

THE GARDEN OF EDEN: SACRED SPACE, SANCTUARY,  
AND TEMPLE OF GOD

Submitted to:  
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There are many evidences found in religious literature that the Garden of Eden was a temple of the Lord. It was not a sanctuary built of cedar or marble, for it is not necessary for a temple to be an edifice or structure;<sup>1</sup> rather, Eden was an area of sacred space made holy because of God's presence there. Eliade has stated that the Garden of Eden was the heavenly prototype of the temple<sup>2</sup> and the Book of Jubilees 3:19 adds that "the Garden of Eden is the holy of holies, and the dwelling of the Lord." This paper will examine these claims.

John Lundquist, in his article, "The Common Temple Ideology of the Ancient Near East,"<sup>3</sup> lists nineteen aspects of types that are common among ancient Near Eastern temples. The thesis of this paper is that the garden setting of Eden contained many--if not all--of the nineteen types cited by Lundquist. Not only were these types found in the garden story, but Eden was seen to be the prototype, pattern, and/or originator of subsequent temples, regardless of their historical era, or "language and cultural political boundaries."<sup>4</sup> This paper will

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<sup>1</sup>Kristensen, 1960:358-359.

<sup>2</sup>Eliade, Patterns, 1958a:282.

<sup>3</sup>Lundquist, 1984:54-76.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 1984:54.

cover several of Lundquist's nineteen points, one by one, along with evidence from Near Eastern sources that the Garden of Eden accords with these characteristics.

"The Cosmic Mountain Represents the Primordial Hillock, the Place which First Emerged from the Waters that Covered the Earth during the Creative Process"(5)

Before the creation, while the earth was "without form, and void," water covered the entire earth (Gen. 1:1-9). It existed before the "clouds, rocks, formations, and continents."<sup>6</sup> According to Judah ben Pazi, water was the original element.<sup>7</sup> But the original waters were in a state of chaos, so Yahweh came down from heaven and organized the waters into a state of orderliness. How did he do it? Rabbi Isaac said, "The Holy One, blessed be he, cast a stone into the ocean, from which the world then was founded."<sup>8</sup> The waters were controlled much like a man corks a bottle. "Wherewith does one cover a cask? With a lid of earthenware."<sup>9</sup> This cork of the bottle or covering for the cask, became the "primordial hillock,"

<sup>5</sup>Lundquist, 1984: 57.

<sup>6</sup>Yoma, Talmud, p. 257.

<sup>7</sup>Water, " The Jewish Encyclopedia, 1971 ed.

<sup>8</sup>Yoma, Talmud, p. 257.

<sup>9</sup>Midrash Rabbah, p. 1.

the first land to emerge from chaos. In Genesis 1, God commanded the land (primordial hillock) to appear and then planted on it the garden (see vs. 9-12, 29-30).

"The Temple is the Architectural Embodiment  
of the Cosmic Mountain."(10)

Every Near Eastern temple symbolically represents a mountain, but the first temple of earth was a mountain in actuality. In Genesis 1-3 there is no proof of a mountain in Eden. But evidence can be found elsewhere. For instance, the pericope in Ezekiel 28:11-19, a parallelism of the Genesis garden account, compares the king of Tyrus with Adam. The king is told:

Thou has been in Eden the garden of God  
. . . thou art the anointed cherub that covereth;  
and I have set thee so: thou wast upon  
the holy mountain of God . . . thou wast  
perfect in the ways from the day thou wast  
created, till iniquity was found in thee . . .  
thou has sinned: therefore I will cast thee  
as profane out of the mountain of God.  
(Ezek. 28:13-16)

Thus Tyrus (Adam) was perfect while in the Garden of Eden, was anointed, and dwelt on the mountain of God. But he sinned and was thrown from the mountain, or cast

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<sup>10</sup>Lundquist, 1984:57.

from the temple, since no unclean thing was allowed in the temple.

The Nag Hammadi Codices explain that after Adam sinned, the Gods said, "Come, let us cast him out of Paradise down upon the earth," (On the Origin of the World 120:36), suggesting that the Gods cast Adam down from the mountain in Paradise.

Enoch beheld many mountains in Paradise, including the center mountain which resembled the throne of God (I Enoch 24, 25, 18:6-12). An old Hebrew legend alleges that Paradise was located on a mountain and that Adam not only dwells on the mount, but he "walks among the stars."<sup>11</sup> And Widengren points out that the Assyrian garden of paradise is "situated upon the mountain of Gods."<sup>12</sup>

"The Temple is Often Associated with the Waters of Life which Flow from a Spring within the Building Itself."(13)

The rivers of Eden are the quintessential sacred waters. Originating below the roots of the tree of

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<sup>11</sup>Fawcett, 1973:256.

