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Ancient Temple Imagery in the Sermons of Jacob

David E. Bokovoy

Abstract: *This essay makes a compelling argument for Jacob, the brother of Nephi, having deep knowledge of ancient Israelite temple ritual, concepts, and imagery, based on two of Jacob's sermons in 2 Nephi 9 and Jacob 1-3. For instance, he discusses the duty of the priest to expiate sin and make atonement before the Lord and of entering God's presence. Jacob quotes temple-related verses from the Old Testament, like Psalm 95. The allusions to the temple are not forced, but very subtle. Of course, Jacob's central topic, the atonement, is a temple topic itself, and its opposite, impurity, is also expressed by Jacob in terms familiar and central to an ancient temple priest. The temple is also shown as a gate to heaven.*

[**Editor's Note:** Part of our book chapter reprint series, this article is reprinted here as a service to the LDS community. Original pagination and page numbers have necessarily changed, otherwise the reprint has the same content as the original.

See David E. Bokovoy, "Ancient Temple Imagery in the Sermons of Jacob," in *Temple Insights: Proceedings of the Interpreter Matthew B. Brown Memorial Conference, "The Temple on Mount Zion," 22 September 2012,* ed. William J. Hamblin and David Rolph Seely (Orem, UT: The Interpreter Foundation; Salt Lake City: Eborn Books, 2014), 171–186. Further information at https://interpreterfoundation.org/books/temple-insights/.]

Despite its deep spiritual significance for Latter-day Saints, the Book of Mormon contains very few explicit references to temple worship.

Toward the beginning of Nephi's record, the Book of Mormon prophet informs his readers that he built a temple for his community "after the manner of the temple of Solomon" (2 Nephi 5:16). Years later, the righteous King Benjamin gathered his people at the temple to hear the words of his highly influential sermon (see Mosiah 2:6); similarly, when the resurrected Christ visited the Nephites, the Book of Mormon makes note that the long-awaited theophany occurred specifically at the temple precinct in Bountiful (see 3 Nephi 11:1). Hence, even though we do not have much explicit detail, clearly the temple itself fulfilled a decisive role in Nephite religious conceptions.

Since the Book of Mormon presents the Nephites as a forgotten familial branch of ancient Israel, the profound religious role that the temple appears to have held in Nephite society really comes as no surprise. For both biblical and ancient Israel, the temple served as the very focal point of religious devotion.[1] In its most basic, fundamental sense, the temple provided a literal dwelling place for Deity.[2] The temple precinct was therefore considered "holy," and entry into Israelite temple space not only imbued the worshiper with a degree of that holiness, but also conceptually placed the individual in the presence of divinity.

Even though its depiction of actualized temple rituals is admittedly somewhat slight, when Book of Mormon prophetic discourse is read through the lens of ancient temple worship, many of these sermons can be shown to reflect imagery and ritual performances directly associated with biblical concepts.[3] This observation proves especially true in the teachings of the Book of Mormon prophet Jacob. Thus, through an analysis of two of Jacob's sermons (2 Nephi 9 and Jacob 1–3), Book of Mormon prophetic discourse can be shown to draw on a variety of ancient temple themes.

As the second Nephite scribal voice, Jacob, the brother of Nephi, fulfills a central role as priestly author in what the Book of Mormon itself identifies as the more spiritually focused writings of the small plates. Nephi specifically refers to Jacob as a "consecrated" priest "over the land" of Nephi's people (2 Nephi 5:26). According to his own writings, Jacob's priestly responsibility dictated that he take upon his "head" the sins of the people if he failed to teach them the word of God (see Jacob 1:18).

Reading Jacob's description of his obligation in connection with biblical temple ritual creates a type of reversal in Jacob's statement from the traditional role fulfilled by an Israelite high priest. According to Exodus 28:38, when officiating in temple worship, the high priest would wear the sacred priestly "cap" or "miter" inscribed with the Hebrew

phrase "holiness to Yahweh/the Lord," signifying that as priest, he was able to effectively expiate or absorb sin:

> [Holiness to the Lord] shall be upon Aaron's forehead, that Aaron may bear the iniquity of the holy things, which the children of Israel shall hallow in all their holy gifts; and it shall be always upon his forehead, that they may be accepted before the LORD. (Exodus 28:38)

This biblical text indicates that part of the priestly duty consisted in removing sin, and that wearing a "cap" upon his head, the biblical high priest was able to win acceptance for Israel before the Lord.

