

ESSAYS IN HONOR OF G. K. BEALE

From Creation  
to  
NEW  
CREATION

Biblical Theology and Exegesis



Daniel M. Gurtner &  
Benjamin L. Gladd, eds.





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## **From Creation to New Creation: Biblical Theology and Exegesis**

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# FOREWORD

David F. Wells

A fresh breeze is blowing in biblical studies today. It is felt in the desire, expressed in many different ways, to read the Bible as a whole, to see it as having a self-consistent narrative. How to describe that narrative, whether it has one central theme or multiple themes, is a matter of discussion. That there is a self-contained story, with a beginning and an end, is the important point that is being freshly articulated.

This new interest is, in one sense, very old. It would be foolish to think that the early fathers, like Irenaeus or even Tertullian, had no understanding of the Bible's connecting narrative. Nor would it make any sense to say that Calvin and Luther did not grasp the overall structure of Scripture. Calvin, after all, is among the very few to have commented on virtually the entire Bible.

However, it is true that the pursuit of the connecting ligaments of Scripture has taken its own path and has its own particular history in the modern period. It became ensconced in its own discipline, biblical theology, in the eighteenth century, and it has gone in and out of fashion ever since then. Mostly, though, it has been out of fashion.

This has been especially true in more recent times. Henning Graf Reventlow's *Problems of Biblical Theology in the Twentieth Century* gives the reader a good sense of the massive literature that has emerged and the major issues that have been engaged. It has been a checkered story. Brevard Childs, himself a practitioner in this discipline, had to lament its demise in *Biblical Theology in Crisis*. He was, of course, taking up just one of its episodes, the crash-and-burn end to the movement in the United States that had been rooted in the fresh interest in the Bible that had grown out of European neo-orthodoxy. This phase of biblical theology began in the 1950s and had ended by the 1970s.

Despite these difficulties, there has emerged a growing belief more recently that this enterprise must be continued. What has emerged in recent decades, then, is a fresh emphasis on the thought that the Bible's books do not stand conceptually alone, isolated from one another like

silos in a field, but that they are bound together by a common story, redemptive in nature, whose chief actor is God himself. Reading these books for this narrative—dare we call it a metanarrative?—and this narrative for what we learn of God has emerged with fresh insistence. It is at least in this sense that we may speak of a theological reading of the Bible. It is what explains which OT texts are used in the NT, and it explains the way in which they are used. And the existence of this narrative tells us why there are OT texts to be used at all. It is that the NT is giving us a theological perspective on the OT. A significant contributor to this new turn is Greg Beale.

It is an honor to have this opportunity to express my great regard for him as well as my appreciation for his friendship. Indeed, for a time we were also colleagues. No one, I know, is more focused on his work than he, no one more relentless in the pursuit of textual detail, and no one more passionate about biblical truth. Furthermore, I know of no one else who would even think of doing what he did: he read the 750 pages of dense and complicated argument in N. T. Wright's *The Resurrection of the Son of God* while brushing his teeth morning and evening! He has made an extraordinary contribution within the academy as well as to the next generation of young scholars and of young pastor-scholars.

Greg's particular interest has been the use of the OT by the NT authors. This is not a narrow interest if one assumes, as he does, that all of this takes place within a coherent and identifiable narrative that links the parts. If that is so, then it is possible, using conventional exegetical norms, to lay bare the underlying meaning that links the texts. And that is what he has done most fully in his recent *A New Testament Biblical Theology: The Unfolding of the Old Testament in the New*. This volume picks up on the embedded typology, and this leads into a comprehensive way of reading the whole Bible, all its parts are connected together in its eschatological structure of the already/not yet.

This certainly places Greg alongside a scholar from an earlier time, Geerhardus Vos. However, Vos's *Biblical Theology: Old and New Testaments*, despite the subtitle, is more about the Old than the New, and more about how themes unfolded in the Old than about how they reached their fulfillment in the New. That is what Greg has done. He has, in a way, completed what Vos started.

The essays in this volume are grouped into three sections that reflect Greg's preoccupations in his work: he has worked on the OT, from the vantage point of a NT scholar, thereby creating a biblical theology. However, I should not attempt to summarize these essays here. I would do their authors a disservice. They must be read completely for their richness, intricate detail, and many insights. However, it is striking to see how much first-rate work, such as these essays represent, is now forging these narrative links within the OT and between the OT and the NT.

The church is all the richer for it!

## PREFACE

Daniel M. Gurtner  
Benjamin L. Gladd

Both editors of the present volume have studied under Professor Beale and worked as his teaching assistant. Through his years of teaching, Dr. Beale has developed a reputation among students as being intense, rigorous, even intimidating. For those of us who know him best from working closely with him, it is strikingly apparent that such enthusiasm in the classroom is deeply rooted in his faith in Jesus Christ, his love for the life-transforming power of the gospel of Jesus Christ through careful study of the Scriptures, and his pursuit—using every intellectual fiber of his being—to engage the most important of labors known to humanity: the service of Christ’s church.

An academic? Yes. But some of us recall his passionate threat to jettison from the classroom anyone who was not engaged in some capacity of pastoral ministry. Another time Dr. Beale was red-faced with fury when a student requested of him a lowering of academic standards since the student was “only” going to be a pastor. For him, being a pastor is not a license for less rigor and care in one’s study but a motivation, even responsibility, to pour all the energies of one’s mind into engaging the Scriptures and relating them faithfully in preaching and teaching. Whether Dr. Beale is breaking a sweat in class over a word study or draining a ballpoint pen of most of its ink on a student’s written work, students willing to be challenged are forever changed.

Professor Beale’s enthusiasm for the life-changing truths of the Word of God and passion for others to join him on his journey of plumbing the richness of Scripture is an other-worldly, even apocalyptic experience. Dr. Beale both demands and exemplifies the joys of worshipful exegesis—using every skill available to engage carefully and critically but humbly and respectfully the Word of God in its original languages. Those of us still unearthing the riches Greg poured into us are enthusiastic to offer this collection of essays in appreciation of the goodness of God granted to us in the life and ministry of G. K. Beale.

Thanks are due to Allan Emery of Hendrickson Publishers for his immediate interest in this project and able guidance in seeing it to completion. Thanks are also due to Seth Ehorn, who provided remarkable service in proofreading, formatting, indexing, and tracking down numerous references with exemplary competence and expediency. Without Seth's efforts, this volume would not have been completed.



# INTRODUCTION

Daniel M. Gurtner  
Benjamin L. Gladd

Few evangelical scholars today have the skill to publish leading scholarship in both New Testament and Old Testament studies. Professor Beale's career has been marked by some of the best of both, employing the energies of his exegetical rigor in these areas toward fresh and innovative contributions to biblical theology. He is best known for his work on how the two Testaments are related to one another, particularly the use of the Old Testament in the New Testament. Laying the foundation for future projects, his dissertation at Cambridge focused on the use of Daniel in Second Temple Judaism and Revelation. Professor Beale's Revelation commentary, a demonstration of his fastidious exegesis and theological acumen, is hailed as one of the best commentaries ever written on John's Apocalypse. The academy has also lauded his other monographs, *The Temple and the Church's Mission* and *We Become What We Worship*, along with his commentary on 1 Thessalonians. With D. A. Carson, he co-edited the award-winning *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*. Dr. Beale's tireless work has culminated in the recent publication of his biblical-theological *magnum opus*, *A New Testament Biblical Theology: The Unfolding of the Old Testament in the New* (Baker, 2012).

Perhaps one of Professor Beale's greatest accomplishments lies in the indelible mark he leaves upon his students in the classroom. He not only takes his writing seriously but also his teaching. His students bear witness to his passion and conviction with which he presents the material. Professors rarely spend as much time preparing and intensely laboring over their lecture material. It is well known that he arrives at his office several hours before class to review his lecture notes. With his Hebrew and Greek text open, he meticulously combs over seemingly minute exegetical details. Many of the contributors of this volume can readily attest to the personal sacrifice he makes in discipling his students, as he is far more concerned with training men and women of the church than the academy.

Taking time out of his day to pray with and spiritually encourage a student is not an uncommon occurrence.

In honor of Dr. Beale's extensive contributions to Christ's church and the academy, we would like to present him with this volume as a small token of our appreciation. All of the contributors readily admit their understanding of Scripture has been deeply enriched because of his refreshing insights and detailed exegesis. Paying tribute to Professor Beale is an impressive gathering of his peers and students, touching on subjects as far reaching as his scholarship has itself gone. *From Creation to New Creation* exhibits some of evangelicalism's leading scholarship.