<sup>12</sup>Widengren, 1951:11.

life,<sup>14</sup> these pure waterways "flow from the earth" (LXX Genesis 13:10), separate into four rivers, and from Eden water the entire earth.

From this first river account sprang numerous analogous narratives about holy waters. For example, Joel's account teaches that rivers will flow from the temple-mountains, and the rivers will flow with "new wine" and "milk." Then Joel explicitly states that "a fountain (or spring) shall come forth of the house of the Lord" (Joel 3:18). Ezekiel's blessed river will heal the putrid waters of the Dead Sea, bless fishermen with an abundance of fish, increase fruit-bearing vegetation to the deserts, in summary, bless mankind with a paradisaical earth (Ezek. 47:1-12). John, in a vision which may hearken back to the original paradise of the Garden of Eden, described the future paradise as having "a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and the Lamb," and adds, "and there shall be no more curse" (Rev. 22:1-4).

Daniel, however, described a different type of river, one of a celestial nature. After having an eschatological vision he wrote a description of the Ancient of

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<sup>13</sup>Lundquist, 1984:37.

<sup>14</sup>Thompson, 1978:62-64.

Days sitting upon his throne of "fiery flame" and flowing from his throne was a "fiery stream" (Dan. 7:9-11). Although among the Biblical books this "fiery stream" is unique to Daniel, many similar passages appear in the Pseudepigraphic literature. For instance, two similar passages in the Enochian literature read: "A river of fire . . . flows beneath the throne of glory" (3 Enoch 36:1-2). And, "beneath the throne were issuing streams of flaming fire" (1 Enoch 14:15). Both Daniel and Enoch describe the waters as coming from the throne (as does Rev. 22:1-4) suggesting that God is the source of the waters.

Other scriptures resemble the Genesis passage which says "and a river went out from Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads" (Gen. 2:10). For example, Enoch said there were "four rivers of fire" (3 Enoch 19:4) and "four heads of the River of Fire . . . opposite the throne of glory" (3 Enoch 18:19).

In addition to the above, the Qumran community believed in this supernal stream. They referred to it as "a fountain of light" with "fiery sparks" coming from it.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup>Gaster, 1976:169.

That the Edenic waters brought life to Adam can be seen in the Mandaean literature. The Mandaeans refer to these holy waters as the "stream of living waters," the "well-spring," and the "womb of creation." They believe that Adam was created in this "womb" of water. A passage from the Secret of Adam states:

Thus then was Seed cast and fell into that well spring which is called the womb. There it remained for 360 days until everything had become strong . . . and he (Adam) ascended the bank of the well spring and his glory burst forth over all worlds.(16)

Sometime later Adam wandered about Eden's mountains until he found the sacred mountain, the date-palm tree, and the "stream of living waters." He fell on his face realizing the power and nature of the sacred landscape and while in this environment he began to understand himself and comprehend God.<sup>17</sup>

"The Temple is Associated with the Tree of Life."(18)

Perhaps more than coincidentally the Holy Writ begins with a description of the primordial paradise and

<sup>16</sup>Drower, 1960:23.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid. 1960:23-24.

<sup>18</sup>Lundquist, 1984:57



concludes with a narration of the celestial paradise. Both accounts include a brief mention of the tree of life, but fail to describe the tree or recite its characteristics. Gen. 2:9 merely states that the tree of life was located "in the midst of the garden" and according to Rev. 22:2, that "on either side of the river was there the tree of life." However, several descriptions of the tree of life are found in the non-cannonical scriptures.

According to the Nag Hammadi Codices, "the color of the tree of life is like the sun, and its branches are beautiful. Its leaves are like those of the cypress. Its fruit is like the clusters of white grapes. Its height rises up to heaven" (On the Origin of the World 110:13-18).

The book of Hymns contains the following mosaic of the tree of life. For "heavenly beings" have:

planted a tree  
 which blooms with flowers unfading  
 whose boughs put forth thick leaves  
 which stands firm-planted forever,  
 and gives shade to all  
 whose branches tower to heaven,  
 whose roots sink down to the abyss.  
 All the rivers of Eden water its boughs;  
 It thrives beyond all bounds,  
 burgeons beyond all measure.  
 Its branches stretch endless across the world  
 and its roots go down to the  
 nethermost depths.(19)

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<sup>19</sup>Gaster, 1976:168

Enoch's description of the tree adds yet another view of the tree of life.