In a related notion, Leviticus 10:17 indicates that biblical priests carried the responsibility to "bear the iniquity of the congregation" and to "make atonement for them before the LORD." This biblical concept of priestly responsibility to absorb sin, therefore, parallels Jacob's description of his own assignment:

> 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 1:19)

When read through the lens of ancient Israelite temple worship, Jacob's comments bring to mind the thought of the biblical priest, whose robes were no doubt stained with the blood that had effectively absorbed the iniquity of his people during sacrificial slaughter. Yet Jacob's role was also that of teacher, and like the biblical priest who could "bear iniquities of the congregation," as symbolized through the sacred phrase inscribed upon the cap worn directly upon his head, Jacob recognized that he would take "the sins of the people upon [his] own head" if he failed to fulfill his consecrated commission.

According to the Book of Mormon, in serving as a priest, Jacob would have performed Mosaic temple ordinances in the Nephite temple constructed by his brother as a parallel to Solomon's holy shrine. Alma 25:15 states that the Nephites participated in the "outward performances" of the law of Moses. In terms of biblical tradition, some of these "outward performances" appear directly linked with temple worship and ritual. It is perhaps therefore significant that the same literary unit in the Book

of Mormon that describes Nephi building a temple also identifies Nephi consecrating Jacob to serve as priest (see 2 Nephi 5:16, 26).

In his own writings, Jacob identifies himself as a priest who taught his people the word of God in the temple:

> 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. (Jacob 1:17–18)

Significantly, Jacob's priestly sermons, including the one he delivers specifically at the temple, suggest a profound familiarity on the part of the author with the rituals and concepts connected with ancient Israelite temple worship. Jacob goes so far as to specifically identify his sermon in Jacob 2–3:12 as a temple discourse in his opening remarks:

> Now, my beloved brethren, I, Jacob, according to the responsibility which I am under to God, to magnify mine office with soberness, and that I might rid my garments of your sins, I come up into the temple this day that I might declare unto you the word of God. (Jacob 2:2)

With this introduction, Jacob, the priest, identifies the temple as the *Sitz im Leben* or "setting in life" for his teachings. References to the temple as the *Sitz im Leben* for Jacob's sermon appear both in the narrative introduction to the speech and directly in Jacob's opening remarks. Through this repetition, and therefore emphasis, the author clearly sets up Jacob 2–3:12 as a priestly sermon to be interpreted in the context of temple ideology.

In the narrative introduction to his discourse, Jacob informs his readers that both he and his fellow priesthood holders "labored diligently" to convince their people to "come unto Christ and partake of the goodness of God, that they might enter into his rest" (Jacob 1:7). Jacob's language presents a literary allusion to Psalms 95:11, a text where, concerning the wilderness generation of Israel, Yahweh declared, "I swore in my wrath that they should not enter my rest." The Hebrew word translated in the King James Version as "rest" means more precisely "resting place," and refers contextually to the "promised land" where, from a biblical perspective, the presence of Yahweh literally resided.[4]

In the context of Jacob's temple sermon, Jacob's allusion to Psalm 95 more closely parallels the text's Christological reinterpretation in

Hebrews 3–4 where the place of rest referred to in Psalm 95 denotes God's holy presence as signified by his throne:

> Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief … Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. (Hebrews 4: 11, 16)

When read as a thematic introduction to his temple sermon, Jacob's use of Psalm 95 and the notion of entering into God's rest matches one of the paramount conceptions associated with ancient temple worship, that of physically entering the presence of divinity.

Within the Bible, this motif appears reflected through the biblical expression translated as "before the LORD/Yahweh." In Hebrew, the prepositional term that means literally "to the face of" or "at the front of" carries the semantic nuance, "in the presence of" — or as rendered in King James Bible English, simply "before."[5] Studies have shown that any ritual activity in which a biblical author uses the formula "before the Lord" can be considered an indication of either a temple experience or site, since as Moshe Haran illustrated, "this expression stems from the basic conception of the temple as a divine dwelling-place and actually belongs to the temple's terminology."[6] Hence, as an introduction to his speech, Jacob's statement regarding the process of entering into the Lord's "rest" serves as an important thematic segue to his temple sermon, as does his allusion to the "provocation" of God "in the days of temptation while the children of Israel were in the wilderness" (Jacob 1:7).

Jacob's statement in 1:7 draws upon Psalms 95:8, an ancient temple-related text that encourages Israel to "harden not your heart as in the day of provocation and as in the day of temptation in the wilderness." In his highly influential work on form criticism in the psalms, Hermann Gunkel identified Psalm 95 as a temple hymn performed at the time of "entry into the sanctuary."[7] On sacred occasions in the Hebrew Bible connected with festivals, Israelites would come together to worship Deity at the temple. In the words of Gunkel, the people would gather together at the temple "in their best clothes and in the happiest mood."[8] Subsequent studies following Gunkel's lead have shown that temple hymns, including specifically Psalm 95, would perhaps have been sung by ancient Israelites as they entered the house of the Lord.[9] Summarizing these observations, Marvin Tate writes:

> In v 1 worshippers approaching the place of worship for some festival occasion encourage each other, or are encouraged by

> a speaker such as a priest, to move on to the sanctuary with shouting and singing. A second call to move toward Yahweh is given in v 2, envisioning worshipers about to enter the inner areas of the sanctuary (perhaps into the inner court of the temple). A third exhortation is found in v 6, calling on the worshipers to enter farther into the inner place of worship and to bow down before Yahweh. A choir or chorus is assumed to have chanted vv 3–5 and 7ab, or else the worshipers would have done so themselves.[10]

The opening lines of the Old Testament temple hymn Jacob quoted describe the feelings temple worshipers should have when entering the Lord's presence:

> O come, let us sing unto the Lord:
> let us make a joyful noise
> to the rock of our salvation.
> Let us come before his presence
> with thanksgiving,
> And make a joyful noise unto him
> with psalms.

After citing this hymn in his narrative introduction, Jacob, however, appears to specifically reverse the sentiment expressed in these lines, telling his people that even though he had come up into the temple (see Jacob 2:2), he felt the exact opposite emotion of joy and thanksgiving in the Lord's presence:

> Yea, it grieveth my soul and causeth me to shrink with shame before the presence of my Maker, that I must testify unto you concerning the wickedness of your hearts. (Jacob 2:6)

When read in connection with Jacob's citation of Psalm 95:8, this statement appears to present an intentional reversal of the hymn's opening lines. In addition to the reference of appearing "before God's presence," Jacob's allusion to "wicked hearts" parallels the imagery in Psalms 95:8, where the hymn instructs temple worshipers to specifically "harden not your heart" on this sacred occasion. Jacob was also clearly touched by the metaphor "rock of our salvation" that appears in Psalms 95:1. He adopted this divine metaphor in two of his Book of Mormon sermons (see 2 Nephi 9:45 and Jacob 7:25).

Other literary allusions to ancient temple worship appear throughout Jacob's sermon, including in his subsequent reference to prayer:

> Look unto God with firmness of mind and pray unto him with exceeding faith, and he will console you in your afflictions, and he will plead your cause, and send down justice upon those who seek your destruction. (Jacob 3:1)

The concept of praying to the Lord for consolation during afflictions and of petitioning God to impart justice upon a person's enemies reflects motifs frequently attested in biblical psalms of individual lament.[11] Studies have shown that many of these prayers were performed by ancient Israelites in the context of temple worship (see, for example, 1 Samuel 1:6–7; 2:1–10).[12] "Have mercy upon me, O Lord, for I am weak," professes one such text, "O Lord, heal me; for my bones are vexed" (Psalms 6:1–2).

As is typical for these ancient temple prayers, the petition for divine assistance with afflictions appears accompanied with a reference to one's enemies who seek the afflicted person's destruction: "Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity, for the Lord hath heard the voice of my weeping …. Let all mine enemies be ashamed and sore vexed" (Psalms 6:8, 10). This type of imagery illustrates that in the context of his temple-based sermon, Jacob appears to have made an allusion to themes frequently connected with temple prayer in ancient Israel. Though brief, this analysis illustrates the way in which a Book of Mormon sermon such as Jacob 2–3:12, which took place physically at the temple, can be read to reflect Israelite temple-centered concepts, including the notion of entering God's presence with joy, and there seeking His divine favor to overcome one's enemies and afflictions.