This volume is organized into three discreet sections: Old Testament, the Use of the Old Testament in the New, and Biblical Theology. The Old Testament essays address various exegetical and intertextual issues on the use of the Old Testament in the Old Testament. This field of study has received an increasing amount of attention in recent years and still remains fertile for continued investigation. Complementing the Old Testament essays is a series of essays on the use of the Old Testament in the New Testament. One of Professor Beale's lasting contributions is his interest in the relationship between the Testaments. He contends that the New Testament authors cited the Old Testament contextually and carefully contemplated their application of it. Several essays follow suit, investigating the use of the Old Testament in the New. The remaining essays, like the previous section, interact with the use of the Old Testament in the New, but will tease out the significance of intertextual relationships and construct a biblical theology of a particular theme. These essays on various aspects of biblical theology honor Dr. Beale's passion and interest in biblical theology.

## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

After earning his doctorate in New Testament from Cambridge University, Dr. Beale began his teaching career at Grove City College. Four years later, he moved to Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, where he would spend the next sixteen years. During that time, he and a fellow parent founded Covenant Christian School. He was head master of the school for ten years. The school grew to include kindergarten through eighth grade and, eventually, added a high school.

Wheaton College then appointed him the Kenneth T. Wessner Chair of Biblical Studies in 2000. He played a key role in the founding of Wheaton's PhD program. While at Wheaton, many of Dr. Beale's former students started their own ministries and began inviting him to come and teach. He and his wife, Dorinda, traveled throughout the United States and the world, affording him the opportunity to teach and preach. Currently, he teaches at Westminster Theological Seminary as the J. Gresham Machen Professor of New Testament.

Not only is Dr. Beale an accomplished scholar, he has lived a life in service to the local church. Throughout his career he has regularly taught Sunday school and preached in many churches. He currently holds ordination in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

Dr. Beale holds a number of prestigious memberships, such as *Studiosum Novi Testamenti Societas* and the Tyndale Fellowship at the Tyndale House at Cambridge University. He also served as the president of the Evangelical Theological Society in 2004.

A complete list of Dr. Beale's publications is provided beginning on p. 275.



# ABBREVIATIONS

## General Abbreviations

AB	Anchor Bible
ABD	<i>Anchor Bible Dictionary</i> . Edited by D. N. Freedman. 6 vols. New York, 1992
ABRL	Anchor Bible Reference Library
ACCSNT	Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture: New Testament
AGJU	Arbeiten zur Geschichte des antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums
AJEC	Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity
AnBib	Analecta biblica
ANE	Ancient Near East(ern)
ANET	<i>Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament</i> . Edited by J. B. Pritchard. 3rd ed. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969
ANEP	<i>The Ancient Near East in Pictures Relating to the Old Testament</i> . Edited by J. B. Pritchard. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1954
ANF	Ante-Nicene Fathers
AOAT	Alter Orient und Altes Testament
AOTC	Apollos Old Testament Commentary
Aq.	Aquila
ArBib	The Aramaic Bible
ASORDS	American Schools of Oriental Research Dissertation Series
ATD	Das Alte Testament Deutsch
ATANT	Abhandlungen zur Theologie des Alten und Neuen Testaments
BAR	<i>Biblical Archaeology Review</i>
BBR	<i>Bulletin for Biblical Research</i>
BDAG	Bauer, W., F. W. Danker, W. F. Arndt, and F. W. Gingrich. <i>Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament</i>

	<i>and Other Early Christian Literature</i> . 3rd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999
BDB	Brown, F., S. R. Driver, and C. A. Briggs. <i>A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament</i> . Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1907
BDF	Blass, F., A. Debrunner, and R. W. Funk. <i>A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature</i> . Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961
BDS	Bibal Dissertation Series
BECNT	Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament
BETL	Bibliotheca ephemeridum theologiarum lovaniensium
BHS	<i>Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia</i> . Edited by K. Ellinger and W. Rudolph. Stuttgart, 1983
BHT	Beiträge zur historischen Theologie
<i>Bib</i>	<i>Biblica</i>
<i>Bijdr</i>	<i>Bijdragen: Tijdschrift voor filosofie en theologie</i>
BIS	Biblical Interpretation Series
BJS	Brown Judaic Studies
<i>BN</i>	<i>Biblische Notizen</i>
BNTC	Black's New Testament Commentaries
BWANT	Beiträge zur Wissenschaft vom Alten und Neuen Testament
<i>BZ</i>	<i>Biblische Zeitschrift</i>
BZNW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft
ca.	circa
<i>CAD</i>	<i>The Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago</i> . Chicago: University of Chicago, 1956–
CBC	Cambridge Bible Commentary
CBET	Contributions to Biblical Exegesis and Theology
<i>CBQ</i>	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
cent.	century
ch(s).	chapter(s)
CNTTS	Center for New Testament Textual Studies
CCSA	Corpus Christianorum: Series Apocryphorum
CEB	Common English Bible
d.	died
<i>DNWSI</i>	<i>Dictionary of the North-West Semitic Inscriptions</i> . J. Hoftijzer and K. Jongeling. 2 vols. Leiden: Brill, 1995
<i>DSD</i>	<i>Dead Sea Discoveries</i>
<i>DSS</i>	<i>Dead Sea Scrolls</i>
EBib	Études bibliques



EDSS	<i>Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls</i> . Edited by Lawrence H. Schiffman and James C. VanderKam. 2 vols. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000
<i>ErIsr</i>	<i>Eretz-Israel</i>
esp.	especially
<i>EstBib</i>	<i>Estudios bíblicos</i>
ESV	English Standard Version
FAT	Forschungen zum Alten Testament
FB	Forschung zur Bibel
GGBB	Wallace, Daniel B. <i>Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament</i> . Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996
Gk.	Greek
GKC	<i>Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar</i> . Edited by E. Kautzsch. Translated by A. E. Cowley. 2d. ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1910
HALOT	Koehler, L., W. Baumgartner, and J. J. Stamm. <i>The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament</i> . Translated and edited under the supervision of M. E. J. Richardson. 5 vols. Leiden: Brill, 1994–1999
HB	Hebrew Bible
Heb.	Hebrew
HNT	Handbuch zum Neuen Testament
HNTC	Harper's New Testament Commentaries
HCSB	Holman Christian Standard Bible
HSS	Harvard Semitic Studies
HTKNT	Herders theologischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament
HUCA	<i>Hebrew Union College Annual</i>
ICC	International Critical Commentary
IDB	<i>The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible</i>
IEJ	<i>Israel Exploration Journal</i>
JAAR	<i>Journal of the American Academy of Religion</i>
JANES	<i>Journal of the Ancient Near Eastern Society</i>
JB	Jerusalem Bible
JBL	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
JETS	<i>Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society</i>
JJS	<i>Journal of Jewish Studies</i>
JNES	<i>Journal of Near Eastern Studies</i>
JR	<i>Journal of Religion</i>
JSHJ	<i>Journal for the Study of the Historical Jesus</i>
JSNT	<i>Journal for the Study of the New Testament</i>
JSNTSup	Journal for the Study of the New Testament: Supplement Series

JSOTSup	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament: Supplement Series
<i>JSS</i>	<i>Journal of Semitic Studies</i>
<i>JTS</i>	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
KEK	Kritisch-exegetischer Kommentar über das Neue Testament (Meyer-Kommentar)
KJV	King James Version
KNT	Kommentar zum Neuen Testament
LCL	Loeb Classical Library
LD	Lectio divina
lit.	literally
LHB/OTS	Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies
LNTS	Library of New Testament Studies
LSJ	Liddell, H. G., R. Scott, H. S. Jones. <i>A Greek-English Lexicon</i> . 9th ed. with revised supplement. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996
LSTS	Library of Second Temple Studies
LXX	Septuagint
MS(S)	Manuscript(s)
MT	Masoretic Text
n(n).	note(s)
NA <sup>27</sup>	<i>Novum Testamentum Graece</i> , Nestle-Aland, 27th ed.
NAC	New American Commentary
NASB	New American Standard Bible
NCB	New Century Bible
NCBC	New Cambridge Bible Commentary
NEB	New English Bible
<i>Neot</i>	<i>Neotestamentica</i>
NET	New English Translation
NETS	New English Translation of the Septuagint
NIBC	New International Biblical Commentary
NICNT	New International Commentary on the New Testament
NICOT	New International Commentary on the Old Testament
<i>NIDOTTE</i>	<i>New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis</i> . Edited by W. A. VanGemeren. 5 vols. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997
NIGTC	New International Greek Testament Commentary
NIV	New International Version
NIVAC	New International Version Application Commentary
NLT	New Living Translation
<i>NovT</i>	<i>Novum Testamentum</i>
NovTSup	Novum Testamentum Supplements
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version
NSBT	New Studies in Biblical Theology
NTL	New Testament Library

NTS	<i>New Testament Studies</i>
OEANE	<i>The Oxford Encyclopedia of Archaeology in the Near East.</i> Edited by E. M. Meyers. New York, 1997
OED	<i>Oxford English Dictionary.</i> Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000–
OG	Old Greek
ÖTK	Ökumenischer Taschenbuch-Kommentar
OTL	Old Testament Library
OTP	<i>Old Testament Pseudepigrapha.</i> Edited by J. H. Charlesworth. 2 vols. New York, 1983
par.	parallels
p(p).	page(s)
PNTC	The Pillar New Testament Commentary
PTMS	Pittsburgh Theological Monograph Series
PTSDSS	Princeton Theological Seminary Dead Sea Scrolls
RB	<i>Revue biblique</i>
RevQ	<i>Revue de Qumran</i>
RGG	<i>Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart.</i> Edited by K. Galling. 7 vols. 3rd ed. Tübingen, 1957–1965
RNT	Regensburger Neues Testament
RS	Ras Shamra
RSV	Revised Standard Version
SBEC	Studies in Bible and Early Christianity
SBLABib	Society of Biblical Literature Academia Biblica
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
SBLEJL	Society of Biblical Literature Early Judaism and Its Literature
SBLGNT	Society of Biblical Literature Greek New Testament
SBLMS	Society of Biblical Literature Monograph Series
SBLSymS	Society of Biblical Literature Symposium Series
SBM	Stuttgarter biblische Monographien
SC	Sources chrétiennes. Paris: Cerf, 1943–
Scr	<i>Scripture</i>
SEAug	Studia ephemeridis Augustinianum
SemeiaSt	Semeia Studies
SHCANE	Studies in the History and Culture of the Ancient Near East
SJ	Studia judaica
SJT	<i>Scottish Journal of Theology</i>
SNTSMS	Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series
SP	Sacra pagina
SRB	Supplementi alla Rivista biblica
SSEJC	Studies in Scripture in Early Judaism and Christianity
STDJ	Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah
StPatr	Studia patristica
StPB	Studia post-biblica

SUNT	Studien zur Umwelt des Neuen Testaments
SVTP	Studia in Veteris Testamenti pseudepigraphica
Syr.	Syriac
Sym.	Symmachus
TANZ	Texte und Arbeiten zum neutestamentlichen Zeitalter
TDNT	<i>Theological Dictionary of the New Testament</i> . Edited by G. Kittel and G. Friedrich. Translated by G. W. Bromiley. 10 vols. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964–1976
Tg.	Targum
Theod.	Theodotion
TJ	<i>Trinity Journal</i>
TLZ	<i>Theologische Literaturzeitung</i>
TNIV	Today's New International Version
TNTC	Tyndale New Testament Commentaries
TOTC	Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries
TPINTC	TPI New Testament Commentaries
TSAJ	Texte und Studien zum antiken Judentum
TWOT	<i>Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament</i> . Edited by R. L. Harris, G. L. Archer Jr. 2 vols. Chicago: Moody Press, 1980
<i>TynBul</i>	<i>Tyndale Bulletin</i>
TZ	<i>Theologische Zeitschrift</i>
UBS <sup>4</sup>	<i>The Greek New Testament</i> , United Bible Societies, 4th ed.
v(v).	verse(s)
VC	<i>Vigiliae christianae</i>
Vg.	Vulgate
VT	<i>Vetus Testamentum</i>
VTSup	Supplements to <i>Vetus Testamentum</i>
WAC	Wise, Michael, Martin Abegg Jr., and Edward Cook. <i>The Dead Sea Scrolls: A New Translation</i> . New York: HarperCollins, 2005
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
WMANT	Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testament
WTJ	<i>Westminster Theological Journal</i>
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
ZAW	<i>Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>
ZECNT	Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament
ZIBBC	<i>Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary</i> . Edited by John H. Walton. 5 vols. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009
ZNW	<i>Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche</i>
ZTK	<i>Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche</i>

## Textual Abbreviations

### Old Testament

Gn	Genesis
Ex	Exodus
Lv	Leviticus
Nm	Numbers
Dt	Deuteronomy
Jo	Joshua
Jgs	Judges
Ru	Ruth
1–2 Sm	1–2 Samuel
1–2 Kgs	1–2 Kings
1–2 Chr	1–2 Chronicles
Ezr	Ezra
Neh	Nehemiah
Est	Esther
Jb	Job
Ps(s)	Psalms(s)
Prv	Proverbs
Eccl	Ecclesiastes
Sg	Song of Songs
Is	Isaiah
Jer	Jeremiah
Lam	Lamentations
Ez	Ezekiel
Dn	Daniel
Hos	Hosea
Jl	Joel
Am	Amos
Ob	Obadiah
Jon	Jonah
Mi	Micah
Na	Nahum
Hb	Habakkuk
Zep	Zephaniah
Hg	Haggai
Zec	Zechariah
Mal	Malachi

### New Testament

Mt	Matthew
Mk	Mark
Lk	Luke
Jn	John
Acts	Acts
Rom	Romans

1–2 Cor	1–2 Corinthians
Gal	Galatians
Eph	Ephesians
Phil	Philippians
Col	Colossians
1–2 Thes	1–2 Thessalonians
1–2 Tm	1–2 Timothy
Ti	Titus
Phlm	Philemon
Heb	Hebrews
Jas	James
1–2 Pt	1–2 Peter
1–3 Jn	1–3 John
Jude	Jude
Rv	Revelation
Apocrypha and Septuagint	
Add Esth	Additions to Esther
Ep Jer	Epistle of Jeremiah
1–4 Esd	1–4 Esdras
Jdt	Judith
1–2 Mc	1–2 Maccabees
Pr Man	Prayer of Manasseh
Sir	Sirach/Ecclesiasticus
Tb	Tobit
Wis	Wisdom of Solomon
Pseudepigrapha	
<i>Apoc. Ab.</i>	<i>Apocalypse of Abraham</i>
<i>2 Bar.</i>	<i>2 Baruch</i>
<i>1–3 En.</i>	<i>1–3 Enoch</i>
<i>4 Esd.</i>	<i>4 Esdras</i>
<i>4 Ezra</i>	<i>4 Ezra</i>
<i>Jub.</i>	<i>Jubilees</i>
<i>L.A.B.</i>	<i>liber antiquitatum biblicarum (Pseudo-Philo)</i>
<i>L.A.E.</i>	<i>Life of Adam and Eve</i>
<i>Liv. Pro.</i>	<i>Lives of the Prophets</i>
<i>Mart. Ascen. Isa.</i>	<i>Martyrdom and Ascension of Isaiah</i>
<i>Pss. Sol.</i>	<i>Psalms of Solomon</i>
<i>Sib. Or.</i>	<i>Sibylline Oracles</i>
<i>T. Benj.</i>	<i>Testament of Benjamin</i>
<i>T. Jud.</i>	<i>Testament of Judah</i>
<i>T. Levi</i>	<i>Testament of Levi</i>
<i>T. Naph.</i>	<i>Testament of Naphtali</i>
<i>T. Zeb.</i>	<i>Testament of Zebulun</i>
Philo	
<i>Abr.</i>	<i>De Abrahamo</i>



<i>Agr.</i>	<i>De agricultura</i>
<i>Conf.</i>	<i>De confusione linguarum</i>
<i>Congr.</i>	<i>De congressu eruditionis gratia</i>
<i>Mut.</i>	<i>De mutatione nominum</i>
<i>Opif.</i>	<i>De opificio mundi</i>
<i>Virt.</i>	<i>De virtutibus</i>
Josephus	
<i>A.J.</i>	<i>Antiquitates judaicae</i>
<i>B.J.</i>	<i>Bellum judaicum</i>
<i>C. Ap.</i>	<i>Contra Apionem</i>
<i>Vita</i>	<i>Vita</i>
Mishnah, Talmud, Targums, and Related Rabbinic Literature	
<i>Abod. Zar.</i>	<i>‘Abodah Zarah</i>
<i>‘Abot R. Nat.</i>	<i>Abot of Rabbi Nathan</i>
<i>b. B. Meṣ.</i>	<i>Baba Meṣi’a</i>
<i>b. Ber.</i>	<i>Berakot</i>
<i>b. Ketub.</i>	<i>Ketubbot</i>
<i>b. Mak.</i>	<i>Makkot</i>
<i>b. Meg.</i>	<i>Megillah</i>
<i>b. Šabb.</i>	<i>Šabbat</i>
<i>b. Sanh.</i>	<i>Sanhedrin</i>
<i>b. Soṭah</i>	<i>Soṭah</i>
<i>b. Yoma</i>	<i>Yoma</i>
<i>Cant. Rab.</i>	<i>Canticles Rabbah</i>
<i>m. Hor.</i>	<i>Horayot</i>
<i>m. Meg.</i>	<i>Megillah</i>
<i>m. Qidd.</i>	<i>Qiddušin</i>
<i>m. Soṭah</i>	<i>Soṭah</i>
<i>Mek.</i>	<i>Mekilta</i>
<i>Midr. Exod.</i>	<i>Midrash Exodus</i>
<i>Midr. Lam.</i>	<i>Midrash Lamentations</i>
<i>Midr. Lev.</i>	<i>Midrash Leviticus</i>
<i>Midr. Tanḥ.</i>	<i>Midrash Tanḥuma</i>
<i>Pesiq. Rab.</i>	<i>Pesiqta Rabbati</i>
<i>Pesiq. Rab Kah.</i>	<i>Pesiqta de Rab Kahana</i>
<i>Sipre Num.</i>	<i>Sipre Numbers</i>
<i>Tg. Ez</i>	<i>Targum Ezekiel</i>
<i>Tg. Gn</i>	<i>Targum Genesis</i>
<i>Tg. Is</i>	<i>Targum Isaiah</i>
<i>Tg. Jl</i>	<i>Targum Joel</i>
<i>Tg. Lv</i>	<i>Targum Leviticus</i>
<i>Tg. Neof.</i>	<i>Targum Neofiti</i>
<i>Tg. Onq.</i>	<i>Targum Onqelos</i>
<i>Tg. Ps.-J.</i>	<i>Targum Pseudo-Jonathan</i>

## Dead Sea Scrolls

<i>1QIsa<sup>a</sup></i>	<i>Isaiah<sup>a</sup></i>
<i>1QIsa<sup>b</sup></i>	<i>Isaiah<sup>b</sup></i>
<i>1QpHab</i>	<i>Pesher Habakkuk</i>
<i>1QapGen (= 1Q20)</i>	<i>Genesis Apocryphon</i>
<i>1QS</i>	<i>Rule of the Community</i>
<i>1QM</i>	<i>War Scroll</i>
<i>1QH<sup>a</sup></i>	<i>Thanksgiving Hymns</i>
<i>4Q174 (= 4QFlor)</i>	<i>Florilegium</i>
<i>4Q181 (= 4QAgesCreat)</i>	<i>Ages of Creation</i>
<i>4Q256 (= 4QS<sup>b</sup>)</i>	<i>Rule of the Community</i>
<i>4Q258 (= 4QS<sup>d</sup>)</i>	<i>Rule of the Community</i>
<i>4Q259 (= 4QS<sup>e</sup>)</i>	<i>Rule of the Community</i>
<i>4Q379 (= 4QPssJosh<sup>b</sup>)</i>	<i>Psalms of Joshua<sup>b</sup></i>
<i>4Q385<sup>a</sup> (= 4QpsMoses)</i>	<i>pseudo-Moses<sup>a</sup></i>
<i>4Q387 (= 4QpsEzek)</i>	<i>pseudo-Ezekiel<sup>b</sup></i>
<i>4Q389 (= 4QpsMoses)</i>	<i>pseudo-Moses<sup>d</sup></i>
<i>4Q390 (= 4QpsMoses)</i>	<i>pseudo-Moses<sup>e</sup></i>
<i>4Q521 (= 4QMessAp)</i>	<i>Messianic Apocalypse</i>
<i>6QD</i>	see CD
<i>11Q13 (= 11QMelch)</i>	<i>Melchizedek</i>
<i>CD</i>	<i>Cairo Genizah<sup>a</sup></i>

## Apostolic Fathers

<i>Barn.</i>	<i>Barnabas</i>
<i>1–2 Clem.</i>	<i>1–2 Clement</i>

## Greek and Latin Sources

<i>Aristotle (contested authorship)</i>	
<i>Eth. nic.</i>	<i>Ethica nicomachea</i>
<i>Mag. mor.</i>	<i>Magna moralia</i>
<i>Augustine</i>	
<i>Enarrat. Ps.</i>	<i>Ennarationes in Psalmos</i>
<i>Faust.</i>	<i>Contra Faustom Manichaeum</i>
<i>Eusebius</i>	
<i>Hist. eccl.</i>	<i>Historia ecclesiastica</i>
<i>Hippolytus</i>	
<i>Antichr.</i>	<i>De antichristo</i>
<i>Irenaeus</i>	
<i>Haer.</i>	<i>Adversus haereses</i>
<i>Martial</i>	
<i>Epigr.</i>	<i>Epigrammata</i>
<i>Origen</i>	
<i>Adnot. Exod.</i>	<i>Adnotationes in Exodum</i>
<i>Quintilian</i>	
<i>Inst.</i>	<i>Institutio oratoria</i>

Part 1

Old Testament



# CHAPTER 1

## EDEN: A TEMPLE? A REASSESSMENT OF THE BIBLICAL EVIDENCE

Daniel I. Block

### Introduction

The contributors to this volume are deeply indebted to our friend and colleague Greg Beale for his significant contributions to the discipline of biblical theology.<sup>1</sup> Against the grain of increasing specialization and the barriers that exist between HB and NT scholarship, Greg has forced us to reflect deeply on the intertextual connections between the Testaments and the theological themes that bind the HB inextricably to the NT. It is a great privilege to participate in the conversation in his honor. Although my approach to the chosen subject differs somewhat from that of the honoree, I offer this essay as an expression of gratitude for his friendship and as a small contribution to a lively debate on a vital aspect of biblical theology. While limitations of space preclude full discussion of all the issues raised, I acknowledge at the outset that in presenting this response I am swimming against an overwhelming current of scholarly opinion, and even against positions I once held. However, regarding the relationship between the opening chapters of Genesis and Israel's temple traditions, it may be time to contemplate a slight course correction.<sup>2</sup> My musings in this essay are all in soft lead pencil, subject to revision, and they are offered here as part of an ongoing friendly dialogue.

Beale's work on the temple is fundamentally sound. First, it seems clear that Israel's sanctuaries were designed, constructed, and decorated

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<sup>1</sup>I am indebted to my colleagues John Walton and Christopher Ansberry and to my assistants Carmen Imes and Austin Surls, who read earlier drafts of this essay and offered many insightful comments and suggestions for its improvement.

<sup>2</sup>Unless the context demands specificity, I use the term "temple" for Israel's central sanctuary, without distinguishing between the tabernacle—a portable temple—and the temple(s) in Jerusalem.

as microcosms of YHWH's heavenly temple. Whether or not Moses was able to gaze into the heavenly throne room on Mount Sinai, the tabernacle represented a replica תַּבְנִיִּת; (*tabnîṭ*) built according to a divinely revealed plan (Ex 25:9, 40). While the temple in Jerusalem had the same basic structure as the tabernacle, it seems the plan revealed to David (1 Chr 28:9–19) also envisioned a replica of the heavenly temple,<sup>3</sup> complete with a throne room (represented by the Holy of Holies) and a throne (represented by the ark of the covenant).<sup>4</sup> Second, while functioning as replicas of YHWH's heavenly residence, both tabernacle and temple were also constructed as miniature Edens.<sup>5</sup> Decorated with images of cherubim and palm trees, lit by the menorah—a symbol of the tree of life<sup>6</sup>—and served by a priest decked out in royal colors and precious stones, these motifs hark back to the garden where God first put human beings.<sup>7</sup> But does this mean that the author of Gn 1–3 perceived either the cosmos or Eden as a temple? I used to think so,<sup>8</sup> but I now wonder if the case is as convincing

<sup>3</sup>The author of Hebrews suggests accordingly that the sacrificial actions, especially the sin and guilt offerings, represented replica actions of the true heavenly sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

<sup>4</sup>Cf. 1 Sm 4:4; 2 Sm 6:2; 2 Kgs 19:15; 1 Chr 13:6; Is 37:16; Pss 80:2[1]; 99:1. See further Daniel I. Block, *The Book of Ezekiel Chapters 25–48* (NICOT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 580–81.

<sup>5</sup>See esp. Michael Fishbane, “The ‘Eden’ Motif/The Landscape of Spiritual Renewal,” in *Biblical Text and Texture: A Literary Reading of Selected Texts* (Oxford: Oneworld, 1998), 111–20; T. Stordalen, *Echoes of Eden: Genesis 2–3 Symbolism and the Eden Garden in Biblical Hebrew Literature* (Contributions to Biblical Exegesis and Theology 25; Leuven: Peeters, 2000), 307–12; Dexter E. Callender Jr., *Adam in Myth and History: Ancient Israelite Perspectives on the Primal Human* (HSS 48; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2000), 50–54.

<sup>6</sup>See Carol L. Meyers, *The Tabernacle Menorah: A Synthetic Study of a Symbol from the Biblical Cult* (ASORDS 2; Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1976), 180.

<sup>7</sup>For additional links, see G. K. Beale, *A New Testament Biblical Theology: The Unfolding of the Old Testament in the New* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2011), 617–22; G. K. Beale, *Temple and the Church's Mission: A Biblical Theology of the Dwelling Place of God* (NSBT 17; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004), 66–75; Gordon J. Wenham, “Sanctuary Symbolism in the Garden of Eden Story,” in *I Studied Inscriptions before the Flood* (ed. R. S. Hess and D. T. Tsumura; Sources for Biblical and Theological Study 4; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1994), 399–404; Elizabeth Bloch-Smith, “Solomon's Temple: The Politics of Ritual Space,” in *Sacred Time, Sacred Space: Archaeology and the Religion of Israel* (ed. B. M. Gittlen; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2002), 83–94 (88), who characterizes the temple in Jerusalem as a “virtual garden of Eden”; Elizabeth Bloch-Smith, “Who Is the King of Glory? Solomon's Temple and Its Symbolism,” in *Scripture and Other Artifacts* (ed. M. Coogan, J. C. Exum, and L. E. Stager; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1994), 18–31; Fishbane, “The ‘Eden’ Motif,” 111–20.

<sup>8</sup>The literature on creation as a cosmic temple and Eden as the original earthly temple is vast and growing. See esp. Beale, *New Testament Biblical Theology*, 614–48; Beale, *Temple*, 29–122; G. K. Beale, “Eden, the Temple, and the Church's Mission in the New Creation,” *JETS* 48 (2005): 5–31; Fishbane, “The ‘Eden’ Motif,” 111–20; Jon D. Levenson, “The Temple and the World,” *JR* 64 (1984): 275–98;

as I once thought. Questions concerning the equation arise from both the text of Gn 1–3 and the conceptual world represented by temples.

## The Textual Evidence of Genesis 1–3

Genesis 1–3 introduces readers to a world that could be considered sacred space by virtue of its divine origin but that the narrator fails (or refuses) explicitly to place in that category, either by using special priestly vocabulary or by means of a conceptual framework. Apparently the functioning of the cosmos was to be secured by human vassals deputized by the Creator. If anything, this is a royal world, with the man being cast as a king, invested with the status of “image of God” (בְּצֶלֶם אֱלֹהִים; *bēṣelem ʾēlōhîm*, Gn 1:26–27), and charged to subdue (כָּבַשׁ; *kḇš*) it and exercise dominion (רָדָה; *rdh*) over it.<sup>9</sup> This charge suggests that in the “super good” (טוֹב מְאֹד; *tōb mēʾōd*, v. 31) world that God had made, creatures’ freedom to resist divine authority needed to be checked. As the image of God, הָאָדָם (*hāʾādām*) did not have absolute or independent power; he was to govern as the viceroy and regent of the One in whose image he was created (cf. Ps 8).

### The Eden Narrative (Gn 2:4b–3:24)

Despite critical scholars’ general attribution of Gn 1:1–2:4a to “P,” the only priestly element is the phrase וַיְקַדְּשֵׁהוּ אֱתוֹ (wayēqaddēš ʾētō), “and he sanctified it.” However, rather than applying the expression to created space, the object is time, the seventh day.<sup>10</sup> That YHWH should later expressly isolate the seventh day as a day of rest for humans is significant for

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John M. Lundquist, “What Is a Temple? A Preliminary Typology,” in *The Quest for the Kingdom of God: Studies in Honor of George E. Mendenhall* (ed. A. B. Huffmon, F. A. Spina, and A. R. W. Green; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1983), 205–20; Stordalen, *Echoes of Eden*, esp. 307–12; Wenham, “Sanctuary Symbolism,” 399–404. While most of these studies draw on extrabiblical parallels, these are highlighted in numerous recent works, most notably Manfred Dietrich, “Das biblische Paradies und der babylonische Tempelgarten: Überlegungen zur Lage des Gartens Eden,” in *Das biblische Weltbild und seine altorientalischen Kontexte* (ed. B. Janowski and B. Ego; FAT 32; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004), 281–323; Bernd Janowski, “Der Himmel auf Erden: Zur kosmologischen Bedeutung des Tempels in der Umwelt Israels,” in *Das biblische Weltbild und seine altorientalischen Kontexte* (ed. B. Janowski and B. Ego; FAT 32; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004), 229–60; John H. Walton, *Genesis 1 as Ancient Cosmology* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2011); John H. Walton, *Ancient Near Eastern Thought and the Old Testament: Introducing the Conceptual World of the Hebrew Bible* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2006), 113–34.

<sup>9</sup> Even the sun, moon, and stars are cast in royal rather than priestly roles: note the verb מָשַׁל (*mšl*), “to rule, govern,” in Gn 1:18.

<sup>10</sup> On other supposedly priestly features, see below.

Israel's practice of the seventh-day Sabbath, but it says nothing about a temple metaphor underlying Gn 1.<sup>11</sup> While the Israelites celebrated many liturgical sabbaths (the annual festivals, new moon festivals, and so on), within the Pentateuch the seventh-day Sabbath was a domestic rather than cultic observance. Not only did Israel's observance of this Sabbath antedate the construction of the tabernacle and the establishment of its ritual (Ex 16:22–30), but the Sabbath ordinance was also embedded in the ten foundational principles of covenant righteousness, which are silent on temple and cult (Ex 20:8–11; Dt 5:12–15).<sup>12</sup> The difficulty of reconstructing from the Pentateuch and from the rest of the HB the cultic activities that people might have practiced on the seventh-day Sabbath makes an association with the temple even more unlikely.

Although Gn 2–3 is commonly attributed to the Yahwist rather than the Priestly source, ironically scholars have recognized more links to Israel's sanctuary traditions here than in Gn 1:<sup>13</sup> (1) the verb הִתְהַלֵּךְ (*hithallēk*) (Gn 3:8; cf. Lv 26:12; Dt 23:15[14]; 2 Sm 7:6–7); (2) the כְּרֻבִים (*kērubīm*) guarding entrance to the garden (Gn 3:24; cf. Ex 25:18–22; 26:31; 1 Kgs 6:23–28); (3) the tree of life (Gn 2:9; cf. the menorah, a stylized tree of life, Ex 25:31–36); (4) YHWH's charge to Adam “to serve and to keep” (לְעִבְדָה וּלְשָׁמְרָה; *lē'obēdāh ûlšōmērāh*) the garden (Gn 2:15; cf. Nm 3:7–8; 8:26; 18:5–6); (5) the garments (כְּתוֹנוֹת; *kotnōt*) of skin provided for Adam and Eve (Gn 3:21; cf. Ex 28:40; 29:8; 40:14; Lv 8:13); (6) the river flowing from Eden to water the garden (Gn 2:10–14; cf. Ps 46:5[4]; Ez 47); (7) the reference to gold (Gn 2:12; cf. Ex 25:11, 17, 24, 29, 36); (8) the precious stones, בְּדֹלָה (*bēdōlah*, Gn 2:12)<sup>14</sup> and שֹׁהַם (*šōham*, Gn 2:12; cf. Ex 25:7; 28:9–12, 20; 1 Chr 29:2), decorating tabernacle and temple and the high priestly vestments; (9) the lush arboreal imagery (Gn 2:9, 16–17);<sup>15</sup> (10) the garden as a mountain;<sup>16</sup> (11) the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, which was “good for food . . . a delight to the eyes . . . to be desired to make one wise” (Gn 2:9; 3:6; cf. Ps 19:8–9; cf. also Ex 25:16; Dt 31:26, referring to the law kept inside the Holy of Holies), and the illicit eating of which brought death (Gn 2:16–17; 3:3; cf. Nm 4:20; 2 Sm 6:7, touching

<sup>11</sup> Contra Walton, *Genesis 1 as Ancient Cosmology*, 180.

<sup>12</sup> See Daniel I. Block, “Reading the Decalogue Left to Right: The Ten Principles of Covenant Relationship in the Hebrew Bible,” in *How I Love Your Torah, O Lord! Studies in the Book of Deuteronomy* (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2011), 21–55.

<sup>13</sup> See Beale, *Temple*, 66–76.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Nm 11:7, which compares the manna with בְּדֹלָה (*bēdōlah*), an omer of which was stored in the ark of the covenant inside the Holy of Holies (Ex 16:32–33; Heb 9:4).

<sup>15</sup> Cf. 1 Kgs 6:18, 29, 32; 7:18–26, 42, 49, referring to palms, gourds, open flowers, pomegranates, and lilies that decorated the temple.

<sup>16</sup> Though not explicitly declared, that the rivers flowed downward in four directions suggests an elevated mountain (cf. Ez 28:14, 16; also Ex 15:17; Ez 40:2; and many references to Mount Zion).



the ark);<sup>17</sup> (12) the eastern entrance to the garden (Gn 3:24; cf. Ez 40:6); (13) the tripartite structure of the garden (Gn 2:10): Eden = the Holy of Holies; the garden = the holy place; the region outside the garden = the outer court.<sup>18</sup>

While admitting that Gn 2 does not develop the notion that Eden is the Holy of Holies of the cosmic temple or a place for God's presence, for some this impressive list of links suggests the author and the original audience assumed this notion.<sup>19</sup> But this conclusion seems unwarranted; every supposed link is either illusory or capable of a different interpretation. I shall consider the links in turn, beginning with the Eden narrative (Gn 2:4b–3:24) and then considering the first creation account (1:1–2:4a).

*The use of the verb הִתְהַלֵּךְ (hithallēk) (Gn 3:8).* None of the occurrences of this *hitpa'el* form cited above speaks particularly of YHWH's residence in the sanctuary.<sup>20</sup> In Lv 26:11–12 YHWH promises to walk about among his people, to be their God, and to claim Israel as his people. The suffixed form, מִשְׁכַּנִּי (*miškānī*), may refer to the tabernacle elsewhere (Lv 15:31), but here “and I will grant my dwelling in your midst” (וְנִתְתִּי מִשְׁכַּנִּי בְּתוֹכְכֶם; *wəṇāṭattī miškānī bētōkēkem*) functions periphrastically for “and I will dwell among you” (וְנִתְתִּי בְּתוֹכְכֶם; *wəṇāṭattī bētōkēkem*) and speaks of YHWH's presence among his people.<sup>21</sup> Even if the tabernacle were in view, the point is not that it is a place in which YHWH may walk about but that the structure symbolized his presence with the people (cf. Ex 25:8). Deuteronomy 23:15[14] is not concerned about the purity of the tabernacle so YHWH may freely walk about in it but the sanctity of the Israelite camp. The presence of YHWH, the divine Commander-in-Chief, among the troops requires scrupulous maintenance of ritual purity. A superficial reading of 2 Sm 7:6 might suggest that in the past the tabernacle provided YHWH with a place to walk about and that he had not desired a permanent house as his home. However, 2 Sm 7:7 declares that the real issue is not a building in which he walks about but the means by which he relates to his people. Until now the tabernacle had symbolized his freedom to accompany Israel on their journeys; he had never asked for a permanent home.

<sup>17</sup> Many of these features are cited by Wenham, “Sanctuary Symbolism,” 400–403.

<sup>18</sup> Beale adds numbers 10–12 (*Temple*, 66–74; *New Testament Biblical Theology*, 617–21). Levenson (“The Temple and the World,” 275) has argued rightly that these paradisiacal features do not merely represent “the invasion of Canaanite culture right into the center of Israel's life and worship” but derive from Israel's own sacred traditions.

<sup>19</sup> Thus Walton, *Genesis 1 as Ancient Cosmology*, 186 n. 182; Walton, *Ancient Near Eastern Thought*, 125.

<sup>20</sup> A misinterpretation found in Wenham, “Sanctuary Symbolism,” and repeated by Stordalen, *Echoes of Eden*, 458.

<sup>21</sup> For the use of the verb שָׁכַן (*škn*) with YHWH as the subject + בְּתוֹךְ (*bētōk*), see Ex 29:45; 1 Kgs 13:2; Ez 43:9; Zec 2:11; cf. Rv 21:3.

If הִתְהַלֵּךְ (*hiṭhallēk*) in Gn 3:8 does not allude to YHWH's activity within the sanctuary, to what does it refer? Based on the use of the *hitpa'el* form elsewhere, three primary possibilities emerge. First, the expression may speak of random back-and-forth movement, like flashes of lightning (Ps 77:18[17]), though this sense seems unlikely. Second, it may speak of walking back and forth as claimant to space. In Gn 13:17 YHWH invites Abraham to walk about through the length and breadth of the land of Canaan, in effect, staking his claim to it.<sup>22</sup> Zechariah 6:7 uses the *hitpa'el* of the four horses, who "patrol" the earth as agents of YHWH's sovereign rule. Third, the form may speak of free and friendly intercourse with those with and before whom one walks (Gn 24:40; 1 Sm 25:15). Genesis 3:8 reflects both YHWH's authority over the garden and his relationship with its inhabitants.<sup>23</sup> This applies particularly to its human inhabitants, to whom he calls out, "Adam, where are you?" However, having sinned, Adam and Eve hid from their friend and divine Suzerain; the confident relationship had been destroyed. If later texts speak of YHWH walking among his people, this is the reward for covenantal fidelity (Lv 26:11–12), which is a prerequisite to a return to Edenic circumstances.

*The כְּרֻבִים (kērubīm) guarding entrance to the tree of life (Gn 3:24).* The term כְּרֻבִים (*kērubīm*) occurs ninety-one times in the HB. Outside this context and Ez 28, which reflects on this text, the expression is always associated with Israel's sanctuary.<sup>24</sup> The Hebrew word appears to be related etymologically to Akkadian *kāribu/kuribu* (from *karābu*, "to bless, to pray"), which refers to a protective genus represented iconographically by sphinx-like composite figures, often human-headed bulls or lions with eagles' wings. Although often associated with temples,<sup>25</sup> these sculpted figures were not restricted to sacred space. Since they frequently appear supporting human thrones<sup>26</sup> and guarding royal palaces

<sup>22</sup> According to Donald J. Wiseman ("Abraham Reassessed," in *Essays on the Patriarchal Narratives* [ed. A. R. Millard and D. J. Wiseman; Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1980], 155 n. 31), הִתְהַלֵּךְ (*hiṭhallēk*) "denotes action according to the divine law expressed in judicial processes. Cf. 1 Sm 12:2; 25:15 and, referring to land tenure, Jo 18:4, 8; Jgs 21:24."

<sup>23</sup> See further below.

<sup>24</sup> Referring to sculptured images above the ark of the covenant (Ex 25:18–20; 37:7–9; Nm 7:89; 1 Chr 28:18), inside the Holy of Holies (1 Kgs 6:23–28, 8:6–7; 2 Chr 3:10–13), and beneath the massive sea (1 Kgs 7:29, 36); or decorations on the curtains of the tabernacle (Ex 26:1, 31; 36:8, 35; cf. 2 Chr 3:14, the veil of the temple) or the walls of the temple (1 Kgs 6:29, 32, 35; 2 Chr 3:7; Ez 41:18, 20, 25).

<sup>25</sup> According to Victor Avigdor Hurowitz, "YHWH's Exalted House—Aspects of the Design and Symbolism of Solomon's Temple," in *Temple and Worship in Biblical Israel* (ed. John Day; LHB/OTS 422; New York: T&T Clark, 2007), 87, "these cherubs were the private honor guard of the Temple's divine resident."

<sup>26</sup> E.g., the twelfth cent. B.C. cherub throne on the Megiddo Ivory; the sarcophagus carving of King Hiram of Byblos.

and gardens,<sup>27</sup> the presence of כְּרֻבִים (*kěrubîm*) in Gn 3:24 and Ez 28 does not establish the garden as a sanctuary.

Ezekiel 28:11–19 combines motifs from several different sources. Admittedly, Eden is characterized as הַר קֹדֶשׁ אֱלֹהִים (*har qōdeš ʿēlōhîm*), “the holy mountain of God,” and the pectoral decorated with gemstones recalls the Israelite high priest’s breastpiece. However, several factors argue against a primarily priestly interpretation. First, the determinative title for this figure is מֶלֶךְ (*mēlek*), “king” (28:12), and when he is identified otherwise, he is a כְּרוּב (*kěrûb*), whose role is fundamentally different from that of the כְּרֻבִים (*kěrubîm*) in Gn 3:24.<sup>28</sup> Rather than guarding the entrance to Eden, in a creative adaptation of Gn 2–3, he is the principal human figure inside the garden. Second, this figure is renowned not for his cultic role but for his wisdom, which the HB never associates with priests but overtly links with kingship.<sup>29</sup> Third, although the LXX obviously connects him with the high priest in Jerusalem, the MT seems to have weakened the association deliberately by reducing the number of gemstones to nine and presenting them in an order that differs significantly from Ex 28:17–20 and 39:10–13.<sup>30</sup> While ancient heads of state often combined royal and priestly functions, this person is cast primarily as a royal figure; he is characterized as the signet of perfection (חֹתֶם הַכְּנִיָּה, *hōtēm toknîṭ*), endowed with wisdom, perfect in beauty, and placed in the garden of God, apparently to govern it as God’s vice-regent. This figure has been specially created and anointed;<sup>31</sup> YHWH dressed him with the symbols of office (the multigemmed pectoral, v. 13),<sup>32</sup> placed him in the garden to guard it,<sup>33</sup> and authorized him to “walk back and forth (הִתְהַלֵּךְ; *hithallākētā*) among stones of fire” (v. 14) as YHWH had walked in the garden (Gn 3:8).

<sup>27</sup> E.g., the massive lamassus in front of Assyrian palaces: Ashurbanipal’s human-headed winged lions in the Metropolitan Museum of Art and Sargon II’s human-headed winged bulls in the British Museum.

<sup>28</sup> LXX’s μετὰ τοῦ χερουβ εἴθηκά σε (*meta tou cheroub ethēka se*), “With the cherub I placed you,” drops מִמְשַׁח הַסּוּכָה (*mimšah hassōkēk*) and distinguishes this figure from the cherub, apparently reading MT’s אַתְּ כְרוּב (*ʿat-kěrûb*), “you are a cherub,” as אַתְּ כְרוּב (*ʿet-kěrûb*).

<sup>29</sup> See further below.

<sup>30</sup> Similarly, Moshe Greenberg, *Ezekiel 21–37: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 22; New York: Doubleday, 1997), 582, and Bernard Gosse, “Ezéchiél 28,11–19 et les détournements de malédictions,” *BN* 44 (1988): 32.

<sup>31</sup> MT מִמְשַׁח (*mimšah*), from מָשַׁח (*mšḥ*), “to anoint.” While the textual evidence is admittedly weak, some follow Vg.’s *extentus*, “extended,” assuming מִשַׁח II, “to stretch out, measure,” hence “colossal.” See Stordalen, *Echoes of Eden*, 342; Greenberg, *Ezekiel 21–37*, 583–84. Alternatively, the reference could be to “outstretched [wings].”

<sup>32</sup> In the iconography of Egypt and Mesopotamia, pectorals are more often associated with royalty than with priests.

<sup>33</sup> On this interpretation of הַסּוּכָה (*hassōkēk*), see Block, *Ezekiel Chapters 25–48*, 100, 113.

Like Abraham, who was charged to “walk before” (הִתְהַלֵּךְ לְפָנַי; *hithallēk lēpānay*) YHWH and be blameless (תָּמִים; *tāmīm*, Gn 17:1), so this כְּרוֹב (כֶּרֶטֶב; *kērūb*) was blameless (תָּמִים; *tāmīm*) when he was installed as the guardian of the garden. The response of the כְּרוֹב (*kērūb*) to his commission reinforces this royal interpretation: like many kings, he amassed great wealth, became autocratic and violent in his rule, was arrogant and corrupt in his administration, and profaned the sanctuaries within the garden.<sup>34</sup> His demise was not caused by failure to perform priestly duties but by his failure as YHWH’s vice-regent and guardian of the garden.<sup>35</sup>

*The tree of life (Gn 2:9).* Although the tree of life in the garden probably inspired the shape of the menorah in the tabernacle (Ex 25:31–36), the context determines its function. The tree was situated in the midst of all sorts of beautiful fruit-bearing trees and juxtaposed with the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Whereas outside Israel sacred rituals often involved caring for and feeding the gods, this tree existed for the benefit of human beings and symbolized the divine will for them. Despite the absence of a word for “covenant,” Gn 2–3 seems to assume a suzerain-vassal covenantal relationship between YHWH and humankind. In an obviously preliterate world the two trees represented respectively the covenant blessings and curses (cf. Lv 26; Dt 28). Unlike the cosmic tree in extrabiblical iconography and mythology, apart from this symbolic significance the tree of life seems not to have served as the *axis mundi*, linking heaven and earth.

*YHWH’s charge to Adam “to serve and to keep” the garden (Gn 2:15).* Many scholars have argued that the combination of the verbs עָבַד (*ʿbd*), “to serve,” and שָׁמַר (*šmr*), “to keep, guard,” in association with the tabernacle<sup>36</sup> suggests that the role of human beings in the garden was analogous to that of Levites, in which case the garden would be a sanctuary. Just as priests and Levites served and guarded sacred space, so the man was charged to serve and guard the garden. However, the use of the verbs in Gn 2:15 seems to point in a different direction. Indeed, many transla-

<sup>34</sup>The plural form suggests these sanctuaries are distinct from the garden itself.

<sup>35</sup>Ezekiel’s association of a cherubic figure with Tyre is natural. Not only did Tyrian-style cherubs decorate Solomon’s temple (1 Kgs 6:23–36), but also they figure prominently in ancient Phoenician ivories, many of which were richly decorated with gemstones. Note especially the carving of a king-cherub, whose face appears to be the portrait of the king and under whose feet are seen alternating patterns of stylized tulip flower gardens and mountains in M. E. L. Mallowan, *Nimrud and Its Remains* (London: Collins, 1966), vol. 2, figs. 504; 506, 538; R. D. Barnett, *Ancient Ivories in the Middle East and Adjacent Countries* (Qedem 14; Jerusalem: Institute of Archaeology, 1982), fig. 51. For discussion, see R. D. Barnett, “Ezekiel and Tyre,” *Erlsr* 9 (1969): 9.

<sup>36</sup>Nm 3:7–8; 8:26; 18:5–6. See Wenham, *Genesis 1–15* (WBC 1; Waco, TX: Word, 1987), 67; Beale, *Temple*, 66–70; John H. Walton, *Genesis* (NIVAC; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001), 192–93.

tions render עֲבַד (*'bd*) as “till” or “cultivate,” which would be nonsensical in the tabernacle context.<sup>37</sup> But a garden (גַּן; *gan*) is more than soil; this one consists of vegetation of all kinds (2:9), rivers (2:10–14), precious metals and gemstones (2:12), and all kinds of creatures of land and sky (2:19–20). Strictly speaking, the verb “to serve” assumes the subordination of the subject of the verb to its object.<sup>38</sup> Indeed, both verbs, “to serve” and “to keep, guard,” demand that subjects expend their efforts in the interests of the object.<sup>39</sup> While the garden satisfied human aesthetic and utilitarian interests, the man was not placed in it merely to indulge himself with its resources. The purpose clause of v. 15 reverses the roles; he was placed in the garden to serve its interests and to guard it, presumably from inside and outside threats.

The text does not identify those threats. The earlier mandate to subdue and rule the earth (1:28) might suggest that the world outside the garden was “very good” (1:31), but it did not exhibit the *shalom* that characterized life within the garden.<sup>40</sup> It seems the man’s function was to protect the garden from the encroachment of violence outside. However, Gn 3 suggests the greatest threats were not outside but inside the garden, in the forms of a serpent and the first human pair. While the feminine suffixes on לְעִבְדָּהּ וּלְשָׂמְרָהּ (*l’ēbḏāh ûlšāmrah*) are problematic for any interpretation, they seem to relate to the nearest antecedent, גַּן־עֵדֶן (*gan-’ēden*), “the garden of Eden,” which as a place is conceptually feminine.<sup>41</sup> The reference to guarding in 3:24 does not alter the situation, since the object to be guarded is access (דֶּרֶךְ; *derek*) to the tree of life. Lacking other clear signals it is inappropriate to read back into this collocation cultic

<sup>37</sup> This may be appropriate when its object is הָאֲדָמָה (*hā’ādāmā*), “the ground”: Gn 2:5; 3:23; 4:2, 12; 2 Sm 9:10; Zec 13:5; Prv 12:11; 28:19. Cf. Tryggve N. D. Mettinger, *The Eden Narrative: A Literary and Religio-historical Study of Genesis 2–3* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2007), 13. But this use of עֲבַד (*'bd*) is curious and may imply that humans work the soil for the sake of the soil. The closest analogue to the present construction occurs in Dt 28:39, where כֶּרֶם (*kerem*), “vineyard,” is the object of this verb.

<sup>38</sup> Similarly, Terence E. Fretheim, *God and World in the Old Testament: A Relational Theology of Creation* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2005), 53.

<sup>39</sup> Rightly recognized by Steven Bouma-Prediger, *For the Beauty of the Earth: A Christian Vision for Creation Care* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2001), 74, 154.

<sup>40</sup> Christopher J. H. Wright, *Old Testament Ethics for the People of God* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004), 130–31, suggests the world outside was characterized by predation and death.

<sup>41</sup> While גַּן (*gan*) is always masculine elsewhere, here the gender of the suffix is influenced by its association with the toponym Eden, which is feminine. So also Claus Westermann, *Genesis 1–11: A Commentary* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1984), 184. Stordalen (*Echoes of Eden*, 460) objects, arguing that “the few instances implying a gender for עֵדֶן (*'ēden*) point rather to the masculine.” However, the only textually certain example he cites (Ps 36:9[8]) does not involve the place, and the other two involve conjectural readings and do not involve a toponym (Jer 31:34; 2 Sm 1:24).

significance derived from later texts (e.g., Nm 3:7–8; 8:26; 18:5–6). The conjunction of verbs עָבַד (*ʿbd*) and שָׁמַר (*šmr*) in association with the tabernacle suggests priestly functions were reminiscent of humankind’s role in the garden, but the reverse is unwarranted.

*The garments (כְּתָנֹת; kotnôṭ) of skin that YHWH provided for Adam and Eve (Gn 3:21).* The garments of skin offer no evidence for ascribing a priestly role to Adam. While כְּתָנֹת (*kotnôṭ*) is used of priestly garments,<sup>42</sup> the word often referred to the dress of lay persons<sup>43</sup> and seems to have been a common term for a shirt-like tunic.<sup>44</sup> Furthermore, since YHWH clothed both Adam and Eve, consistency demands that both should be viewed as priestly figures. However, this would run against the grain of the entire HB. Although women often functioned as prophets, and female priests were common outside Israel, the patricentric world of the HB had no room for women priests.<sup>45</sup>

*The river flowing out from Eden to water the garden (Gn 2:10–14).* Genesis 2:10–14 speaks of four rivers flowing from Eden to water the garden:

A river flowed out of Eden to water the garden, where it divided and became four rivers. The name of the first is the Pishon; it is the one that flowed around the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold. . . . The name of the second river is the Gihon; it is the one that flowed around the whole land of Cush. And the name of the third river is the Tigris, it is the one that flows east of Assyria. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.<sup>46</sup>

The image is intriguing, as though a fountain flows continuously from an elevated place in Eden into the garden, where it divides to water the four quadrants of the earth.<sup>47</sup> We hear clear echoes of this text in Ps 36:9[8]:

<sup>42</sup> Ex 28:4, 39–40; 29:5, 8; 39:27; 40:14; Lv 8:7, 13; 10:5; 16:4; Ezr 2:69; Neh 7:69, 71; Sir 45:8.

<sup>43</sup> Joseph (Gn 37:3, 23, 31–33), Hushai the Archite (2 Sm 15:32), Eliakim (Is 22:21), Job (Jb 30:18), of women (2 Sm 13:18–19; Sg 5:3).

<sup>44</sup> Twelfth-century B.C. Canaanite ivory carvings from Megiddo depict men in long-sleeved robes over colored tunics (כְּתָנֹת; *kotnôṭ*?), decorated in geometric designs. See <http://www.bible-archaeology.info/clothes.htm>.

<sup>45</sup> The root כָּהֵן (*khn*) never occurs in a feminine form, either as a noun or as a verb. The closest the HB comes is the word קֹדֶשֶׁת (*qēdēšā*), “holy woman” (Gn 38:21–22; Dt 23:18; Hos 4:14). However, these were not priestesses but illicit cult prostitutes (*HALOT*, 3:1075). Compare this with Phoenician and Punic *khnt*, which occurs often in the inscriptions (*DNWSI*, 490–91), and Akkadian *ēntu*, “high priestess” (*CAD* 4 [E], 172–73), which figures prominently in Mesopotamian religious texts.

<sup>46</sup> Translations throughout are the author’s own, unless otherwise stated.

<sup>47</sup> Dietrich (“Das biblische Paradies,” 308–17) identifies the Pishon with the River Karun, whose source is in the Zagros mountains (modern Iran); Gihon with the Kharkheh River, also originating in the Zagros mountains, northwest of the Karun; Hiddekel with the Tigris; and Perat with the Euphrates. These identifications suggest the rivers are listed in an east-west order. Others argue that the Pishon and Gihon were significant rivers in Saudi Arabia that dried up more than four millennia ago. See J. Sauer, “The River Runs Dry,” *BAR* 22/4 (1996): 52–57, 64.



They feast on the abundance of your house,  
 and you let them drink from the stream of your delights  
 [lit., “the stream of your Edens”].  
 For with you is the fountain of life;  
 by your light do we see light.

Several prophetic texts speak explicitly of a river flowing from a sanctuary and transforming the surrounding landscape into a veritable garden.<sup>48</sup> However, these texts modify the tradition, envisioning a single river, or in the case of Zec 14:8–11, two: one flowing eastward to the Dead Sea and the other westward to the Mediterranean.<sup>49</sup> While these images derive from Gn 2:10–14, without the later adaptation we would not think of looking for a sanctuary here.

*The reference to gold in the garden (Gn 2:12).* Both the tabernacle (Ex 25:11, 17, 24, 29, 36) and the temple (1 Kgs 6:20–22, 28, 30, 32, 35) were lavishly decorated with gold, in keeping with the surpassing glory of the divine resident. However, decorations and vessels of gold were not limited to temples. Along with a wealth of other luxury items, Solomon accumulated vast amounts of gold through gifts from allies, tribute from vassal states, and international trade.<sup>50</sup> The gold in Gn 2:12 offers no reason to equate Eden with the temple.

*The precious stones, בְּדֹלָה (bēḏōlah) and שֹׁהַם (šōham) (Gn 2:12).* The first word occurs elsewhere only in Nm 11:7, which compares the appearance of manna with בְּדֹלָה (bēḏōlah), generally translated “bdellium.” The quadrilateral form suggests this is a loan word, cognate to Akkadian *budulhu*, which one text associates with bronze but others link with aromatic gum.<sup>51</sup> Apart from the fact that בְּדֹלָה (bēḏōlah) probably does not

<sup>48</sup>Ez 47:1–12; Zec 14:8–11; Jl 4:18, 20–21[3:18, 20–21]; cf. Rv 22:1–2. See also Ps 46:4–5: “There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy habitation of the Most High. God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved; God will help her when morning dawns” (ESV).

<sup>49</sup>The closest analogue to the four rivers of Gn 2:10–14 is found on an Assyrian ivory carving portraying a mountain deity holding a vessel from which four streams of water flow in four different directions. See Othmar Keel, *The Symbolism of the Biblical World: Ancient Near Eastern Iconography and the Book of Psalms* (trans. T. J. Hallett; New York: Seabury, 1978), 118, fig. 153a. For discussion, see Dietrich, “Das biblische Paradies,” 317–20; Larry Stager, “Jerusalem as Eden,” *BAR* 26/3 (2000): 40–42. The traditions behind this image and the biblical tradition may derive from a common source.

<sup>50</sup>For a description of Solomon’s gold, see 1 Kgs 10:2–25. On the historical plausibility of these accounts, see Alan R. Millard, “King Solomon’s Gold: Biblical Records in the Light of Antiquity,” *Society for Mesopotamian Studies Bulletin* 15 (1988): 5–18; Millard, “King Solomon in His Ancient Context,” in *The Age of Solomon: Scholarship at the Turn of the Millennium* (ed. L. K. Handy; SHCANE 11; Leiden: Brill, 1997), 30–53.

<sup>51</sup>CAD 2 (B), 305–6. The Hebrew word probably refers to the odoriferous, yellowish, transparent gum of a South Arabian tree, *Commiphora mukul*. See further Ute Neumann-Gorsolke, “Bedolachharz,” *Das Bibellexikon*, January 2006,

refer to a precious stone, the absence of this term from descriptions of both the breastpiece of Israel's high priest (Ex 28:17–20; 39:10–13) and the pectoral of the king of Tyre (Ez 28:13) eliminates a link with the tabernacle or the temple. The second word, שֹׁהַם (*šōham*), is more promising<sup>52</sup> because this word is associated with both the priestly vestments and the pectoral of Ezekiel's king of Tyre. Although the word occurs eight times in these descriptions,<sup>53</sup> שֹׁהַם (*šōham*) does not in principle bear priestly overtones. Job 28:15–19, a nonpriestly text, includes this item along with other precious commodities: gold of Ophir, sapphire, glass, jewels of fine gold, coral, crystal, pearls, and topaz. The reference to this gemstone in Gn 2:12 suggests no more than that this is a fabulous garden, analogous perhaps to the garden in Tablet IX of the Epic of Gilgamesh, which has trees bearing carnelian (*sāmtu*) and lapis lazuli as fruit<sup>54</sup> and is located at the mythic border between the human and supernatural world.<sup>55</sup> The garden of Eden was indeed a luxurious place, separated from the everyday world,<sup>56</sup> but this did not make it a temple.

*The lush arboreal imagery (Gn 2:9, 16–17).* Genesis 2–3 designates the space in Eden a garden (גַּן; *gan*) thirteen times.<sup>57</sup> The expression denotes fundamentally an (enclosed?) field, cultivated to produce either fruit or vegetables.<sup>58</sup> Like Hebrew פָּרְדֵּס (*pardēs*) in Eccl 2:5 and Sg 4:13, LXX's rendering of the term as παράδεισος (*paradeisos*, from Persian *pairidaēza*) rightly recognizes this space not simply as a plot that provides vegetables for a household but as a “park,” perhaps even a royal garden.<sup>59</sup> Its location in Eden reinforces this impression. Whereas in the past Hebrew עֵדֵן (*ēden*) was associated with Sumerian *edinu*, “plain, steppe,” its derivation from a root *dn*, “to enrich, to give abundance,” apparently because of access to abundant water, is now assured.<sup>60</sup> