air, fire and water. The scarlet thread represented fire, the blue was the air, the purple was the sea, i.e. water, and the white linen represented the earth in which the flax had grown (*War* 5.212–13). In other words, *the veil represented matter.* The high priest wore a vestment woven from the same four colours and this is why the *Book of Wisdom* says that Aaron's robe represented the whole world (*Wisd.* 18.24; also Philo, *Laws* 1.84; *Flight* 110).[80]

Richard Dilworth Rust observes the presence in the 3 Nephi accounts of significant language pointing to the four elements of physical matter and hence, also, pointing to the materials of the veil and of the high priest's robes.

> For example, faith in Jesus Christ the Creator, the Son of God, is shown in the contrast of light and dark and in reference to the four major elements of earth, air, fire, and water. These are brought together in the section of the Book of Mormon that prefigures the Second Coming of Christ. The chaos of things splitting apart and intense darkness—the opposite of creation—is associated with the death of the creator. Cities are sunk in the sea, Zarahemla is burned, and Moronihah is covered with earth. . . .

> Those elements that had been destructive before now bring great uplifting and salvation at the coming of "the Son of God, the Father of heaven and of earth, the Creator of all things from the beginning" (Helaman 14:12). Water is represented by baptism by immersion, air and fire by the Holy Ghost, and earth by people being instructed to build on the solidity of Christ's rock.[81]

Many of the simple details in 3 Nephi—such as the man in a white robe, the various titles of Christ (which refer to the anointed high priest), and his being confirmed to be the son of God—though understated and subtle in the text, all resonate vividly in the temple context that Barker describes:

> Thus the veil and the priestly vestments provided the first Christians with ready imagery to convey what they meant by the incarnation. The linen robes worn by the high priest in the sanctuary were also the dress of the angels, those who had left the life of this world and lived in the immediate presence of God. . . .
>
> . . . The veil represented the boundary between the visible world and the invisible, between time and eternity. Actions performed within the veil were not of this world but were part of the heavenly liturgy. Those who passed through the veil were the mediators, divine and human, who functioned in both worlds bringing the prayers and penitence of the people to God and the blessing and presence of God to his people.[82]

During his visit, Jesus is transfigured and angels appear, demonstrating fully that God indeed was present (e.g., 3 Nephi 17:23–4). Barker describes the relevant rituals and symbolic meanings centering on the robes of the high priest:

> He took off this robe when he entered the holy of holies because the robe was the visible form of one who entered the holy of holies. In the Epistle to the Hebrews, which explores

> the theme of Jesus as the high priest, there is the otherwise enigmatic line: his flesh was the veil of the temple (Heb. 10.20). In other words, the veil was matter which made visible whatever passed through it from the world beyond the veil. Those who shed the earthly garments, on the other side of the veil, were robed in garments of glory. In other words, they became divine.[83]

One final aspect of the temple veil also deserves mention. Barker explains that the veil was embroidered to depict past, present, and future.[84] During his ministry to the Nephites, Jesus, ultimately the Great High Priest, discourses on the same themes, expounding "all things, even from the beginning until the time that he should come in his glory. . . . And even unto the great and last day" (3 Nephi 26:3–4).

Sacrifice and Atonement

The Book of Mormon prophets keep the law of Moses according to the version they brought with them on the brass plates. "And they also took of the firstlings of their flocks, that they might offer sacrifice and burnt offerings according to the law of Moses" (Mosiah 2:3). A key distinction is that most discussions of the way that the Nephites kept the law emphasize what the law points to, rather than treating it as an end in itself. For example, Lehi explains: "Behold, he offereth himself a sacrifice for sin, to answer the ends of the law, unto all those who have a broken heart and a contrite spirit; and unto none else can the ends of the law be answered" (2 Nephi 2:7).

The constant focus on the atoning sacrifice helps establish the correct context of the Book of Mormon. Hugh Nibley writes:

> The word *atonement* appears only once in the New Testament, but 127 times in the Old Testament. The reason for this is apparent when we note that of the 127 times, all but 5 occur in the books of Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers, where

> they explicitly describe the original rites of the tabernacle or temple on the Day of Atonement; moreover the sole appearance of the word in the New Testament is in the epistle to the Hebrews, explaining how those very rites are to be interpreted since the coming of Christ. . . . [A]tonement (including related terms, atone, atoned, atoneth, atoning) appear[s] . . . 39 times . . . in the Book of Mormon. This puts the Book of Mormon in the milieu of the old Hebrew rites before the destruction of Solomon's Temple.[85]

When the theme of atonement appears in the Book of Mormon, it typically does so in temple contexts.[86] Barker writes: "It is widely agreed that the three autumn festivals of the post-exilic period, (New Year, Day of Atonement and Tabernacles) were derived from an earlier royal festival held every autumn to celebrate the renewal of the year and the enthronement of the king. Nothing can be proved, but Isaiah 40–55 is thought to be based on the liturgies of this festival."[87]

I have already mentioned Szink and Welch's discussion of Benjamin's discourse as pointing to this royal festival. Barker explains how

> Isaiah 53 could have been inspired by the Day of Atonement ritual. A few points must suffice.
>
> 1. "He shall startle many nations" (Isa. 52.15); *yazzeh,* the apparently untranslatable verb, means "sprinkle" in the atonement ritual (Lev. 16.19). The Servant figure does not "startle" many peoples; the original Hebrew says he "sprinkles."
>
> 2. The Servant "carries" the people's sicknesses or weaknesses (Isa. 53.4).
>
> 3. The Servant has been wounded for their transgressions. Wounded, *ḥll,* is a word which carries both the meanings required by Mary Douglas's theory of atonement, viz. to pierce or to defile.
>
> 4. "Upon him was the chastisement that made us

> whole" (Isa. 53.5b) can also be translated "The covenant bond of our peace was his responsibility." "With his stripes, *ḥbrt,* we are healed" would then become "By his joining us together we are healed," forming a parallel to *mwsr,* covenant bond. The primary meaning of *ḥbr* is to unite, join together.
>
> 5. The Servant pours out his soul/life as a sin offering, *ʾšm* (Isa. 53.19). The *ʾšm* is, according to Milgrom, the sacrifice which redresses the *mʿl,* which is either sacrilege against holy things or violation of the covenant. The soul/life was in the blood of the sacrifice, hence it was poured out.
>
> All this suggests that the Servant figure was modelled on the one who performed the atonement rites in the first temple.[88]

In light of all the foregoing, it becomes even more significant that Abinadi quotes Isaiah 53 during his Pentecost discourse in the temple city of Nephi near Noah's temple (Mosiah 12–17).[89]

Monarchy

Of the Old World kingship, Barker observes:

> Again, we cannot be certain that the later emphases were direct and legitimate developments of an earlier tradition, but a pattern does emerge from the later contexts of the Enochic material which makes it likely that the tradition originated in the royal cult. The royal cult is something of which the Old Testament tells us very little; we know that there were kings for some four centuries, but the literature which describes that period is curiously silent about several things.[90]

While Nephi showed reluctance to accept formal kingship, his people looked on him as their king and protector, and he formally consecrated his successor as king.[91] Although much of the period of Nephite kings between Nephi and the transition to judges at the end of Mosiah passes in relative silence,

we do get fuller accounts of Mosiah, Benjamin, Noah, and Limhi as kings.[92]

Fertility, Prosperity, Justice, and Judgment

Barker explores biblical and Enoch passages that describe the underlying role of the king:

> The creation imagery in Ps. 89 describes the power of the king; the royal mythology set the king figure at the centre of the natural order. Ps. 72 associates justice and fertility with the role of the king; Isa. 11 describes a ruler who brings knowledge and justice, and the harmony of all creation. In Ps. 89 the royal figure has to control the evil forces in the political, the natural and the social order (89.23, 25, 33ff).[93]

All these themes appear conspicuously in Benjamin's discourse in Mosiah. For example, notice that the formula "prosper in the land" in the Book of Mormon encompasses fertility.[94] Benjamin encourages a just and equitable social order and reminds those assembled of their dependence on God for deliverance from their political enemies, to sustain the created order, and for their very lives from moment to moment. In the 3 Nephi accounts of the Lord's ministry, the creation imagery permeates the accounts of the destruction, and the voice of the Lord, identifying himself as the light of the world, begins the new creation for the people (3 Nephi 9:18).

King and Covenant

One of the more interesting aspects of Nephite kingship relates to one of Barker's observations about the Israelite king: "The anointed king was also the bond of the eternal covenant which held all things in their appointed place. I strongly suspect that this eternal covenant was renewed at the great autumn festival for the new year."[95]

Barker explains the significance of the eternal covenant:

> In the Hebrew Scriptures there are several covenants: with Noah, with Abraham, with Moses and with David, and Jeremiah looked forward to a new covenant. The Eternal Covenant was the oldest and most fundamental of all and was envisaged as the system of bonds which restrained cosmic forces and maintained an ordered creation where people could live in peace and safety. Nowhere in the Hebrew Scriptures is the establishing of this covenant described, but there are many places where it is assumed.[96]

Given that the covenant is assumed but not described in the Bible, Barker does explain where we should look to find it. "This covenant was part of the judgement-enthronement-renewal cycle associated with the autumn festivals of the Day of Atonement and Tabernacles. . . . Indirect allusions, however, do suggest that the Eternal Covenant was particularly connected with the priests and their role in the temple."[97]

Mosiah's discourse occurred during the autumn festival, and Szink and Welch have illuminated the Day of Atonement aspects of the discourse, just as Tvedtnes has drawn parallels to the Feast of Tabernacles.[98] So in Mosiah, we clearly see the gathering at the temple (Mosiah 2:1) and the creation of the booths for the Feast of Tabernacles:

> And they pitched their tents round about the temple, every man having his tent with the door thereof towards the temple, that thereby they might remain in their tents and hear the words which king Benjamin should speak unto them. (Mosiah 2:6)

Szink and Welch write that

> King Benjamin's speech was delivered in the fall, at the time of year when all ancient Israelites, including peoples of the Book of Mormon, would have been celebrating their great autumn festival season, which included many ancient elements that

> later became enduring parts of the Jewish holidays of Rosh ha-Shanah, Yom Kippur, and Sukkot. Most of the known or surmised ancient elements of these festivals are represented in the text of the Book of Mormon. . . . Benjamin's speech contains numerous elements pertinent to the New Year holy day, the Day of Atonement observances, the Feast of Tabernacles, and the sabbatical or jubilee year.[99]

Barker has explained that while the eternal covenant is never described in the Old Testament, there are several places where it is implied. And in at least two places it seems present in the Book of Mormon. I have previously argued that the overall pattern of 3 Nephi 8–29 suggests the cosmic covenant.[100] More recently, I realized the significance of passages like this in Benjamin's discourse.

> And behold also, if I, whom ye call your king, who has spent his days in your service, and yet has been in the service of God, do merit any thanks from you, O how you ought to thank your heavenly King! I say unto you, my brethren, that if you should render all the thanks and praise which your whole soul has power to possess, to that God who has created you, and has kept and preserved you, and has caused that ye should rejoice, and has granted that ye should live in peace one with another—I say unto you that if ye should serve him who has created you from the beginning, and is preserving you from day to day, by lending you breath, that ye may live and move and do according to your own will, and even supporting you from one moment to another—I say, if ye should serve him with all your whole souls yet ye would be unprofitable servants. (Mosiah 2:19–21)

This image of God as continually sustaining the creation matches the view that Barker develops. And, as we continue to see, the themes appear in the Book of Mormon woven into the same set of associations. One of the places where the concept of

the cosmic covenant appears in the Old Testament is in Isaiah 24, in showing the consequences of the violated covenant.

> Behold, the Lord maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof. . . . The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate: therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men left. (Isaiah 24:1, 4–5)

These specific images also call to mind the destruction in 3 Nephi 8–10 and the Lord's discussion of the healing covenant that he offers in remedy. Barker explains, "The life of the king, symbolized by the life-blood of the substituted animal, was the sign of the divine presence on earth and this life was used to join together again the spiritual and the material worlds by means of the sprinkling of blood on each side of the temple curtain."[101]

In Benjamin's discourse, the atoning blood serves this function, though the temple curtain is not explicitly described.

> And they had viewed themselves in their own carnal state, even less than the dust of the earth. And they all cried aloud with one voice, saying: O have mercy, and apply the atoning blood of Christ that we may receive forgiveness of our sins, and our hearts may be purified; for we believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who created heaven and earth, and all things; who shall come down among the children of men. (Mosiah 4:2)

In 3 Nephi 11–29, the divine presence on earth becomes literal, and the transfiguration of the resurrected Jesus and the appearance of angels demonstrate the joining of the spiritual and material worlds.

The King and the Name

Szink and Welch note that, with respect to the Name,

> so holy was the Day of Atonement that on this day the ineffable name of God, YHWH, could be pronounced. . . . Later Jewish tradition seems to have the priest utter this name ten times during the Yom Kippur liturgy, and to a similar degree, Benjamin employs the expanded names *Lord God* and *Lord Omnipotent* seven and three times, respectively. Seven of these utterances are in the reported words of the angel to Benjamin. . . . The other three utterances come in the words of Benjamin . . . at important ceremonial breaking points in the speech.[102]

Welch observes that only Benjamin uses the title Lord Omnipotent, and the context suggests in this discourse that these expanded names function as substitutes for the tetragrammaton, or divine name. In calling for his people to assemble, Benjamin offers one of the key reasons for doing so: "And moreover, I shall give this people a name, that thereby they may be distinguished above all the people which the Lord God hath brought out of the land of Jerusalem; and this I do because they have been a diligent people in keeping the commandments of the Lord" (Mosiah 1:11).

Margaret Barker's work again proves to be very useful with respect to the Name:

> Throughout Ps. 118:10–13 Yahweh and the Name of Yahweh seem to be synonymous, and even though other instances are less clear, lines such as these from the psalms still suggest that Name meant something other than what we might mean by it. . . . The Name was the presence and power of Yahweh. *It could be manifested in human form.*[103]

Compare Mosiah 3:5, describing how "the Lord Omnipotent who reigneth, who was, and is from all eternity to all

eternity, shall come down from heaven among the children of men, and *shall dwell in a tabernacle of clay.*" Barker explains a "view of the creation where *the Name creates and sustains everything.* The oldest evidence for the Name is exactly this."[104] In Mosiah 2:20, Benjamin explains to those assembled that "God . . . *has created you,* and has kept and preserved you . . . from day to day, by lending you breath, that ye may live and move and do according to your own will, and *even supporting you from one moment to another.*"

On the ritual reaction to hearing the Name, Barker comments:

> According to the Mishnah the Name was only pronounced by the high priest on the Day of Atonement (*Yoma* 3.8): "And when the priests and the people which stood in the Temple Court heard the expressed name, they used to kneel and bow themselves and *fall down on their faces* and say, 'Blessed be the name of the glory of his kingdom forever and ever!'" (*Yoma* 6.2). . . .
>
> . . . The name was Yahweh the creator and renewer made present.[105]

Compare Mosiah 4:1: "And now, it came to pass that when king Benjamin had made an end of speaking the words which had been delivered unto him by the angel of the Lord, that he cast his eyes round about on the multitude, and behold *they had fallen to the earth,* for the fear of the Lord had come upon them."

Again, Barker had explained that the preexilic high priest was called "the anointed," which is what "Christ" and "messiah" both mean. In the discourse, Benjamin describes himself as having been "consecrated" to be king, and during the discourse he acts in the Day of Atonement role as the high priest. And as Szink and Welch note, besides the references to the "name" and the matching seven references to "Christ" (which we ought to read as "anointed high priest who literally wears

the Name to show whom he represents—Yahweh") in the words of the angel, "Benjamin uses the root *atone* seven times in this seven-part speech."[106] This all corresponds to Barker's comments on the link between the Name, the creation, the anointed high priest (the Christ), and the actual atonement.

> The name was the nature, the power, the presence of Yahweh. The name was the fundamental bond of creation. . . . But the Name was also present in persons who mediated between the Most High and humankind, and those thus vested had the power of the Name. The high priest's duty of *making atonement and offering life/blood to restore, renew and heal the people and their land* is the clearest expression of the Name at work, *renewing the covenant of peace* which had been entrusted to the high priesthood (Num. 25.12–15). The Epistle to the Hebrews explains how Jesus, as high priest on earth and in heaven, renewed and restored the covenant with his own life/blood (Heb. 9.12).[107]

In Mosiah 4:2, Benjamin's people cry aloud, "saying: O have mercy, and *apply the atoning blood of Christ* that we may receive forgiveness of our sins, and *our hearts may be purified;* for we believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who created heaven and earth, and all things; who shall come down among the children of men."

Begotten Kings/Begotten Israel

Barker observes, "It is significant that the texts which deal with the kingship of Yahweh are also those which deal with the heavenly hosts and the angel mythology."[108] For example, one of the key texts on this topic is Deuteronomy 32:8–9, which has a most significant variation in both the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Septuagint, as compared to the Masoretic Text that underlies the King James Bible. Here is the RSV, which adopts the Dead Scrolls reading: "When the Most High [that is, El Elyon]

gave to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of men, he fixed the bounds of the peoples according to the number of the sons of God [the KJV has children of Israel]. For the Lord's portion [that is, Yahweh's portion] is his people, Jacob his allotted heritage."

With this and related passages in mind, Barker looks at Ezekiel:

> If Ezekiel believed that the nations round about Israel had angel princes who walked on the holy mountain, must he not also have believed that Israel had an angel prince?[109] Since Ezekiel was a priest in the temple (Ezek. 1.3), this is an important indication of what the ancient cult believed about the king; he would have been both an earthly king and a heavenly patron, an angelic being. This may be what was meant by the coronation oracle which survives in Ps. 2:
>
> "I have set my king on Zion, my holy hill."
> I will tell you of a decree of the Lord:
> He said to me, "You are my son,
> Today I have begotten you."[110]

During the monarchy, the most attention was given to the covenant with the king. Barker explores instances where "the king had been the earthly manifestation of the Lord in his temple; he had been addressed as the Lord's son (Pss. 2.7; 72.1) and he had sat upon the Lord's throne as king."[111] While there may be questions about how literally to take this idea, Barker shows that the idealized memory of

> The human figure on the throne is fundamental to our understanding of what was meant by "Messiah." Further, the hostility to this throne tradition explains the hostility between the first Christians and the Judaism from which they eventually separated. From the time of the monarchy when contemporary cultures had described their kings as the image of God, Israel's anointed kings had also sat upon

> the divine throne in the temple as the visible manifestation of the Lord, the patron angel of Israel.[112]

Our best understanding of how the Nephites viewed their king is shown during Benjamin's discourse.

> I have not commanded you to come up hither that ye should fear me, or that ye should think that I *of myself* am more than a mortal man. . . . And behold also, if I, whom ye call your king, who has spent his days in your service, and yet has been in the service of God, do merit any thanks from you, O how you ought to thank your heavenly king! (Mosiah 2:10, 19)

Nibley understood these declarations as expressing Benjamin's awareness that "throughout the pagan world the main purpose of the Great Assembly . . . is to hail the king as a god on earth," showing his awareness of "the *conventional* claims of kingship."[113] Were they conventional among the earlier Nephite kings? We can't say for sure. The ambiguity introduced by Benjamin's "of myself" should not mask the fundamental harmony. Barker's examples of the king as divine look back to the early times of the Davidic monarchy. She ties this tradition to his transfiguration during a heavenly ascent, and we should note that Benjamin's report of his encounter with the angel could be understood this way. Lehi leaves Jerusalem during difficult times for the monarchy, and Benjamin's predecessors have a mixed record. The important thing for Barker's reconstruction is that the memory of the divinized king points to the Christian expectation. And her view of Christian secret tradition corresponds well with 3 Nephi when the kingdom of God does indeed appear on earth as it is in heaven.[114]

Later developments in Israel emphasized a democratization of the covenant, in which all Israel makes the covenant. We also see this extension of the covenant to Israel during Benjamin's discourse.[115] "And now, because of the covenant

which ye have made ye shall be called the children of Christ, his sons, and his daughters; for behold, this day he hath spiritually begotten you; for ye say that your hearts are changed through faith on his name; therefore, ye are born of him and have become his sons and his daughters" (Mosiah 5:7).