These allusions to Israelite temple motifs in Jacob 2:1–3:12 are clearly very subtle in nature. They suggest a detailed understanding on the part of the Book of Mormon priest and his intended audience regarding the connection between Jacob's words and the sacred location where he in fact delivered his sermon. And yet Jacob's discourse in Jacob 2:1–3:12 is not the only occasion on which the Nephite priest appears to have intentionally invoked subtle Israelite temple themes into the context of his teaching. The Israelite concept of holiness and temple also serves as the conceptual background for Jacob's great discourse on the Atonement of Christ in 2 Nephi 9.

Throughout his Atonement discourse, Jacob goes so far as to adopt the term "holy" as a biblical-like *leitwort* or "theme word," intentionally repeated for both didactic as well as poetic purposes.[13] Examples include:

> The mouth of his holy prophets (v. 2)

> The Holy One of Israel (vv. 11, 12, 15, 18, 19, 23, 24, 25, 26, 39, 40, 41)
>
> The holy judgment of God (v. 15)
>
> The saints of the Holy One of Israel (v. 18, 19, 43)
>
> The holiness of our God (v. 20)
>
> Holy, holy are thy judgments (v. 46)
>
> If ye were holy I would speak unto you of holiness; but ye are not holy (v. 48)
>
> The holy name of my God (v. 49)

As suggested via this repetition, the notion of holiness appears as a central theme throughout Jacob's address.

Anciently, temple priests such as Jacob dealt regularly with the concept of holiness in terms of their ritual performances. In the Hebrew Bible, *holiness* refers to "a state of being in places, objects, persons, and time that corresponds with the presence of God."[14] From a biblical perspective, only Deity Himself was considered intrinsically holy. Therefore, the closer an individual — or even an object — gets to God's presence in the temple, the more holy he or it becomes.

As a divine attribute, God wanted to share His holiness with His covenant people: "ye shall therefore be holy, for I am holy," He commanded (Leviticus 11:45). Since the temple served as God's house, it appears inseparably linked with the quality of holiness in biblical views. For example, "I will come into thy house in the multitude of thy mercy," declared the Psalmist, "and in thy fear will I worship toward thy holy temple" (Psalms 5:7). Many of the sacrificial rituals performed under the law of Moses served as sacred acts designed to retain the temple's quality of holiness (see Leviticus 10:3).[15] This effort was based on the notion that Israel needed to keep separate the holy from the unholy, and the clean from the unclean, especially in terms of temple worship (see Leviticus 10:10).

Jacob Milgrom has shown that as the opposite of holiness, impurity could attack areas and/or people made holy by the sanctifying presence of God, including the temple.[16] In priestly temple-based rituals, impurity was removed by means of sacrificial blood, which functioned as a type of ritual detergent, effectively absorbing impurity from the temple and its sacred vessels:

> Then shall [the Priest] kill the goat of the sin offering … and bring his blood within the vail … and sprinkle it upon

> the mercy seat, and before the mercy seat. And [the Priest] shall make an atonement for the holy place, because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions in all their sins: and so shall he do for the tabernacle of the congregation, that remaineth among them in the midst of their uncleanness. (Leviticus 16:15–16)

According to this system, sacrificial blood was holy and could therefore absorb impurity (the opposite of holiness) and restore the temple to its pristine holy condition imparted by its connection with the presence of God. In the biblical priestly system, human beings could transmit impurity, contaminating other individuals and/or objects, and thus destroy the state of holiness in the temple. In this sense, humans could spread impurity in one of three ways: as a leper, as a corpse (see Numbers 5:1–4), or by means of sexual emissions (see Leviticus 12; 15:16–24).[17]

This ancient priestly view of bodily impurifications may at first seem arbitrary in nature. The impurities focus on four phenomena: death, semen, skin disease, and blood. However, as Milgrom has explained, their "common denominator" is, in fact, death:

> Blood and semen represent the forces of life; their loss, therefore, signifies death. In the case of scaly disease (so-called leprosy), this symbolism is made explicit: Aaron prays for his stricken sister: 'Let her not be as one dead' (Numbers 12:12). Furthermore, such disease is powerful enough to contaminate someone who is under the same roof, and it is no accident that it shares this feature with the corpse (Numbers 19:14). The wasting of the body, the common characteristic of all biblically impure skin diseases, symbolizes the death process as much as does the loss of blood and semen.[18]

Hence, according to priestly perceptions, death is impurity — and since impurity and holiness constitute polar opposites, "the identification of impurity with death must mean that holiness stands for life."[19] God is intrinsically "holy," since He Himself possesses life eternal.

This technical view of Israelite temple concepts and ritual regarding "holiness" explains why as a type of ritual detergent, sacrificial blood successfully absorbed impurity. In the Hebrew Bible, blood appears specifically defined as the "life-force;" it was therefore far too holy for humans to consume (see Genesis 9:3–4). Instead, temple priests made use of blood to rid both the temple and human beings from impurity.

"For the life of the flesh is in the blood," states Yahweh in Leviticus 17:11, "and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul." Therefore, according to priestly views, holiness was life, and its opposite, impurity, constituted death, a state that could be ritually absorbed by means of sacrificial blood (a holy "life-giving" substance).

As a priest working in the Nephite temple and presumably performing ancient Mosaic ordinances, Jacob relied on these specific themes in his Atonement sermon (see 2 Nephi 9). A careful reading of Jacob's discourse suggests a highly technical understanding on the author's part of these basic priestly concerns. In the course of his sermon — which, as mentioned, relies heavily on the theme word *holy* — Jacob specifically states that all flesh is subject unto "death," and that even the "great Creator" would die for all men (2 Nephi 9:5–6). Through this atoning sacrifice, Jacob taught that the "Holy One of Israel" prepared a way for humanity to escape both the "death of the body, and also the death of the spirit" (2 Nephi 9:10).

Jacob then continued this theme, testifying of the power of the "Holy One of Israel" to overcome "death," stating that this Atonement will transpire as "assuredly as the Lord *liveth*" (2 Nephi 9:16). Moreover, Jacob's praise directed toward the Holy One of Israel in the course of his speech specifically includes the statement, "O the greatness of the mercy of our God, the Holy One of Israel! For he delivereth his saints [i.e. "holy ones"] from … death and hell" (2 Nephi 9:19). Finally, as priest, Jacob warned his people against transgressing against their "Holy God," encouraging them to remember that "to be carnally minded is death, and to be spiritually minded is life eternal" (2 Nephi 9:39). These repeated references to death and life in the context of a "holiness"-centered sermon by a Book of Mormon priest suggest that the author possessed a profound understanding of ancient Israelite temple motifs.

Though Jacob's sermon can certainly be read and appreciated without a technical awareness of ancient temple concepts, Jacob's Atonement discourse makes greater sense in light of biblical priestly concerns regarding holiness (life) and impurity (death). Jesus is the "Holy One of Israel," who shed His blood in order to help rid His people of their impurity — overcoming, in the process, both spiritual and temporal death. In the context of his repeated emphasis on "holiness," Jacob employs the image of blood, specifically stating that, as priest, he had rid himself of his people's blood by delivering the Atonement sermon (2 Nephi 9:44).

Although subtle in nature, Jacob's temple-based imagery on holiness concludes with an allusion to "righteous paths" and the Holy One of Israel as the "keeper of the gate":

> O then, my beloved brethren, come unto the Lord, the Holy One. Remember that his paths are righteous. Behold, the way for man is narrow, but it lieth in a straight course before him, and the keeper of the gate is the Holy One of Israel; and he employeth no servant there; and there is none other way save it be by the gate; for he cannot be deceived, for the Lord God is his name. (2 Nephi 9:41)

In ancient thought, temples as holy shrines appear directly associated with gate imagery.[20] The biblical Jacob, for example, referred to the sacred space Bethel as the "house of God" and the "gate of heaven" (Genesis 28:17). The concept of a "gate keeper" that the Book of Mormon Jacob refers to reflects exchanges between priests and ancient Israelites seeking to enter into the temple — in other words, the "gates of righteousness." Othmar Keel refers to this ritual exchange in his classic study on Near Eastern iconography in the Psalms:

> The pilgrim addressed the priest (or priests) sitting at the temple gates (cf. 1 Samuel 1:9), asking who might set foot on the mountain of Yahweh (cf. Psalms 15:1; 24:3). The gates of the Jerusalem temple, as 'Gates of Righteousness,' were open only to the 'righteous.' (Psalms 118:19–20)[21]

This observation provides an important link to Jacob's sermon. "Open to me the gates of righteousness: I will go into them," states the Israelite worshiper, in one such exchange, "this gate of the Lord, into which the righteous shall enter" (Psalms 118:19–20). In the context of his Atonement sermon featuring a constant reliance on holiness and impurity imagery, Jacob's allusion to "righteous paths" and the Holy One of Israel serving as the "keeper of the gate" appears to echo this technical aspect of Israelite temple worship. In these sense, Jacob's sermon in 2 Nephi 9 shares the same thematic concept that appears in his temple discourse in Jacob 2–3:12 of the righteous entering into the Lord's holy presence with joy and thanksgiving.

As witnessed in this study, Book of Mormon sermons such as those delivered by Jacob, the priest, can be shown to reflect religious cognition and ritual performances tied to ancient Israelite temple motifs. Even though the Book of Mormon itself provides very few details regarding actual Nephite temple worship, discourses like those delivered by Jacob

in 2 Nephi 9 and Jacob 2–3:12 often feature impressive thematic ties with ancient Israelite temple concepts. Through the Atonement of Christ, the holy one of Israel, Jacob taught his people on these two separate occasions that they had been given an opportunity to overcome death and enter into the Lord's presence with everlasting joy and eternal thanksgiving.

Notes

1. Hamblin and Seely note, "the Temple was the center of Israelite religion, where worship was carried out by a hereditary priesthood from the tribe of Levi, with the descendants of Aaron as elite priests" (William J. Hamblin and David Rolph Seely, *Solomon's Temple Myth and History* [London: Thames and Hudson, 2007], 27). Although it is common for contemporary readers of scriptural texts to project onto the ancient temple modern concepts regarding sacred space, Israelite temples served a somewhat different religious role than contemporary churches or synagogues as the focus of Israelite religious devotion. In the words of Carol Meyers, "the temple building itself was not a place of public gathering and prayer, although its courtyards were the scene of such activity. Rather, the Temple in conception was a dwelling place on earth for the deity of ancient Israel and in this way, too, was fundamentally different from the religious buildings (synagogue, church, mosque) of post-biblical times" (Carol Meyers, "Temple, Jerusalem," in *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, ed. David Noel Freedman, et al. [New York: Doubleday, 1992], 6: 351).
2. The notion of temple as divine dwelling space appears reflected in biblical thought via statements regarding the tabernacle, such as Israel's portable temple in the wilderness. In Ex. 25:8, for example, the Lord states, "let them make me a sanctuary that I may dwell among them." Regarding the temple as "dwelling place" for Deity in Israelite concepts, Saul Olyan has explained, "The primary locus of worship in ancient Israel was the sanctuary, a sacred space set apart for the deity's service and often, where a temple stood, for his dwelling (open-air sanctuaries without dwelling places for a deity are known mainly from textual descriptions)" (Saul M. Olyan, "Sacred Times and Spaces: Israel," *Religions of the Ancient World: A Guide*, ed. Sarah Iles Johnston, et al. [Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2004], 258). Note that John Lundquist states that "the idea of the temple as the house of God, a specific place in which the divine spirit resides, is common to all religions" (John M. Lundquist, *The Temple: Meeting Place of Heaven and Earth*

[London: Thames and Hudson, 1993], 36).

3. The classic exploration of temple imagery in a Book of Mormon sermon remains John Welch's study of Jesus' sermon in 3 Ne.; see John W. Welch, *Illuminating the Sermon at the Temple & Sermon on the Mount: An Approach to 3 Nephi 11–18 and Matthew 5–7* (Provo, UT: FARMS, 1998). For an analysis of King Benjamin's sermon in the context of temple themes, see M. Catherine Thomas, "Benjamin and the Mysteries of God," *King Benjamin's Speech: "That Ye May Learn Wisdom,"* eds. John W. Welch and Stephen D. Ricks (Provo, UT: FARMS, 1998), 277–294. For temple imagery in the holy order of the Son of God patterned after the Savior's life depicted in Alma 8–14, see Thomas R. Valletta, "Conflicting Orders: Alma and Amulek in Ammoniah," *The Temple in Time and Eternity,* eds. Donald W. Parry and Stephen D. Ricks (Provo, UT: FARMS, 1992), 183–231. In addition, see LeGrand L. Baker and Stephen D. Ricks, "*Who Shall Ascend into the Hill of the Lord?" The Psalms in Israel's Temple Worship in the Old Testament and in the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Eborn Books, 2009).
4. Ludwig Koehler and Walter Baumgartner, *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*, Study Edition (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 1:600.
5. Koehler and Baumgartner, 2: 942.
6. Menahem Haran, *Temples and Temple-Service in Ancient Israel: An Inquiry into the Character of Cult Phenomena and the Historical Setting of the Priestly School* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978), 26.
7. Hermann Gunkel, *An Introduction to the Psalms: The Genres of the Religious Lyric of Israel*, trans. James D. Nogalski (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1998), 42.
8. Gunkel, *An Introduction to the Psalms*, 41.
9. See especially G. H. Davies, "Psalm 95," *ZAW* 85 (1973):183–198, and the analysis of the psalms cultic function featured in Sigmund Mowinckel, *The Psalms in Israel's Worship* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004).
10. Marvin E. Tate, *Word Biblical Commentary: Psalms 51–100* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1990), 498–499.
11. For an introduction to this textual genre via form criticism, see John H. Hayes, "The Songs of Israel," *The Hebrew Bible Today: An Introduction to Critical Issues*, eds. Steven L. McKenzie and M. Patrick Graham (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998), 156–161.
12. Gottwald notes the consensus regarding this issue when he writes,

"The speech conventions of these prayers, in their vocabulary and genres, were shaped within the framework of Israel's 'cult,' that is, its formal worship centered on the temple at Jerusalem. The subject of these psalms is overwhelmingly the distress and deliverance of the people of Israel as a whole and of individual Israelites" (Norman K. Gottwald, *The Hebrew Bible: A Socio-Literary Introduction* [Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985], 525).

13. For an introduction to this important literary technique, see Martin Buber, "Leitwort Style in Pentateuch Narrative," in *Scripture and Translation*, ed. Martin Buber and Franz Rosenzweig, trans. Lawrence Rosenwald and Everett Fox [Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994], 114–128. As literary scholar Robert Alter notes in his analysis of the convention, "This kind of word-motif, as a good many commentators have recognized, is one of the most common features of the narrative art of the Bible" (Robert Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative* [New York: Basic Books, 1981], 92).
14. David P. Wright, "Holiness in Leviticus and Beyond: Differing Perspectives," *Interpretation* 53/4 (1999), 351.
15. The foundational scholarly analysis regarding the retention of holiness and the sacrificial cult remains Jacob Milgrom's three-volume Anchor Bible commentary: Jacob Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (New York: Doubleday, 1998); Jacob Milgrom, *Leviticus 17–22: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (New York: Doubleday, 2000); and Jacob Milgrom, *Leviticus 23–27: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (New York: Doubleday, 2001).
16. For an introduction to Milgrom's reading of "sanctum contamination," see Jacob Milgrom, *Leviticus: A Continental Commentary* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2004), 141–145.
17. For an identification and analysis of these three ways in which humans may function as "bearers of impurity" within the priestly tradition, see Milgrom, *Leviticus*, 11–13.
18. Jacob Milgrom, *Numbers: JPS Commentary* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Soceity, 1990), 346.
19. Milgrom, *Leviticus*, 12.
20. Throughout the Hebrew Bible, the image of *gate* is that of passage and/or entryway into guarded space and, therefore, appears directly linked with the temple (note, for example, Genesis 28:17). "The position of gatekeeper implies the act of guarding against illegitimate entry, whether into a city (2 Kings 10), a king's court (2 Kings 11:4–9)

or the temple (2 Kings 12:9; 2 Chronicles 23:19)" (Leland Ryken, et al., *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervasity Press, 1998), 321. For an analysis of gate and gatekeeper imagery in the context of ancient Near Eastern temple conceptions, see John Gee, "The Keeper of the Gate," *The Temple in Time and Eternity*, eds. Donald W. Parry and Stephen D. Ricks (Provo, UT: FARMS, 1999), 233–274.

21. Othmar Keel, *The Symbolism of the Biblical World: Ancient Near Eastern Iconography and the Book of Psalms*, trans. Hallett (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1997), 126.

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