That tree is indescribable for pleasantness and fine fragrance, and more beautiful than any other created thing that exists. And from every direction it has an appearance which is gold-looking and crimson, and with the form of fire. And it covers the whole of Paradise. And it has something of every orchard tree and of every fruit. (2 Enoch 8:3-4)

Micrea Eliade has written much about the mythical center of the universe and its relationship to religion, cults, and temples. In The Sacred and the Profane he places the sacred tree at the center or navel of the world, which becomes the center pole or axis mundi of the universe.<sup>20</sup> The sacred tree is always found on top of a holy mountain and these "connect Earth and Heaven" enabling the "primordial man" to climb the mountain and then the tree to reach heaven and thus commune with the gods.<sup>21</sup>

Both the Apocryphon of John and the Penitence of Adam place the tree at the center of paradise.<sup>22</sup> Enoch,

<sup>20</sup>Eliade, The Yearning, 1959:257-260

<sup>21</sup>Eliade, The Yearning, 1959:257-260.

<sup>22</sup>N.H.L., 1977:110 Quinn, 1980:113.

on the other hand, saw that Eden was not on the center of the earth, but he had to travel "into the center of the earth" to see that "blessed place" (1 Enoch 26:1). According to the Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament,<sup>23</sup> the phrase "the tree of life also in the midst of the garden" could read "the tree of life also in the middle of the garden" (Gen. 2:9) denoting that the tree was in the middle or center of the garden.

"Inside the Temple" is "The Sacred Marriage."(24)

A subtle and elusive theme in the paradisiacal account is that of the hieros gamos, the sacred marriage. Although the text does not mention the marriage between Adam and Eve, there are allusions that a divine marriage took place. Adam was told in Gen. 2:18 that man should not be alone and therefore was told by God himself that a "helpmeet" would be created to exist with him. So God caused Adam to slumber and created a woman from his rib. The meaning of the word "helpmeet" in the KJV is ambiguous and vague. However, according to a dictionary of word origins, the meaning of the word is actually

<sup>23</sup>Brown, 1951:1063.

<sup>24</sup>Lundquist, 1984:58.

"helpspouse" or "wife."<sup>25</sup> Thus God was saying, "I shall make a wife for him."

Elsewhere the choice of wording of the KJV differs from the LXX. In the KJV Gen. 2:23 the expression "she (Eve) was taken out of man" differs slightly in the LXX to read "she was taken out of her husband."

Before Adam and Eve transgressed and thus before their deportation from the garden, Eve was called the "wife" of Adam. Gen. 2:25 states that "the man and his wife" were both naked. In Gen. 3:17 Adam is reprimanded for heeding the words of his "wife" and verses 20 and 21 refer to Eve as the "wife" of Adam. Every passage of the KJV that uses the word "woman" could read "wife," because the words "wife" and "woman" both come from the exact Hebrew word issha.<sup>26</sup> Therefore, Gen. 2:22, 23 and Gen. 3:1, 2, 6, 12, 13, 15, 16 could read "wife" rather than "woman," supporting the idea that Adam and Eve were considered to be married before their banishment from Eden.

Finally, it should be noted that several authors have conjectured that the first couple was married.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>25</sup>Morris, 1977:228.

<sup>26</sup>Brown, 1951:61.

<sup>27</sup>For example, see Sanhedren, Talmud, p. 242; Engnell, 1955:113; Von Rad, 1973:84; and Gowan, 1975:87.

"Inside the Temple . . . Worshipers were Clothed."(28)

Before the fall, Adam and Eve wore the garments of immortality and heavenly crowns.<sup>29</sup> After Eve partook of the forbidden fruit, she exclaimed, "I was bare of the righteousness which I had been clothed (upon), and I wept and said to him: "Why hast thou done this to me in that thou hast deprived me of the glory with which I was clothed" (The Books of Adam and Eve 19:1-2). But when they sinned, they lost their heavenly clothing. Graves explained that Eve's glorious outerskin, "a sheet of light smooth as a fingernail, "fell away at the fall,<sup>30</sup> and the Apocryphon of John says that God "cast them (Adam and Eve) out of paradise and he clothed them in gloomy darkness (The Apocryphon of John 24:7-8).

The Kabbalists believe that Eden was located above the earth but below heaven. They believe that when Adam and Eve fell, it was a literal fall earthward to mortality, and they donned animal skins which "incarnate humans wear to this day in the form of the physical body."<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>28</sup>Lundquist, 1984:58.

<sup>29</sup>Drower, 1960:26-27.

<sup>30</sup>Graves, 1969:77.

<sup>31</sup>Halevi, 1976:39.

Associated with temple ritual was the apron (for



example, see Exod. 28:4) which Adam and Eve made for themselves. More properly called a "girdle," "loin covering," or "waistcloth,"<sup>32</sup> the original apron was said to be made from the same tree of which they had unlawfully eaten (Books of Adam and Eve 20:5).

Another temple garment Adam and Eve wore was made by God himself (Gen. 3:21). The scriptures refer to these as "garments of skins" (LXX Gen. 3:21) because of the sacrificial animals from which they were made. Others have referred to them as "royal robes" and "robes of the priesthood."<sup>33</sup> Adam's garment reportedly lasted twenty generations (through Enoch and Noah to Abraham) and was handed down from father to son.<sup>34</sup>

Besides the sacred vestments mentioned above, there is evidence that Adam was given a holy crown. Called the "crown of priesthood," this headdress was made from the tree of life.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>32</sup>Brown, 1951: 292.

<sup>33</sup>For "robes of Priesthood" see Graves, 1960:78, and for "royal robes" see Engnell, 1955:112-113.

<sup>34</sup>Graves, 1960:70.

<sup>35</sup>Drower, 1960:9, 26-27.

An important parallel to the Adam and Eve story is found in the "Epic of Gilgamesh." It tells of Enkidu, a bestial type of person who was "born in the hills," ate grass with the animals, and drank "at the watering place." He was seduced by a temptress. After laying with her "six days and seven nights," Enkidu mingled with his animal friends but was repudiated by them. "But he now had wisdom, broader understanding," and the courtesan said to him, "Thou art wise, Enkidu, art become like a god!" And then Enkidu was given new clothing.<sup>36</sup>

"The Temple is a Place of Sacrifice."(37)

Sacrifice as known by Moses and his company did not reach fruition in the garden. However, sacrifice did exist. After God cursed Adam and Eve, he made "coats of skins" for them and "clothed them" (Gen. 3:21) with a tunic or "garments of skin" (LXX Gen. 3:21). The fact that God used an animal skin to clothe Adam and Eve is more than coincidence. Not any type of material would have sufficed. And to acquire the skin an animal had to be slain. Candlish has noted that since God "concerned himself with the materials" of the garments, that

<sup>36</sup>Pritchard, 1973:44, 47.

<sup>37</sup>Lundquist, 1984:59.

thing higher and holier" was intended, some spiritual meaning and purpose for the skins. Candlish concludes that sacrifice originated in the garden.<sup>38</sup>

There are other accounts that sacrifice existed in the garden. A passage from the Books of Adam and Eve implies that Adam and Eve practiced a form of sacrifice before they were cast from the garden. Adam, speaking to the angels, pleads:

Behold, ye cast me out. I pray you, allow me to take away fragrant herbs from paradise, so that I may offer an offering to God after I have gone out of paradise that he hear me. (Books of Adam and Eve 29:3-4)

Noteworthy in this passage is the idea that Adam is already familiar with the sacrificial procedure. Also the Book of Jubilees 3:27-28 reports that the very day Adam fell, "he offered as a sweet savour an offering, frankincense, galbanum, and stacte, and spices."

The term "sweet savour" mentioned in this passage is identical to the "sweet savour" mentioned in the Bible (The Books of Adam and Eve 29:4 call it "sweet odor" rather than "sweet savour".) Moses was told by the Lord (Exod. 30:34) to make a perfume from various spices (stacte, onycha, galbanum) and mix it with frankincense.

<sup>38</sup>Candlish, 1979:82.



Three of these spices, galbanum, stacte, and frankincense, are identical to the spices that Adam is said to have offered to the Lord. Moses was told to place this perfume before the alter of the tabernacle, so the Lord could meet with him there. Elsewhere in the Biblical canon, the term "sweet savour" is used at least thirty-seven times (for example, see Exod. 29:18, 25, 41; Lev. 1:9, 13, 17, 2:9). Christ became a "sweet smelling" savour in his sacrifice (Eph. 5:2), and Paul records that he and the Christian saints were "unto God a sweet savour of Christ" (2 Cor. 2:15).

"The Temple is Associated with  
Abundance and Prosperity."(39)

The Hebrew word Eden connotes "luxury," "dainty," and delight"<sup>40</sup> and describes the paradisiacal condition Adam and Eve enjoyed. The LXX calls Eden the "garden of delight" (Gen. 2:15, 3:24). In the garden God planted "every tree" that was beautiful to behold. These trees were always in "full flower," every fruit was ripe and ready for consumption, and there was "no unfruitful tree

<sup>39</sup>Lundquist, 1984:58.

<sup>40</sup>Brown, 1951:726.

there" (2 Enoch 8:7; Gen. 2:9).<sup>41</sup> According to the Appocalypse of Paul, every tree of paradise was loaded with millions of fruits. He reportedly says:

And I looked round that land and I saw a river flowing with milk and honey; and at the edge of the river were planted trees full of fruit. And each tree was bearing twelve times twelve fruits in the year, various and different. And the trees were full of fruit from root up to tree-top. From the root of each tree up to its heart there were ten thousand branches with tens of thousands of clusters (and there were ten thousand clusters on each branch) and there were ten thousand dates in each cluster. And it was the same with the vines. Each vine had ten thousand branches, and each branch had on it ten thousand bunches of grapes, and each bunch had ten thousand grapes. And there were other trees there, myriads of myriads of them, and their fruit was in the same proportion. (Apocalypse of Paul 22)

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<sup>41</sup>Lines from three poems help convey the idea of continual fruitfulness.

They in that Garden planted be again,  
There is continual Spring, and Harvest there.

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(God) gave us this eternal Spring.  
Which here enamells every thing.

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No change of Seasons or excess was there,  
No Winter chill'd nor Summer scorched the Air,  
But with a constant Spring nature was fresh and fair.

From John Prest, The Garden of Eden (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981), pp. 66-67.

During that pristine state all animal life could talk (Book of Jubilees 3:28)<sup>42</sup> and all beings enjoyed communion with God (Testament of Adam 1:10, 2:7). Darkness was not known to its inhabitants, for they had perpetual light (2 Enoch 31:2). Neither did they know pain, sickness, disease, or death, for the fruit of the vegetation offered continual life. From the temple's river came grains, flocks, and prosperity (Ps. 65:9ff). Furthermore, during OT times, Eden was a byword for prosperity and fruitfulness (Isa. 51:3; Ezek. 36:35, Joel 2:3).

"The Temple is Oriented Toward the Four World Regions or Cardinal Directions."<sup>(43)</sup>

There are three evidences that the garden also had this orientation. 1) Two Hebrew terms describe the English word east, kadem and mizrach, but there is an etymological distinction between these words. Kadem is used when the cardinal directors of the earth are described (as in Gen. 13:14; 28:14; Job 23:8-9; Ezek. 48:18ff), and mizrach when it specifies the location of

<sup>42</sup>The fact that all animal life could talk explains why Eve wasn't alarmed or frightened (she was almost casual) when the serpent conversed with her.

<sup>43</sup>Lundquist, 1984:57.

the garden as "eastward in Eden," hence implying the use of the four "cardinal directions" of diety.

2) The river of Eden originates at the garden center (tree of life), and from there parts into four divisions (see Gen. 2:10-14). Other passages, similar in description to the Genesis narrative, describe "four rivers of fire" (3 Enoch 19:4) or "four heads of the River of Fire . . . opposite the throne of glory," (3 Enoch 18:19) again pointing to the four cardinal directions motif.

3) The difficult passages from the Pseudepigrapha demonstrate that the name "Adam" originated from the four points of the Compass. The first passage explains: "Indeed it is God himself who fashioned Adam, of four letters, the first-formed man, fulfilling by his name east and west and south and north" (Sibylline Oracles 3:24-26). And in a more explicatory passage God told Enoch:

And I (God) assigned to him (Adam) a name from the four components:

from East--(A)  
from West--(D)  
from North--(A)  
from South--(M)

And I assigned to him four special stars, and called his name Adam (2 Enoch 30:13-14).

Exactly what these passages mean remains to be explored. However, it is clear that the very name of

Adam illustrates the four directions.

"Temples, in Their Architectonic Orientation, Express the Idea of a Successive Ascension toward Heaven."<sup>(44)</sup>

During Enoch's panoramic vision of Edenic paradise, he saw several extraordinary mountains. All of them were "dignified and glorious" and made of precious and ethereal stones. And, more importantly, the mountains (which were in groups of three) were not arranged across the horizon as are the typical adjacent-type mountains. Rather, Enoch noticed that the mountains were stacked three high, one on top of the other escalating heavenward. These mountains "were pressing into heaven like the throne of God" and reached skyward "where the heavens come together" (1 Enoch 18:6-12, 24, 25). This idea of mountains one on top of the other, or three high, is the apotheosis of "successive assension toward heaven."

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<sup>44</sup>Lundquist, 1984:57.

"The Temple is Associated with the Realm of the Dead, the Underworld, the Afterlife, the Grave . . . and the Resurrection."(45)

Eden, being the primal sanctuary, knew not death or resurrection. However, death was assured for Adam and Eve when they partook of the forbidden food. God had offered Adam and Eve the fruit of every tree in the garden but one. He forbade them from partaking of the tree of death, of which if they partook they would "surely die" (Gen. 2:17) or "die the death" (Book of Adam and Eve 17:5). In fact, do not even touch the fruit "lest ye die," (On the Origin of the World 118:31), they were told. The seeds, roots, branches, leaves, blossoms, fruit, and even the shadow of this tree were associated with death.