Ricks has observed "a similar idea in the enthronement of Joash. 'And Jehoiada made a covenant between the Lord and the king and the people, that they should be the Lord's people' (2 Kings 11:17). What was once reserved for kings at coronation has now been extended in Nephite culture to the people generally."[116]

Notice that Psalm 82, which is important evidence of the idea of the divine potential of humankind and contains ties to the fallen angel myth,[117] also contains the royal themes that appear in Benjamin's discourse. But in this case, the psalm describes the inverse situation of a broken covenant. Even so, it shows the obligations of the covenant—both social and economic—for individuals and a relationship to cosmic order, as well as the consequences of falling, given the coming judgment:

> God standeth in the congregation of the mighty; he judgeth among the gods [cf. Mosiah 2:28]. How long will ye judge unjustly, and accept the persons of the wicked? Selah. Defend the poor and fatherless: do justice to the afflicted and needy. Deliver the poor and needy: rid them out of the hand of the wicked [cf. Mosiah 4:20–27]. They know not, neither will they understand; they walk on in darkness [cf. Mosiah 2:32–33]: all the foundations of the earth are out of course [cf. Mosiah 2:32–33; 3:21]. I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are children of the most High [cf. Mosiah 5:7]. But ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes [cf. Mosiah 2:36–41]. Arise, O God, judge the earth: for thou shalt inherit all nations [cf. Mosiah 3:10, 13, 20]. (Psalm 82:1–8)

Again, we constantly see that the comparisons we make are not of random parallels, but of interconnected themes, woven together.

Menorah and King

For example, though we have discussed the tree of life in relation to the temple, consider how the tree relates to the king. Barker explains:

> The ancient cult was the original setting of the Menorah. It was a complex symbol of life, light and the presence of God, embodied in the person of the king whom it also represented. There were other agents of God on earth, just as there were other branches of the lamp; each had/was a star, each was a son of God, with access to the divine council and authority to speak in the name of Yahweh. . . . [I]mages of sonship, life, light, kingship, ascent, descent, divine judgement in the presence of Jesus and the prominence of the temple setting can all find a common point of origin in a tradition which remembered the older ways.[118]

These themes appear in Lehi's visions of the divine throne and of the tree of life in 1 Nephi 1 and 8 respectively, showing that Lehi takes us back to the older ways.

Wisdom

The theme of wisdom appears frequently in the Book of Mormon in examples of the distinct genre of wisdom literature, as discussed by Peterson and Nibley,[119] and in direct references to wisdom, as in Benjamin's discourse: "And behold, I tell you these things that ye may learn *wisdom;* that ye may learn that when ye are in the service of your fellow beings ye are only in the service of your God" (Mosiah 2:17). He also la-

ments the thought of the Spirit of the Lord having "no place in you to guide you in *wisdom's* paths" (Mosiah 2:36).

Peterson provides a useful description of "wisdom" literature:

> Biblical scholars recognize a genre of writing, found both in the canonical scriptures (e.g., Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, the Song of Solomon) and beyond the canon, that they term "wisdom literature." Among the characteristics of this type of writing, not surprisingly, is the frequent use of the term *wisdom*. But also common to such literature, and very striking in texts from a Hebrew cultural background, is the absence of typically Israelite or Jewish themes, such as the promises to the patriarchs, the story of Moses and the exodus, the covenant at Sinai, and the divine promise to David. There is, however, a strong emphasis on the teaching of parents, and especially on the instruction of the father.[120]

Peterson observes that "careful readers will note that all of these characteristics are present in the accounts of the vision of Lehi and Nephi as they are given in the Book of Mormon."[121] Indeed, Peterson's "Nephi and His Asherah" demonstrates many fascinating connections between the Book of Mormon and Proverbs. For example, he shows the equation of the tree of life and wisdom in Proverbs, the opposition to wisdom by the harlot (a conspicuous theme in 1 Nephi 13–14), and even the name Lemuel, given by Lehi to his second son, which appears in the Bible only in Proverbs.

Barker works to extend the standard definition, building a case that "wisdom was an older form of communication between God and his people. Wisdom was something which the Deuteronomists reformed. This possibility is crucial for my argument."[122] In surveying several other discussions of wisdom, she notes that "all attempts to reconstruct the earlier form of wisdom on the basis of the canonical texts run into great difficulties; massive inconsistencies are all too obvious, and we

are obliged to assume that something is seriously amiss in the approach."[123] Further, "Reconstructions of the earliest wisdom use two sources: the basic stratum of Proverbs and the allusions in the prophets. The former has clearly been altered several times."[124] After considering three representative but mutually inconsistent attempts to define wisdom, Barker concludes:

> The weak link in scholarly reconstruction of Israel's ancient wisdom is inconsistency. We find wise men in court or school settings elsewhere in the ancient world, and assume these as the context for Israel's wisdom. But we do not also assume that the manner of operation of the other wise men might have been similar to that of Israel's. Having given the wise men their setting, we then credit them with only the edited texts as evidence for what they were actually about. Thus we fill the courts and schools of Israel with muddled platitudes, which is all that remains of Israel's wisdom, and have then to invent a secular rationalism to explain the prophet's wrath, and an incursion of foreign magicians to explain the rise of apocalyptic.[125]

Considering such unresolved problems in earlier attempts to describe preexilic wisdom, Barker comments: "In studying the pre-Christian Jewish concepts of wisdom, I have never encountered one based upon the evidence of the Enochic literature. This is surprising, since 1 Enoch is quoted in the New Testament, and was used by the Qumran community during the period of Jesus' ministry."[126]

Using Enoch as a key, she argues that "everything points to a development during the exile which radically altered wisdom, but which did not succeed in destroying it. The older tradition reappeared in later works. . . . Wisdom as we know it in the canonical texts was born in the community which Enoch, a later wise man, condemns as impure and apostate."[127] Ultimately she

builds the case that "*the simplest, and most likely idea of wisdom to underlie the New Testament is that of the Enoch tradition.*"[128]

How do the reflections of wisdom in the Book of Mormon compare with her definitions and her charge that the Deuteronomists reformed the understanding of wisdom? Although the Book of Mormon shows influence from Josiah's reform, at least with respect to the renewed emphasis on Moses and Deuteronomic law,[129] Barker argues that the key changes to wisdom came in response to the destruction of the monarchy and the exile, after Lehi left. So how was wisdom understood before the exile? "Wisdom was the secrets of creation, learned in heaven and brought to earth, the recurring theme of the apocalypses. There must have been some way in which the king, and the wise men, 'went' to heaven like the prophets in order to learn these secrets by listening in the council of God."[130]

Again, in the Book of Mormon we find that the throne vision given to both Lehi and Nephi demonstrates from the first this same understanding of wisdom. Barker offers a closer look at key passages in Proverbs, the main repository of surviving wisdom in the Bible. Against the context of the later apocalyptic literature, she finds surviving traces of the older scheme and resonance with themes that we have already seen in relation to the temple and the king. For example:

> Proverbs 30 must refer to the world beyond the veil of the temple; it links sonship, ascent to heaven, knowledge of the Holy Ones and the works of Day One:
>
> Who has ascended to heaven and come down?
> Who has gathered the wind in his fists?
> Who has wrapped up the waters in a garment?
> Who has established all the ends of the earth?
> (Prov. 30.4).
>
> To which Deuteronomy replies: "(This commandment) is not in heaven, that you should say: Who will go up for

> us to heaven, and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?" (Deut. 30.11). Job's arguments were shown to be "words without knowledge" (Job 38.2) because he had not witnessed the works of Day One.[131]

The account of Jesus in 3 Nephi links these same themes. He is the "son of God" who has ascended and comes down (3 Nephi 11:8–10). The descriptions of the destruction explicitly mention his power over the winds and the waters (3 Nephi 8:16 and 9:7). He says "I created the heavens and the earth, and all things that in them are" (3 Nephi 9:15).

Nephi as an Archetypal Wise Man

The two most conspicuous examples of wise men in the Bible, Joseph and Daniel, show common traits with Nephi. Referring to the book of Daniel, Barker notes:

> The text itself claims to be about a *wise man* who predicts the future, interprets dreams and functions at court. . . . Joseph, our only other canonical model [of a wise man], is very similar; he functions at court, interprets dreams and predicts the future. . . . Daniel is sufficiently Judaized to observe the food laws, but how are we to explain his dealings with heavenly beings, and his use of an inexplicable mythology? The elaborate structures of the book suggest that it was using a known framework, and not constructing imagery as it went along, but there is no hint of such imagery in Proverbs, *except in passages where the text is now corrupt.* This suggests that the wisdom elements in the non-canonical apocalypses which have no obvious roots in the Old Testament may not be foreign accretions, but elements of an older wisdom which reformers have purged.[132]

While Nephi does not interact with Zedekiah's court in the manner of Joseph or Daniel, he does accept kingship, functionally, if not literally, in the New World and anoints a king to suc-

ceed him (2 Nephi 5:18; Jacob 1:9).[133] Nephi also interprets dreams and predicts the future (1 Nephi 10–15). Like Daniel, he shows commitment to the law (1 Nephi 4:14–17; 2 Nephi 5:10), has dealings with angels (1 Nephi 3:29–30; 11:21, 30; 12:1; 2 Nephi 4:24), recognizes the need to seek the interpretation of symbols (1 Nephi 11:11), and speaks of the need to understand the cultural context behind prophetic writing (2 Nephi 25:1–5). Lehi discovers his descent from Joseph in the brass plates (1 Nephi 5:14–16; 2 Nephi 3:4), and the Book of Mormon shows access to Joseph traditions that do not survive in the present Bible (2 Nephi 3 and Alma 46:23–27).[134] Indeed, in Barker's survey the features that early biblical and Enochic writings associated with wisdom correspond neatly to Nephi's own resumé, including his knowledge of writing (1 Nephi 1:2), the wisdom genre in his writing,[135] his mining and metalworking (1 Nephi 17:9–10), his shipbuilding (1 Nephi 17:8–9; 18:1–8), his navigation (1 Nephi 18:12–13, 22–23), and the arts of war (2 Nephi 5:14, 34). He is likely the source of the calendrical calculations his descendants used to determine the holy days and the passage of years related to Lehi's six-hundred-year prophecy of the Messiah (1 Nephi 10:4). Barker further notes, "Wisdom included medicine, taught to Noah (Jub. 10.10) and to Tobit (Tob. 6.6) by angels and brought by the rebels in 1 Enoch 8, where they taught the cutting of roots. In the Old Testament the art of healing belongs to God (Exod. 15.26; Deut. 32.39; Job 5.18) and the gift of healing was given to prophets (1 Kings 17; Isa. 39). We know virtually nothing of the medicines."[136]

The Book of Mormon shows connection to both the spiritual power given to the prophets and the wisdom tradition of medicinal knowledge:

> And it came to pass that they went immediately, obeying the message which he had sent unto them; and they went in

> unto the house unto Zeezrom; and they found him upon his bed, sick, being very low with a burning fever; and his mind also was exceedingly sore because of his iniquities; and when he saw them he stretched forth his hand, and besought them that they would heal him. (Alma 15:5)

> And there were some who died with fevers, which at some seasons of the year were very frequent in the land—but not so much so with fevers, because of the excellent qualities of the many plants and roots which God had prepared to remove the cause of diseases, to which men were subject by the nature of the climate. (Alma 46:40)

Another aspect of the ancient wisdom tradition involved the arts of divination, of foretelling the future. Barker observes that even though "Deut. 18 prohibits the use of all divination in no uncertain way; . . . such practices are quite consistent with the ways of Daniel and Joseph."[137] For example, she explains: "We have to find a place within Israel's tradition for . . . Urim and Thummim (Num. 27.21; Deut. 33.8) and for the belief that the outcome of any lot was determined by the Lord (Prov. 16.33). Daniel and Joseph both give God the credit for their skills as diviners (Gen. 41.6; Dan. 2.27)."[138]

Looking to the Book of Mormon, we easily find expressions that are at home with these traditions. For instance, Nephi reports how "we cast lots—who of us should go in unto the house of Laban" (1 Nephi 3:11). This story and the description of the function of the Liahona, as strange as it seemed to Joseph Smith's contemporaries, fit nicely into the world of the ancient wise men.

> And it came to pass that as my father arose in the morning, and went forth to the tent door, to his great astonishment he beheld upon the ground a round ball of curious workmanship; and it was of fine brass. And within the ball

> were two spindles; and the one pointed the way whither we should go into the wilderness. . . . And it came to pass that I, Nephi, beheld the pointers which were in the ball, that they did work according to the faith and diligence and heed which we did give unto them. And there was also written upon them a new writing, which was plain to be read, which did give us understanding concerning the ways of the Lord; and it was written and changed from time to time, according to the faith and diligence which we gave unto it. And thus we see that by small means the Lord can bring about great things. (1 Nephi 16:10, 28–29)

In *Since Cumorah,* Nibley compared the function of the Liahona to an ancient Semitic practice of divination using arrows.[139] We also have the account of the interpreters in the Book of Mormon, which Joseph Smith later associated with the Urim and Thummim.

> Now Ammon said unto him: I can assuredly tell thee, O king, of a man that can translate the records; for he has wherewith that he can look, and translate all records that are of ancient date; and it is a gift from God. And the things are called interpreters, and no man can look in them except he be commanded, lest he should look for that he ought not and he should perish. And whosoever is commanded to look in them, the same is called seer. . . . But a seer can know of things which are past, and also of things which are to come, and by them shall all things be revealed, or, rather, shall secret things be made manifest, and hidden things shall come to light, and things which are not known shall be made known by them, and also things shall be made known by them which otherwise could not be known. (Mosiah 8:13, 17)

Clearly, the Book of Mormon connects not just to the more traditional understandings of wisdom but also melds with Barker's reconstruction.

Wisdom, the Holy Ones, and Heavenly Ascent

Another significant set of wisdom associations comes with the theme of the Holy Ones in relation to Joseph and Daniel and patterns that appear in comparing them. Barker explains:

> Since the activities of Daniel's Holy Ones are exactly like those found in earlier Old Testament texts, we must not assume that the character they have in Daniel, or their other roles, is late or alien to Israel's traditions. The pattern does not change; they deal with politics, with heavenly decrees from Elyon, they communicate through visions and work through the wise men who advise the king.[140]

The Book of Mormon prophets who use the title Holy One of Israel (or the later shortened Holy One) are Nephi (1 Nephi 19:14–15; 22:5, 18–28, an Isaiah commentary; 2 Nephi 25:29; 27:30, 34; and 28:5, Isaiah paraphrase/commentary; 2 Nephi 30:2; 31:13), Lehi (2 Nephi 1:10; 2:10; 3:2), Jacob (2 Nephi 6:9–10, 15; 9:11–26, 39–41, 51), Amaleki (Omni 1:25–26), $Alma_2$ (Alma 5:52–53), Mormon (Helaman 12:2; Mormon 9:14), and Jesus (3 Nephi 22:5 = Isaiah 54:5). They all show connections to the same patterns from the early tradition. A key aspect of the early tradition is the possibility of seeing God: "The conflict between those who said it was possible to have a vision of God, and those who denied it, was to continue for centuries."[141]

The conflict appears early in the Book of Mormon.

> Now this he spake because of the stiffneckedness of Laman and Lemuel; for behold they did murmur in many things against their father, because he was a visionary man, and had led them out of the land of Jerusalem, to leave the land of their inheritance, and their gold, and their silver, and their precious things, to perish in the wilderness. And this they said he had done because of the foolish imaginations of his heart. . . . And they were like unto the Jews who were at Jerusalem, who sought

> to take away the life of my father. (1 Nephi 2:11, 13; cf. Jacob 7:5–7; Alma 30:12–17; Helaman 16:16)

Laman and Lemuel demonstrate sympathy for the Jerusalem party, the same group of people who caused problems for Jeremiah and Ezekiel.[142]

Use and Abuse of Wisdom

While Barker shows a tradition that recognizes the importance of wisdom and vision, she also explains how it fell out of favor during Josiah's reforms. Additionally, some passages in Jeremiah record his conflicts with the wise men who allied themselves to the doomed monarchy:

> How do ye say, We are wise, and the law of the Lord is with us? Lo, certainly in vain made he it; the pen of the scribes is in vain. The wise men are ashamed, they are dismayed and taken: lo, they have rejected the word of the Lord; and what wisdom is in them? (Jeremiah 8:8–9)

> Then said they, Come, and let us devise devices against Jeremiah; for the law shall not perish from the priest, nor counsel from the wise, nor the word from the prophet. Come, and let us smite him with the tongue, and let us not give heed to any of his words. (Jeremiah 18:18)

It is easy to surmise the reaction of those who had taken the advice of the misbehaving wise men in this case and their disillusion while in exile in Babylon. Backlash would be inevitable, particularly by those allied with Josiah's reformers and already hostile to the old wisdom. Barker explains:

> It was what the wise men *did* with their wisdom which caused the conflict with the prophets. Wisdom was not in itself a bad thing, but if misused it was the source of much evil. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom" occurs many times, and reminds us that there was some

> conflict, now lost to us, which involved wisdom and the attitude to the Lord. One of the strands in the intertestamental literature reflects a similar position; wisdom was not inherently evil, but became so through misuse. The theme of pride and the misuse of wisdom is vitally important to the understanding of Isaiah, and is the basis for Ezek. 28, which describes the fate of the Prince of Tyre when he abused his wisdom.[143]

Jacob shows his awareness of the same potential for mischief:

> O that cunning plan of the evil one! O the vainness, and the frailties, and the foolishness of men! When they are learned they think they are wise, and they hearken not unto the counsel of God, for they set it aside, supposing they know of themselves, wherefore, their wisdom is foolishness and it profiteth them not. And they shall perish. But to be learned is good if they hearken unto the counsels of God. But wo unto the rich, who are rich as to the things of the world. For because they are rich they despise the poor, and they persecute the meek, and their hearts are upon their treasures; wherefore, their treasure is their God. And behold, their treasure shall perish with them also. (2 Nephi 9:28–30)

Again, significantly, these Book of Mormon connections to wisdom themes do not occur at random but are all linked. Jacob's "wo unto the rich" passage resonates with conspicuous Enoch themes,[144] and Enoch in turn provides the Ariadne thread that led Barker back to the First Temple.

Temporal and Spiritual: On Earth as It Is in Heaven

Barker discusses the use of parables: "Teaching in parables was a characteristic of wise men, as we have often been told. But the wise men were also visionaries, and this aspect is less emphasized. The Book of Proverbs does not seem to be the work of a visionary, yet the two biblical wise men of whom we

know anything, Daniel and Joseph, were both dreamers."[145] Lehi and Nephi fit the same mold, as we have seen.

Another aspect of the wisdom tradition has to do with an approach to teaching and expounding parables.

> Many of the parables, the sayings of the wise men, give the heavenly side of the parallel, in order that the hearer may work out the earthly application. Because of the very nature of the "heavenly" aspect of the parable, it was given in the form of a vision, in Enoch's case called a "vision of wisdom." It was an insight into the secrets of the creation, as that creation was experienced in an earthly, material existence. It was a revelation, an apocalypse. That is what apocalypse means. Often the visions dealt with the great judgement, whether of Israel or of her enemies, but always there was an earthly correspondence.[146]

The prominence of judgment in Nephi's apocalyptic vision (1 Nephi 11:36) needs no comment. But notice how Nephi explains the relationship between the material and the heavenly, or, as he puts it, the temporal and the spiritual:

> And it came to pass that I said unto them that it was a representation of things both temporal and spiritual; for the day should come that they must be judged of their works, yea, even the works which were done by the temporal body in their days of probation. Wherefore, if they should die in their wickedness they must be cast off also, as to the things which are spiritual, which are pertaining to righteousness; wherefore, they must be brought to stand before God, to be judged of their works. (1 Nephi 15:32–33)

Again, we find the same approach to the same themes. Barker explains that the wisdom teachers have a distinctive approach toward identifying the relevance of apocalyptic symbols in the temporal realm. "Nor do we have to think of a parable or vision as having only one specific meaning or application. We tend to think that story parables are relevant again and again,

but that visions have a particular message for a particular situation. This is not so."[147]

Nephi shows the appropriate perspective in the way he applies the scriptures: "And I did read many things unto them which were written in the books of Moses; but that I might more fully persuade them to believe in the Lord their Redeemer I did read unto them that which was written by the prophet Isaiah; for I did liken all scriptures unto us, that it might be for our profit and learning" (1 Nephi 19:23).

This "likening" approach can show up in the allusive way that Alan Goff has shown throughout Nephi's account.[148] It also shows in the way that Nephi relates his own vision to that of Lehi. Welch observes: "The two visions are very different in character. Lehi's dream is intimate, symbolic, and salvific; Nephi's vision is collective, historic, and eschatological. Yet both visions embrace the same prophetic elements, only from different angles."[149] Not only the content and genre of their visions but even their modes of teaching demonstrate the influence of the wisdom tradition.

Old World Evidence That Parts of Wisdom Were Lost

Barker clearly indicates the difference between what wisdom became later and what wisdom seemed to be: "The two wise men of whom we know anything in detail, Joseph and Daniel, did have the ability to predict the future. Both interpreted dreams, and Daniel had visions, yet the Book of Proverbs has little to say on the subject of future times. If wisdom was radically modified during the exile, we should have an explanation for this silence."[150]

She acknowledges that one of the difficulties in reconstructing wisdom has been the influence and effectiveness of those making the changes: "The reasons for the changes to

wisdom must lie elsewhere, perhaps in those very aspects of wisdom which are no longer extant in the biblical texts as a result of the alterations."[151]

Still, the evidence she surveys demonstrates clearly that wisdom was changed:

> One is also impatient to know what is missing from the text at certain points. Prov. 30.1ff is completely mutilated, and I shall not attempt to translate it, but the LXX of v. 4 reads the plural, *sons*. Given the general theme of the passage, namely ascent to heaven and power over creation, this plural form reminds one immediately of the sons of God in the Enochic mythology. It is these *sons* who have also disappeared from the Hebrew of Deut. 32, suggesting that the opacity of Prov. 30 may not be accidental.[152]

> Texts dealing with Holy Ones and the Holy One have significant elements in common: theophany, judgement, triumph for Yahweh, triumph for his anointed son, ascent to a throne in heaven, conflict with beasts and with angel princes caught up in the destinies of earthly kingdoms. Many of these texts are corrupted; much of their subject matter is that of the "lost" tradition thought to underlie the apocalyptic texts. The textual corruption and the lost tradition are aspects of the same question.[153]

Barker surveys a number of examples and concludes, "The MT has changed 'sons of God' to 'servants,' and removed all explicit references to the heavenly beings who were to be judged. It is important to remember that the changes in the MT always follow the same pattern, and that this pattern distinguishes it from much at Qumran, and also from much in the New Testament."[154] She argues not just from specific examples, but from overall patterns, and from patterns back down to tiny details. Given an awareness of these patterns, a

careful reader of Latter-day Saint scriptures may find new insights even with respect to this particular issue.

Jacob and the Deuteronomist Reformers

In "Paradigms Regained," I present arguments that Barker's view fits very nicely with the Book of Mormon in that the very things that Barker says were changed in response to the exile and the monarchy appear intact in the Book of Mormon. However, it had no report of any direct statement in the Book of Mormon referring to the efforts of the Deuteronomist reformers. More recently I realized the significance of Jacob's comments in Jacob 4:4–14. Jacob 4:14 refers to certain Jews at Jerusalem hostile to the prophets[155] who "despised the words of plainness" and "look[ed] beyond the mark." Jacob would have learned from Lehi of the violent rivals that Lehi, Jeremiah, and others faced in Jerusalem. As a consequence of their actions, Jacob reports, "God hath taken away his plainness from them, and delivered unto them many things which they cannot understand, because they desired it." In chapter 4, Jacob reports on the plainness that he emphasizes overall in his ministry, and it is plausible that he would emphasize the very things that he knew had been lost that were all the more precious given his knowledge of that loss. Since Jacob had never been in Jerusalem, he likely obtained from Lehi and Nephi the information about what was lost, or perhaps he drew parallels from Lehi's vision of Jerusalem's destruction (2 Nephi 1:4). It is at least a striking coincidence that Jacob is contemporary with the exile, and his summary of his life teachings in this chapter corresponds point for point to Barker's analysis of what had been lost at that very time and who was responsible.

Remember that Barker writes that "wisdom was an older form of communication between God and his people. Wisdom

was something which the Deuteronomists reformed. This possibility is crucial for my argument."[156] Jacob 4:10 emphasizes that the Lord "counseleth in wisdom," and he shows many ties to the lost tradition in his discourses. Barker writes that "the heavenly ascent and the vision of God were abandoned"; Jacob reports that "we have many revelations and the spirit of prophecy" (Jacob 4:6) and urges that his people "despise not the revelations of God" (Jacob 4:8). Barker describes a reaction against "the hosts of heaven and the angels" in favor of a strict monotheism.[157] According to Barker, in the tradition of the First Temple "there was a High God and several Sons of God, one of whom was Yahweh, the Holy One of Israel."[158] Jacob declares that "they believed in Christ and worshiped the Father in his name, and also we worship the Father in his name. And for this intent we keep the law of Moses, it pointing our souls to him; and for this cause it is sanctified unto us for righteousness, even as it was accounted unto Abraham in the wilderness to be obedient unto the commands of God in offering up his son Isaac, which is a similitude of God and his Only Begotten Son" (Jacob 4:5). Barker emphasizes the role of the atoning high priest as a manifestation of Jehovah.[159] Jacob, a temple priest, delivers key discourses on the atonement at the temple that emphasize "the Holy One of Israel" (2 Nephi 9:11) and urges his readers to "be reconciled unto him through the atonement of Christ" (Jacob 4:11).

Other correlations deriving from Jacob's role as a temple priest include some of the specific language he uses. For example, in her essay "Beyond the Veil of the Temple," Barker quotes several writings that emphasize the priestly visionaries' knowledge of the things of the past and future as depicted on the temple veil and as shown to them in their visions.[160] Jacob comments, "For the Spirit speaketh the truth and lieth not. Wherefore, it

speaketh of things as they really are, and of things as they really will be; wherefore, these things are manifested unto us plainly, for the salvation of our souls" (Jacob 4:13; cf. D&C 93:24). Barker presents arguments in *The Older Testament* that part of the Deuteronomic reform involved the rejection of a wisdom tradition that predicts the future,[161] and Jacob says, "For, for this intent have we written these things, that they may know that we knew of Christ, and we had a hope of his glory many hundred years before his coming; and not only we ourselves had a hope of his glory, but also all the holy prophets which were before us" (Jacob 4:4). Again, we find not just random parallels, but matching patterns that depend on one specific time and place and one interpretive framework.

Concluding Observations

Barker's own purpose is to illuminate the origins of Christianity. She follows clues from many sources that all lead her back toward the First Temple and the conflicts that arose in ancient Israel in the late seventh and early sixth centuries, right around the time of Lehi. In summary, she explains:

> There appeared very early in Christian writings, references to beliefs that are nowhere recorded in the New Testament and yet clearly originated in the tradition we call apocalyptic. As more is discovered about this tradition, so more and more points of contact can be found between the beliefs of the ancient temple theology and what became Christianity. The secret tradition of the priests probably became the secret tradition of early Christianity; the visions and angel lore suggest this, as does the prohibition in Deuteronomy 29.29. What had the secret things been that were contrasted with the Law? What had been meant by saying that the Law was neither too hard nor too distant? The comparison suggests

> that there had been something both hard and distant which had been brought from heaven by one who had ascended (Deut. 30.11–12, cf. John 3.11–12). This suggests that a secret tradition had been banned by the Deuteronomists, who were the temple reformers at the end of the seventh century BCE, and we do not have to look far to discover what this tradition must have been. They offered their Law as a substitute for Wisdom (Deut. 4.6, cf. Gen. 3.5, the Wisdom that made humans like gods). They also said that the Lord was not visible in human form (Deut 4.12), even though a contemporary priest, Ezekiel, had had a vision of a human figure on the throne (Ezek. 1.26–28), and Isaiah had seen the Lord (Isa. 6.5) and someone, of sufficient repute to have his words included in Scripture, had described the vision of God on Sinai (Exod. 24.10).[162]

Putting her efforts in perspective, Barker explains:

> What I shall propose . . . is not an impossibility, but only one possibility to set alongside other possibilities, none of which has any claim to being an absolutely accurate account of what happened. Hypotheses do not become fact simply by frequent repetition, or even by detailed elaboration. What I am suggesting does, however, make considerable sense of the evidence from later periods.[163]

Her reconstruction does challenge conventional notions; however, because the texts she uses have now become more available, she has been getting more attention and respect. Her ideas are not completely without precedent or parallel. For example, Nibley writes:

> Years ago Hermann Gunkel pointed out that a full-blown gospel of redemption and atonement was in existence among the preexilic Jews, but this claim, so jarring to the prevailing schools of theology, which would only accept an evolutionary pattern of slow and gradual development, was

> strenuously resisted by the experts. The discovery of the Scrolls has changed all that: "Now that the warning has been given," writes Dupont-Sommer, "many passages of the Old Testament itself must be examined with a fresh eye."[164]

While following along the same kinds of evidence to similar conclusions, Barker brings a fresh eye and offers a substantially new and original viewpoint, particularly with respect to her overarching vision of what happened. Commenting on the distinctiveness and importance of her views, Robert M. Price writes:

> This is what we mean by "paradigm shift." In reading Margaret Barker's wide-ranging investigation one feels the tectonic plates shifting and coming together in a new configuration, or perhaps rather a very old one, as we see the outlines of primal Gondwanaland restored again. Barker strips off the blinders of the canonical redactors of the Old Testament, a job we thought we'd long ago completed.[165]

Thus we see that Barker has raised an important set of questions and has provided a formidable body of scholarship, unsettled though it may be, granted the inevitable controversy that comes when one challenges entrenched positions and vested interests.[166] While comparisons are obviously promising, we also have many questions to explore. Some we cannot yet answer, but we can at least ask. For instance, how did Jeremiah relate to Josiah's reform? Jeremiah received his prophetic call in the thirteenth year of Josiah's reign (Jeremiah 1:2), when Josiah was twenty-one. Jeremiah's father might be the man who reports finding the book of the law, and Jeremiah himself refers to Deuteronomy frequently. But why do even the Jeremiah texts from Josiah's time so rarely refer directly to Josiah after that initial mention?[167] Why does an oracle like the one starting in Jeremiah 3:6, given in the days of Josiah, that is, *during the reform years,* vehemently denounce *both* cultic and moral lapses in Israel?[168] Why the contrast to the rosy picture of the reform

portrayed in 2 Kings and 2 Chronicles? Jeremiah complains bitterly: "From the thirteenth year of Josiah the son of Amon king of Judah, even unto this day, that is the three and twentieth year, the word of the Lord hath come unto me, and I have spoken unto you, rising early and speaking; but ye have not hearkened" (Jeremiah 25:3).

Jeremiah knows the law, yet he complains that those who "handle the law knew me not" (Jeremiah 2:8), and he even asks, "How do you say, 'We are wise, and Yahweh's torah is with us'? In fact, here, it was made for a lie, the lying pen of the scribes" (Jeremiah 8:8).[169] Some of Jeremiah's ongoing condemnation of moral and religious corruption seems to fit some goals of the reformers, especially in renouncing idolatry. Yet we have no approval, or even acknowledgment, of the reform that fits with either the Kings or Chronicles account. Many of his comments become more intriguing in light of Barker's thesis:

> Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein. (Jeremiah 6:16)

> Because my people hath forgotten me, they have burned incense to vanity, and they have caused them to stumble in their ways from the ancient paths, to walk in paths, in a way not cast up. (Jeremiah 18:15)

Which old paths, which ancient ways, were being abandoned during Jeremiah's long ministry? The Josianic/Deuteronomic reform was directed at the high priesthood, the objects in the holy of holies, and the centralization of worship in Jerusalem.[170] Yet Jeremiah was from a priestly family and uses language associated with the targets of the reformers. For example, while he appears to agree with the reform's attack on idolatry in the high places (Jeremiah 3:6; 2 Kings 23:5), he speaks of personal

revelation (Jeremiah 1:4), the Lord of Hosts (81 times), the tree of life (Jeremiah 1:11; 17:8), the fountain of living waters (Jeremiah 2:13; 17:13), and the glorious high throne of God (Jeremiah 17:12). He also predicts the future. Barker has shown that these were all targeted by the reformers.[171] And clearly, Jeremiah was at odds with most of the religious and political establishment who supported the reforms.

Barker has done most of her work knowing "almost nothing"[172] about Latter-day Saint scripture and scholarship, yet both fields show a striking thematic resemblance to each other, as even a survey of her titles demonstrates.[173] Joseph Smith, of course, dictated the Book of Mormon without the benefit of Barker's language skills and sources (other than the Bible), most of which have been discovered since Joseph Smith died. And we should note that Joseph's critics, from Alexander Campbell on, reserved some of their most withering scorn for Book of Mormon depiction of pre-Christian Jewish temple worship, priesthood, and prophecy. In his 1831 "Delusions," Campbell was quick to claim plagiarism by Joseph Smith from sources like Shakespeare, the Bible, and popular culture.[174] The idea that preexilic Judaism might display differences from later Judaisms never surfaces in Campbell's critique or any other. Only within the past few years has D. Michael Quinn suggested the remote possibility of Joseph Smith gaining access to two relevant texts, the Laurence translations of the *Ascension of Isaiah* and the *Book of Enoch*.[175] All of Joseph's contemporaries had equal physical proximity and better education and financial access, and none of them made a connection to those barely potential (though by themselves inadequate) sources. Remember that the critics made searches and inquiries[176] among Joseph's neighbors sufficient to lead them to the unpublished and ultimately irrelevant Spaulding manuscript. This zeal demonstrates that they would have been alert to any promising rumor and shows that they had the motivation to track down a

rare and unpopular text. Yet even the most popular text among current critics, Ethan Smith's *View of the Hebrews,* drew no notice from critics until the turn of the twentieth century.[177]

All the texts contemporary with Joseph Smith ultimately prove inadequate to account for the Book of Mormon, even if he had seen them.[178] Indeed, it is only within the past thirty years, especially in light of recent reevaluations compelled by texts such as the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Pseudepigrapha, that a few Latter-day Saint scholars have begun to seriously explore the implications of the preexilic setting for the first chapters of the Book of Mormon.[179] Despite disclosures in the Book of Mormon that should have set us more directly on this path of research, all have tended to read the Bible and the Book of Mormon in what Barker calls "a deuteronomic manner," assuming an unbroken continuity in the religion of Israel before and after the exile. Barker shows that "The exile in Babylon is a formidable barrier to anyone wanting to reconstruct the religious beliefs and practices of ancient Jerusalem. . . . Enormous developments took place in the wake of enormous destruction."[180]

Barker's work illustrates a complex pattern involving specific historical events, times, places, persons, and teachings. All of this comes in a timely manner and in the appropriate place to be relevant to the Book of Mormon. In my opinion, this correspondence is not accidental but providential (see 1 Nephi 13). "And again, I will give unto you a pattern in all things, that ye may not be deceived" (D&C 52:14). Given that the pattern appears clearly in the Book of Mormon, what should we think?

> O then, is not this real?
> I say unto you, Yea,
> because it is light; and whatsoever is light, is good,
> because it is discernible, therefore ye must know that it is good. (Alma 32:35)

Notes

1. Barker's own emphasis is on understanding the origins of Christianity. Correlation with the Book of Mormon can be seen as either accidental convergence or as inspired confirmation in fulfillment of prophecy in 1 Nephi 13:39–40, depending on your perspective.

2. See Margaret Barker, *The Older Testament: The Survival of Themes from the Ancient Royal Cult in Sectarian Judaism and Early Christianity* (London: SPCK, 1987), 1.

3. William J. Doorly, *Obsession with Justice: The Story of the Deuteronomists* (New York: Paulist, 1994).

4. Barker, *Older Testament,* 7.

5. Ibid., emphasis dropped.

6. See Barker, *Older Testament.*

7. See Ellis T. Rasmussen, "Deuteronomy," in *Encyclopedia of Mormonism,* 1:378–79; and Kevin Christensen, "Paradigms Regained: A Survey of Margaret Barker's Scholarship and Its Significance for Mormon Studies," *FARMS Occasional Papers* 2 (2001): 9–10.

8. Norbert F. Lohfink, "Was There a Deuteronomistic Movement?" in *Those Elusive Deuteronomists: The Phenomenon of Pan-Deuteronomism,* ed. Linda S. Schearing and Steven L. McKenzie (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1999), 60. However, despite the ideals, when one considers the violence during Josiah's reform (2 Kings 23:20) and Barker's references to later memories of Josiah's reform as a time of wrath, "happy" ought not be read here without a sense of irony. Notice that in contrast to the institutional violence that went with the reform, the Nephite tradition says "there was no law against a man's belief" (Alma 30:11).

9. For the Nephite temples, see 2 Nephi 5:15–16. For Nephi's acceptance of kingly roles, see 2 Nephi 5:18. For discussion, see Noel B. Reynolds, "Nephite Kingship Reconsidered," in *Mormons, Scripture, and the Ancient World: Studies in Honor of John L. Sorenson,* ed. Davis Bitton (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1998), 151–89. For setting up priests, see 2 Nephi 5:26, and for the distinct traditions in which they operate, see Alma 13. For ties to wisdom, see Daniel C. Peter-

son, "Nephi and His Asherah: A Note on 1 Nephi 11:8–23," in *Mormons, Scripture, and the Ancient World,* 191–243, and Christensen, "Paradigms Regained," 54–55.

10. Margaret Barker, *The Great Angel: A Study of Israel's Second God* (London: SPCK, 1992), 12.

11. Barker, *Older Testament,* 7.

12. Barker notes that Isaiah, Ezekiel, and John were all temple priests and knew the ancient tradition. For Isaiah, see Margaret Barker, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ: Which God Gave to Him to Show to His Servants What Must Soon Take Place (Revelation 1.1)* (Edinburgh: Clark, 2000), 124. For Ezekiel, see ibid., 67. For John, see ibid., 10, 79, 124.

13. Margaret Barker, *On Earth as It Is in Heaven: Temple Symbolism in the New Testament* (Edinburgh: Clark, 1995), 4; see also Margaret Barker, *The Lost Prophet: The Book of Enoch and Its Influence on Christianity* (London: SPCK, 1988), 52. Compare Barker's distinction between the law and wisdom with Nibley's discussion of "horizontal and vertical" Judaism and Christianity in Hugh Nibley, *Since Cumorah,* 2nd ed. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1988), 89.

14. Barker, *Older Testament,* 93.

15. Nephi uses the title in 1 Nephi 19 himself and in quotations from Isaiah and from Zenos, a prophet in the northern kingdom.

16. See Peterson, "Nephi and His Asherah," 191–243.

17. See 2 Nephi 25:12–19, in which Nephi discourses on Isaiah, himself a temple priest, on the topic of divine sonship. Later, Benjamin, Abinadi, and the risen Lord discuss other aspects of this theme.

18. Barker, *Older Testament,* 225.

19. Margaret Barker, *The Gate of Heaven: The History and Symbolism of the Temple in Jerusalem* (London: SPCK, 1991), 92.

20. Barker, *Older Testament,* 1.

21. Compare Margaret Barker, *The Great High Priest* (London: Clark, 2003), 294–315.

22. See John W. Welch, "Connections between the Visions of Lehi and Nephi," in *Pressing Forward with the Book of Mormon: The FARMS Updates of the 1990s,* ed. John W. Welch and Melvin J. Thorne (Provo,

Utah: FARMS, 1999), 49–53, showing that Nephi understands Lehi's vision in a historical and apocalyptic sense; Stephen E. Robinson on "Nephi's 'Great and Abominable Church,'" *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 7/1 (1998): 32–39; also Mark D. Thomas, *Digging in Cumorah: Reclaiming Book of Mormon Narratives* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 2000), 99–104; and Barker, *Great High Priest,* 200–201.

23. Note the temple context and Welch's suggestions regarding the title as the Name. Contrast Alma 34:35.

24. Note that Barker compares the seven-branched candlestick in the temple to the Lord and to the tree of life, in, for example, *Older Testament,* 221–31.

25. Barker, *Revelation of Jesus Christ,* 67.

26. Barker, *Older Testament,* 240.

27. In comparing the Book of Mormon to Barker's account, we must also consider evidence that appears downstream from the preexilic origin but demonstrates thematic connections to the earlier period. For example, Jacob, though never in Jerusalem, was consecrated as a temple priest by Nephi, who had known Jerusalem (2 Nephi 25:5). The most frequently quoted biblical prophet in the Book of Mormon is Isaiah, who was a temple priest in Jerusalem. Therefore, we should expect not only Lehi and Nephi, but also Jacob and subsequent Book of Mormon prophets, to demonstrate influence from the preexilic tradition via Lehi and the brass plates. They should show no influence from the reforms specific to the exile and restoration, while they should and do show influence from the northern kingdom traditions because of Lehi's descent from Joseph. John L. Sorenson, *Nephite Culture and Society* (Salt Lake City: New Sage Books, 1997), 25–39.

28. Barker, *Gate of Heaven,* 7.

29. Barker, *Older Testament,* 6.

30. Barker, *Gate of Heaven,* 13–14.

31. See John W. Welch, "The Temple in the Book of Mormon: The Temples at the Cities of Nephi, Zarahemla, and Bountiful," in *Temples of the Ancient World: Ritual and Symbolism,* ed. Donald W. Parry (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1994), 297–387; John W. Welch, "The Melchizedek Material in Alma 13:13–19," in *By*

Study and Also by Faith: Essays in Honor of Hugh W. Nibley, ed. John M. Lundquist and Stephen D. Ricks (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1990), 2:238–72; and John W. Welch, *Illuminating the Sermon at the Temple and the Sermon on the Mount* (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1999).

32. Compare the description of King Noah's temple in Mosiah 11:10.

33. Barker, *Gate of Heaven,* 16.

34. Ibid., 17.

35. See Terrence L. Szink and John W. Welch, "King Benjamin's Speech in the Context of Ancient Israelite Festivals," in *King Benjamin's Speech: "That Ye May Learn Wisdom,"* ed. John W. Welch and Stephen D. Ricks (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1998), 147–223. See also "Abinadi and Pentecost," in *Reexploring the Book of Mormon,* ed. John W. Welch (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1992), 135–38.

36. Mircea Eliade, *Cosmos and History: The Myth of the Eternal Return* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1959), 77.

37. Barker, *Gate of Heaven,* 63.

38. Stephen D. Ricks "Kingship, Coronation, and Covenant in Mosiah 1–6," in *King Benjamin's Speech,* 261. Ricks cites Walter Brueggemann, "From Dust to Kingship," *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 84/1 (1972): 1.

39. See Richard Dilworth Rust, "The Book of Mormon, Designed for Our Day," *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon* 2 (1990): 1–23; Hugh Nibley, *The Prophetic Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1989), 407–34; Christensen, "Paradigms Regained."

40. See Barker, *Lost Prophet,* 77–78.

41. Compare with Richard E. Friedman, *Who Wrote the Bible?* (New York: Summit Books, 1987), 126.

42. Barker, *Gate of Heaven,* 69.

43. See Friedman, *Who Wrote the Bible?* 126. "Not only is Jeremiah the only prophet to refer to Shiloh and allude to Moses' bronze snake [Jeremiah 8:17–22]; he is the only prophet to refer to Samuel, the priest-prophet-judge who was the greatest figure in Shiloh's history."

44. Ibid., 102; see Donald W. Parry, "Garden of Eden: Prototype

Sanctuary," in *Temples of the Ancient World,* ed. Donald W. Parry (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1994), 126–51.

45. See Sorenson, *Nephite Culture and Society,* 25–39. See also Steve St. Clair, "The Stick of Joseph: The Book of Mormon and the Literary Tradition of Northern Israel": "As described in the Bible, the southern kingdom had standard practices in regard to who held the priesthood: it was restricted to members of the tribe of Levi and specifically to descendants of Aaron, the brother of Moses. In the northern kingdom and the peoples descended from it, the picture was much more interesting, and more confusing. They accepted priesthood service by people who did not fit the southern pattern. . . . Priesthood practice among the Rechabites is most instructive as an example of northern Israelite views. When the Prophet Jeremiah, himself perhaps a descendant of northern Israelite priests, praised the covenant-keeping of the Rechabites shortly before the Babylonian captivity, he made them a striking promise in the name of the Lord: 'Jonadab, son of Rechab, shall never lack a man to stand before me.' To 'stand before the Lord' was a technical term with the specific meaning of serving as a priest, because the title 'priest' (Heb. *cohen*) is derived from a word meaning 'to stand upright.' . . . The Rechabites, then, were a group of functioning priests who had no traceable connection with the tribe of Levi or the ancestry of Aaron." Unpublished paper in author's possession. Compare Barker, *Great High Priest,* 122.

46. Barker, *Great Angel,* 15.

47. Barker, *Older Testament,* 257.

48. Compare Noel Reynolds, "The Brass Plates Version of Genesis," in *By Study and Also by Faith,* 2:136–173.

49. See Barker, *Lost Prophet,* 20–24, 36–39.

50. Barker, *Older Testament,* 133.

51. Ibid., 233–34.

52. Ibid., 179.

53. Barker, *Gate of Heaven,* 81. A fourth-century Coptic text (A.D. 380) is also notable when considering the tension between the fallen angel stories and the Genesis Adam story. "Discourse on Abbatôn by

Timothy, Archbishop of Alexandria," in *Coptic Martyrdoms Etc. in the Dialect of Upper Egypt,* ed. E. A. Wallis Budge (London: British Museum, 1914), 474, fuses a postresurrection discourse of Jesus, a ritually elaborate account of Satan's fall, the fallen angel stories, the choice of Jesus as the redeemer from the foundation of the world, and the creation of Adam into a narrative that resonates profoundly with Latter-day Saint Abraham, Moses, and temple accounts.

54. This approach can be concurrent with the insights regarding allusions to the stories in Judges as discussed by Alan Goff in "The Stealing of the Daughters of the Lamanites," in *Rediscovering the Book of Mormon,* ed. John L. Sorenson and Melvin J. Thorne (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1991), 67–74, and Brown, *From Jerusalem to Zarahemla,* 99–112.

55. Barker, *Lost Prophet,* 23.

56. Compare Barker, *Older Testament,* 233–45, with Bruce M. Pritchett Jr., "Lehi's Theology of the Fall in Its Preexilic/Exilic Context," *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 3/2 (1994): 49–83.

57. Barker, *Older Testament,* 233.

58. Pritchett, "Lehi's Theology of the Fall," 58.

59. Barker, *Older Testament,* 240.

60. Ibid., 238.

61. Pritchett, "Lehi's Theology of the Fall," 61.

62. Margaret Barker, *The Risen Lord: The Jesus of History as the Christ of Faith* (Edinburgh: Clark, 1996), 71.

63. See Christensen, "Paradigms Regained," 71–75.

64. Barker, *Lost Prophet,* 23.

65. Szink and Welch, "King Benjamin's Speech," 178.

66. Barker, *Great High Priest,* 82.

67. Barker, *Gate of Heaven,* 29.

68. Ibid., 29, 92.

69. See Bruce W. Jorgensen, "The Dark Way to the Tree: Typological Unity in the Book of Mormon," in *Literature of Belief: Sacred Scripture and Religious Experience,* ed. Neal E. Lambert (Provo, Utah: BYU Religious Studies Center, 1981), 217–31; Jeanette W.

Miller, "The Tree of Life, a Personification of Christ," *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 2/1 (1993): 93–106.

70. See Welch, "Connections between the Visions," 49–53.

71. See C. Wilfred Griggs, "The Book of Mormon as an Ancient Book," in *Book of Mormon Authorship: New Light on Ancient Origins,* ed. Noel B. Reynolds (Provo, Utah: BYU Religious Studies Center, 1982), 77, 81; and Hugh Nibley, *An Approach to the Book of Mormon,* 3rd ed. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1988), 253–64.

72. Barker, *Older Testament,* 224.

73. Barker, *Great High Priest,* 200–201.

74. Barker, *Gate of Heaven,* 95.

75. Peterson, "Nephi and His Asherah," 213.

76. Barker, *Gate of Heaven,* 93.

77. Ibid., 104.

78. This is also true of the experience of the queen and of Abish, although that would lead off on a different tangent. For a suggestion of the mythic/ritual significance of this account, see Kevin and Shauna Christensen, "Nephite Feminism Revisited: Thoughts on Carol Lynn Pearson's View of Women in the Book of Mormon," *FARMS Review of Books* 10/2 (1998): 9–61.

79. M. Catherine Thomas, "The Brother of Jared at the Veil," in *Temples of the Ancient World,* 388–98.

80. Barker, *Great High Priest,* 190.

81. Rust, "The Book of Mormon," 14–15.

82. Barker, *Gate of Heaven,* 104–5.

83. Barker, *Great High Priest,* 190.

84. Ibid., 193.

85. Hugh Nibley, *Approaching Zion* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1989), 566–67.

86. See Welch, "The Temple in the Book of Mormon," 297–387.

87. Barker, *On Earth as It Is in Heaven,* 46. See Christensen, "Paradigms Regained," 77–81, for a discussion of open questions of Isaiah authorship and the Book of Mormon in relation to the Isaiah chapters quoted in the Book of Mormon.

88. Barker, G*reat High Priest,* 53–54; also in Margaret Barker,

"Atonement: The Rite of Healing," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 49/1 (1996): 18–19.

89. See "Abinadi and Pentecost," 135–38.

90. Barker, *Older Testament,* 13–14.

91. Reynolds, "Nephite Kingship Reconsidered," 151–89.

92. See, for example, Gordon C. Thomasson, "Mosiah: The Complex Symbolism and Symbolic Complex of Kingship in the Book of Mormon," *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 2/1 (1993): 21–38.

93. Barker, *Older Testament,* 113.

94. For example, Benjamin in Mosiah 2:22; the exact phrase occurs twenty-one times in the Book of Mormon, as well as in several other variations.

95. Barker, *Gate of Heaven,* 103.

96. Barker, *Revelation of Jesus Christ,* 41.

97. Barker, *Gate of Heaven,* 80.

98. See Szink and Welch, "King Benjamin's Speech," 147–223; John A. Tvedtnes, "King Benjamin and the Feast of Tabernacles," in *By Study and Also by Faith,* 197–237.

99. Szink and Welch, "King Benjamin's Speech," 199–200.

100. Christensen, "Paradigms Regained," 61–63, also noting comparisons with the Enoch passages in the Pearl of Great Price. Doctrine and Covenants 1:15 also has a strong resonance.

101. Barker, *Gate of Heaven,* 103.

102. Szink and Welch, "King Benjamin's Speech," 179; see Barker, *Great Angel,* 108.

103. Barker, *Great Angel,* 98, emphasis added.

104. Ibid., 104, emphasis added.

105. Ibid., 108, emphasis added.

106. Szink and Welch, "King Benjamin's Speech," 215 n. 111.

107. Barker, *Great Angel,* 111–12, emphasis added.

108. Barker, *Older Testament,* 127.

109. An etymology for Sariah—the name of Lehi's wife, and anciently attested at Elephantine—is "Jehovah is my prince." See Jeffrey R. Chadwick, "Sariah in the Elephantine Papyri," in *Pressing*

Forward, 8; and Paul Y. Hoskisson, "Lehi and Sariah," *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 9/1 (2000): 30.

110. Barker, *Gate of Heaven,* 73.

111. Ibid., 134.

112. Ibid., 176.

113. Nibley, *An Approach to the Book of Mormon,* 300, 301.

114. Compare Barker, *Great High Priest,* 1–33, with Nibley, *Prophetic Book of Mormon,* 407–434, and Welch, *Illuminating the Sermon at the Temple,* 32–34.

115. See John W. Welch, "Democratizing Forces in King Benjamin's Speech," in *Pressing Forward,* 110–26.

116. Ricks, "Kingship, Covenant, and Coronation," 254.

117. Daniel C. Peterson, "'Ye Are Gods': Psalm 82 and John 10 as Witnesses to the Divine Nature of Humankind," in *The Disciple as Scholar: Essays on Scripture and the Ancient World in Honor of Richard Lloyd Anderson,* ed. Stephen D. Ricks, Donald W. Parry, and Andrew H. Hedges (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 2000), 471–594.

118. Barker, *Older Testament,* 230.

119. Peterson, "Nephi and His Asherah," 209–18; and Nibley, *Prophetic Book of Mormon,* 551.

120. Peterson, "Nephi and His Asherah," 209.

121. Ibid.

122. Barker, *Older Testament,* 83.

123. Ibid., 82.

124. Ibid., 84.

125. Ibid., 85.

126. Ibid., 81.

127. Ibid., 89.

128. Ibid., 99.

129. See Christensen, "Paradigms Regained," 9–12; Noel Reynolds, "Lehi as Moses," *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 9/2 (2000): 26–35.

130. Barker, *Older Testament,* 95. Compare Moses 1 and Abraham 3–4.

131. Barker, *Great High Priest,* 199–200.

132. Barker, *Older Testament,* 91–92.

133. See Reynolds, "Nephite Kingship Reconsidered," 151–89.
134. The material in 2 Nephi 3 has been compared to the Messiah ben Joseph traditions in Joseph F. McConkie, "Joseph Smith as Found in Ancient Manuscripts," in *Isaiah and the Prophets,* ed. Monte S. Nyman (Provo, Utah: BYU Religious Studies Center, 1984), 11–31.
135. See especially Peterson, "Nephi and His Asherah," 209–18.
136. Barker, *Older Testament,* 95.
137. Ibid., 96.
138. Ibid., 97.
139. Nibley, *Since Cumorah,* 251–63.
140. Barker, *Older Testament,* 114.
141. Barker, *Gate of Heaven,* 135.
142. See John A. Tvedtnes, *The Most Correct Book: Insights from a Book of Mormon Scholar* (Salt Lake City: Cornerstone, 1999), 59–75.
143. Barker, *Older Testament,* 90–91.
144. See Nibley, *Approaching Zion,* 325–27.
145. Barker, *Lost Prophet,* 66.
146. Ibid., 67.
147. Ibid.
148. For example, Alan Goff, "Boats, Beginnings, and Repetitions," *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 1/1 (1992): 67–84.
149. Welch, "Connections between the Visions," 49.
150. Barker, *Older Testament,* 96.
151. Ibid., 85.
152. Ibid., 84.
153. Ibid., 119.
154. Ibid., 211.
155. See Tvedtnes, *Most Correct Book,* 66–71, on accounts of opposition to Jeremiah and Ezekiel.
156. Barker, *Older Testament,* 83.
157. Barker, *Great Angel,* 46.
158. Ibid., 3.
159. Barker, *Risen Lord,* 57–84.
160. Barker, *Great High Priest,* 188–201.
161. Barker, *Older Testament,* 95–97.

162. Barker, *Great High Priest,* 9, emphasis deleted.

163. Barker, *Great Angel,* 12.

164. Nibley, *Prophetic Book of Mormon,* 77–78.

165. Robert M. Price, review of *The Great Angel: A Study of Israel's Second God,* by Margaret Barker, *Journal of Higher Criticism* 4/1 (1997): 152–55.

166. For instance, on the basis of three or four quotations by three Latter-day Saint authors, Paul Owen felt compelled to devote fully a fifth of his essay on "Monotheism, Mormonism, and the New Testament Witness," in *The New Mormon Challenge: Responding to the Latest Defenses of a Fast-Growing Movement,* ed. Francis J. Beckwith, Carl Mosser, and Paul Owen (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2002), 271–314, to responding to one of her books (301–8). I counter with an essay, "A Response to Paul Owen's Comments on Margaret Barker," *FARMS Review of Books* 14/1–2 (2002): 193–221, with some excellent help from Margaret Barker herself.

167. Of sixteen verses naming Josiah, most are prefaced by "son of." Three verses mention Josiah in the context of the timing of Jeremiah's prophetic call. Two of these report that Judah had never listened to Jeremiah in all the years since. The only discourse that can be dated with certainty to Josiah's life (Jeremiah 3:6–7) broadly condemns both cultic and moral lapses in Judah and Israel. Only Jeremiah 22:15–16 refers positively to anything about Josiah himself; this passage is a retrospective contrast of Josiah with Jehoiakim, one of his sons, referring to the former judging the cause of the poor and the needy (positive themes of Deuteronomy). Nothing at Josiah's time or later confirms or extends that favorable aside.

168. For example, Jeremiah 3:6–10 denounces idolatry, Jeremiah 5:7 condemns moral lapses, and Jeremiah 5:21 invokes Isaiah's curse in Isaiah 6:8–9 on the refusal of wisdom, pointing to the lack of understanding, seeing, or hearing. Jeremiah 5:27–28 describes economic exploitation and corruption, Jeremiah 5:31 describes false priests and prophets, and Jeremiah 7:4–7 condemns reliance on the temple without moral reformation.

169. Translation in Friedman, *Who Wrote the Bible?* 209. Friedman argues that the passage is criticizing the "P" source.

170. See Margaret Barker, "What Did King Josiah Reform?" in this volume, pages 523–42.

171. See Barker, *Great Angel,* 14–15.

172. Margaret Barker, e-mail to Kevin Christensen, September 2002.

173. See Christensen, "Paradigms Regained," 89.

174. Alexander Campbell, "Delusions," *Millennial Harbinger* 2 (7 February 1831): 85–96.

175. See D. Michael Quinn, *Early Mormonism and the Magic World View,* rev. and enl. ed. (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1998), 210–21. Even Quinn does not think Joseph Smith obtained these books. He raises the remote possibility out of professional obligation, rather than plausibility. Compared to Joseph Smith, critics like Abner Cole, the newspaper editor; John Gilbert, the printer; Alexander Campbell, the second-generation religious leader; or Philastus Hurlbut, the disaffected convert, seem to me to be far more likely to have encountered such materials, in terms of both educational background and financial capability. Given how strenuously Campbell objected, for example, it seems reasonable that had he seen the *Ascension of Isaiah,* he would have drawn attention to Joseph's possible use of it in light of pre-Christian knowledge of Christ rather than solely to Joseph's ignorance of the Old Testament. Compare William J. Hamblin on the economics of book buying in "That Old Black Magic," *FARMS Review of Books* 12/2 (2000): esp. 253–76.

176. See Nibley, *Prophetic Book of Mormon,* 170–81.

177. See Andrew H. Hedges, review of *View of the Hebrews,* by Ethan Smith, *FARMS Review of Books* 9/1 (1997): 63–68.

178. See John Gee, "The Wrong Type of Book," in *Echoes and Evidences of the Book of Mormon,* ed. Donald W. Parry, Daniel C. Peterson, and John W. Welch (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 2002), 307–29.

179. See mentions of preexilic issues by Nibley in "New Approaches to Book of Mormon Study," 77–78; Gordon C. Thomasson, "What's in a Name? Book of Mormon Language, Names, and [Metonymic] Naming," *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 3/1 (1994): 16; John W.

Welch, "King Benjamin's Discourse in the Context of Ancient Israelite Festivals" (FARMS paper, 1985); Angela Crowell, "Dating the Book of Mormon to Pre-exilic Language Structure" (FARMS reprint, 1996); and Pritchett, "Lehi's Theology of the Fall." Note that Pritchett wrote in response to Blake T. Ostler, "The Book of Mormon as a Modern Expansion of an Ancient Source," *Dialogue* 20/1 (1987): 66–123, which attempted a then state-of-the-art survey that saw extensive conflicts between the Book of Mormon and scholarly views of preexilic Israel. In response to perceived conflicts, Ostler proposed a "prophetic expansion" view of the text. Little noticed by Latter-day Saint scholars, Barker's *Older Testament* was published that same year in England. I find it significant that Ostler, in light of work by Barker and others, has revised his view on the necessity of extensive prophetic expansion, though he still asserts a midrashic view of translation. See also Peterson, "Nephi and His Asherah," 195–204.

180. Barker, *Great Angel,* 12.