The root of this is bitter and its branches are death, its shadow is hate and deception is in its leaves, and its blossom is the ointment of evil, and its fruit is death and desire is its seed, and it sprouts in darkness. The dwelling place of those who taste from it is Hades and the darkness is their place of rest. (The Apocryphon of John 21:30-22:1-2).

Nevertheless, Adam and Eve succumbed to the enticements of the serpent (the serpent represents chaos,

<sup>45</sup>Lundquist, 1984:42.

says Eliade)<sup>46</sup> and, as they were promised, they did indeed "die the death." As God told the couple in the Test. of Adam 3:3, "I am consigning you to death," and Genesis 3:19 explains that Adam and Eve would return to earth out of which their bodies were made. In the parallel passage of Ezekiel 28:16-18, God explains to Adam, "Thou has sinned: therefore, I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God." The mountain, of course, represents the Eden temple mountain. God continues, "Thou has defiled the sanctuary (the temple of Eden) by the multitude of thine iniquities . . . therefore will I bring forth a fire from the midst of thee, it shall devour thee, and I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee."

As Eden is associated with death, it is also related to the resurrection of man. God told Adam:

Adam, Adam, do not fear,  
 You wanted to be a god.  
 I will make you a god,  
 not right now . . .  
 I am consigning you to death.  
 And the maggot and the worm will eat your  
 body . . . but after a space of many years . . .  
 I will make you a god just like you wanted.  
 (Test. of Adam 3:2-4)

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<sup>46</sup>Eliade, The Myth 1974:19.

It is reported in the Testament of Adam that Adam died at the age of 930 years, angels carried him to his grave, which was located east of Paradise (Test. of Adam 3:6).

"Sacral, Communal Meals are Carried Out in Connection with Temple Ritual." (47)

Fruit from the tree of life and water from the river of life constitutes the sacred repast of the Eden Temple. The river of life (which reportedly flowed with milk and honey [Apoc. of Paul 22]) gave life to the tree of life, which flourished with fruit. It had "ten thousand branches with tens of thousands of clusters and there were ten thousand dates in each cluster (Apoc. of Paul 22). Adam and Eve enjoyed this sacral meal, thus making pro tempore immortality possible.

But because of transgression, Adam and Eve were deprived of the sacred repast and, to prevent them from eating of the tree while in their sinful state, "they (the gods) came to the tree of life and they set great terrors around it, fiery living beings called 'cherubim' (On the Origin of the World 121:7-9). Afterwards the gods decreed that no human beings could

<sup>47</sup>Lundquist, 1984:59.



touch the tree until the day of judgment (1 Enoch 25:4).

The Penitence of Adam records that after Adam and Eve were cast from paradise they were starving.<sup>48</sup> Whereas in the garden food and drink were available, now it was practically nonexistent. Formerly Adam had been told to eat "freely" of the tree of life (Gen. 2:16), but after his exile into the wilderness, he ate his daily meals "in sorrow . . . all the days of his life" (Gen. 3:17). This was a sharp contrast to the availability of the sacred fruit before his transgression. Perhaps this lack of food in some way represents the absence of the sacred meal that was available in the garden. Its non-presence represented a ritual curse, a denial of the sacred, the sacral meal being replace by the profane.

Throughout the centuries many have attempted to find this sacred repast which brings immortality, but at the final moment a serpent stole his sacred meal, thus consigning him a normal death.<sup>49</sup> Adapa followed Gligamesh in the pursuit of eternal life, but he also failed. After he put on the holy garment anointed himself with oil, the gods offered him "the bread of

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<sup>48</sup>Quinn, 1980:105.

<sup>49</sup>Pritchard, 1973:40-60.

life" and "the water of life," which he refused.<sup>50</sup> An ancient Persian myth describes Meshia and Meshiane as eating fruit when they are persuaded by the devil to deny God. They do so and then lose "their purity."<sup>51</sup>

The sacred repast does make its partakers immortal (Gen. 3:22), which is the goal of all temple attenders. The sacred repast is reserved for the righteous (4 Esdras 7:123, 8:52, Apoc. of Moses 28:2-4) and they will yet eat of the tree of life and drink of the holy water (Test. of Levi, Rev. 22:2, 4 Esdras 7:123, 1 Enoch 26:5-6).

"The Destruction or Loss of the Temple is seen as Calamitous and Fatal to the Community."(<sup>52</sup>)

The loss of the Eden Temple, because of the first couple's transgression, brought destitution, pauperism, and indigence. God himself became the denouncer and these were his cursings:

To the woman (Gen. 3:16) "I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception." (LXX "I will greatly multiply thy pains and thy groanings.")

<sup>50</sup>Ibid. 1973:79.

<sup>51</sup>Graves, 1960:79.

<sup>52</sup>Lundquist, 1984:58.

(Books of Adam and Eve 25:1-4):

Since thou hast hearkened to the serpent, and turned a deaf ear to my commandment, thou shalt be in throes of travail and intolerable agonies: thou shalt bear children in much trembling and in one hour thou shalt come to the birth, and lose thy life, from the sore trouble and anguish. But thou shalt confess and say: 'Lord, Lord, save me, and I will turn no more to the sin of the flesh.' And on this account, from thine own words I will judge thee by reason of enmity which the enemy has planted in thee.

To the man (Gen. 3:17-19): "Cursed is the ground for thy sake. In sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life. Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee. In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread."

(Books of Adam and Eve 24:1-4):

Since thou hast disregarded my commandment and hast hearkened to thy wife, cursed is the earth in thy labors.

Thou shalt work it and it shall not give its strength: thorns and thistles shall spring up for thee, and in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat thy bread. [Thou shalt be in manifold toils; thou shalt be crushed by bitterness, and of sweetness shalt thou not taste.

Weary shalt thou be and shalt not rest; by heat shalt thou be tired, by cold shalt thou be straitened: abundantly shalt thou busy thyself, but thou shalt not be rich: and thou shalt grow fat, but come to no end.

The beasts, over whom thou didst rule, shall rise up in rebellion against thee, for thou hast not kept my commandment.

The Penitence of Adam describes the losses which Adam and Eve experienced. They once had "spiritual joy," "great light", and "heavenly glory" but now they were experiencing "pain and suffering." Further, while Adam was upon his deathbed, he told his children that God had afflicted him and Eve with seventy different bodily afflictions, and that the whole human race would have to experience these illnesses. It was in this setting that Adam sent Seth back to Eden to seek the oil from the tree of life to cure him of his sicknesses and pains.<sup>53</sup>

Genesis 3:23-24 describes the expulsion from the garden sanctuary, saying, "therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the Garden of Eden . . . . So he drove out the man."

After their expulsion, the couple is said to have walked nine days looking for food, but found only food suitable for animals.<sup>54</sup> The Books of Adam and Eve 30:1 says that they "found nothing to eat save nettles and grass in the field. We used to have angel's food," (The Books of Adam and Eve 4:2) explains Adam. As a further curse, since the animals were persuaded by Eve to eat of

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<sup>53</sup>Quinn, 1980:113.

<sup>54</sup>Adam, realizing his brute nature said to Eve: "this hath the Lord provided for animals and brutes to eat." (The Books of Adam and Eve 4:2)

the fruit, they also were chased from the garden, and they could no longer speak the tongue of man (Book of Jubilees 3:28).

Loss of the temple which was the garden truly was a source of suffering for earth's first community. The following quote from Prest's The Garden of Eden summarizes the calamitous nature of the earliest society after their expulsion from the sanctuary.

The earth was a heap of ruins, and living things were poisoned in their natures. The level ground had been folded by earthquakes into horrid mountains and hideous deeps, and the temperate lands were now hemmed in between the frozen wastes of the north and the torrid zone to the South. Gentle dews and fertilizing streams which never failed had been replaced by alternate torrents and droughts. The waterlogged clays and barren sands, the burning lines and sour peats into which the once fruitful soil had now been separated, seemed simultaneously both sterile and to support an unceasing succession of weeds. Males, separated from the anti-tumescient plants that some authorities believed to have existed in the Garden of Eden, found themselves embarrassed by an unruly member. Men and women were the victims of irrational affections they could not control, and following the pains of childbirth, women found themselves burdened with young which were helpless and dependent for years on end, when, without the Fall, it was widely believed, children would have been able both to walk and to talk from birth. Above all, men and women found themselves at every stage of their lives, subject both to painful and crippling diseases and mental anxieties, which seemed often to bring on, and always to foreshadow, their deaths. Fall or flood, these were among the principle evils which gardeners striving

to re-create the antediluvian and prelapsarian past would seek to overcome.<sup>55</sup>

"God's Word is Revealed in the Temple."(56)

In the beginning God gave Adam "open heavens" so he could "look upon the angels" (2 Enoch 31:2). As one of the many boons of the temple, "communication with Heaven was easy in illo tempore," and the meeting with the gods took place in actuality.<sup>57</sup> Furthermore, it was easy for man and God to commune, for man could climb the mountain of Eden, then the tree of life, and ascend to heaven.<sup>58</sup> Also, God often descended on the wings of his cherubim to the earth and visited with the man and his wife.<sup>59</sup> Saint Gregory taught that Adam "delighted in frequent communion with God."<sup>60</sup> This divine conversation with God is found several times in Genesis 2 and 3. For example,

Genesis 2:16 and the Lord God commanded the man, saying  
2:18 and the Lord God said  
3:8 and they heard the voice of the Lord God

<sup>55</sup>Prest, 1981:17.

<sup>56</sup>Lundquist, 1984:59.

<sup>57</sup>Eliade, "Paradise," 1959:260.

<sup>58</sup>Ibid., 1959:256.

<sup>59</sup>Ibid., 1959; 256.

<sup>60</sup>Quoted in Ibid. 1959:253.

3:9 and the Lord God called unto Adam  
 3:11 "and He said"  
 3:13 and the Lord God said unto the  
 woman  
 3:16 Unto the woman he said  
 3:17 and unto Adam he said  
 3:22 And the Lord God said

Finally, Adam had revelations concerning the future eras revealed to him while in paradise. (For example see 2 Baruch 4:3.)

"The Temple and Its Ritual are Enshrouded in Secrecy."(61)

Soon after Eve ate the fruit of the tree of knowledge, she "cried out, Adam, Adam, where art thou? Rise up, come to me and I will show thee a great secret" (Books of Adam and Eve 21:1). The secret was the knowledge found in the fruit.<sup>62</sup> The Book of Hymns says the tree of life also has a secret, and it "keeps its secret hidden, unknown, sealed and unsuspected."<sup>63</sup> Furthermore, the tree of life, tree of knowledge, and other trees of Eden are all "fed from a secret spring,<sup>64</sup> meaning not a spring hidden from mortal eyes, but a spring known or shared only by the initiated. Eve was the first initiate

<sup>61</sup>Lundquist, 1984:59.

<sup>62</sup>Landy, 1979:525.

<sup>63</sup>Gaster, 1976:176.

<sup>64</sup>Ibid., 1976:176.

because she first found the secret of "the Old and New Testaments."<sup>65</sup> Adam was given a secret name, which he received from the "House of Life," and the "House of Life" or sanctuary was known as the "Secret Place."<sup>66</sup> Thus the whole area of Eden was secret, sacred, and available only to the initiated.

#### The Royal Adam

Associated with the sanctuary of Eden was the tradition of a coronation and enthronement ceremony. Adam was not only the first man, but he was also the first king and as king he had dominion, power, and authority. God told Enoch that he had assigned Adam "to be a king, to reign on the earth" (2 Enoch 30:12). Later Enoch recorded: "the Lord appointed him over everything as king, and he subjected everything to him in subservience under his hand" (2 Enoch 58:3). Even the angels were commanded to worship Adam (Apoc. of Sedrach 5:2, see also 4 Ezra 6:54). May, in his paper called "The King in the Garden of Eden," argued that the motif of kingship is prevalent in Ezekiel 28:12-19, and concluded that Adam

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<sup>65</sup>Prest, 1911:23.

<sup>66</sup>Drower, 1960:36.



was the "royal First Man" and the "First King."<sup>67</sup>

Elsewhere, in the Discourse on Abbaton by Timothy concerning Adam as king, the archbishop of Alexandria says:

Thereupon My Father set him (Adam) upon a great throne, and He placed on his head a crown of glory, and He put a royal sceptre in his hand, and My Father made every order of angels in the heavens to come and worship him, whether angel or archangel.<sup>68</sup>

According to the doctrine of the Mandaeans, as recorded in The Secret Adam, Eve accompanied Adam during their initiation, and they both were "inaugurated" into "the mysteries of kings."<sup>69</sup>

#### Conclusion

It has been shown that the garden was viewed as sacred space because it was created by Deity, and it remained sacred because God cast out those who had profaned it. Furthermore, it was pointed out that the garden sanctuary contained no structure; rather a mountain was located in Eden. The actual tree of life was

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<sup>67</sup>May, 1962:166-176.

<sup>68</sup>Budge, 1914:483.

<sup>69</sup>Drower, 1960:23

present in Eden, and from the tree of life ran the sacred river, which symbolically flowed throughout the world sharing its life-giving waters. And finally, Adam and Eve, as prototypes<sup>70</sup> for all mankind, were initiated, enthroned, and crowned king and queen of the world.

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<sup>70</sup>It is clear that Adam and Eve were the prototypes for all mankind. 2 Baruch 54:19 explains that Adam is not the cause nor is he responsible for his or her own sins, and in this way "each of us has become our own Adam."

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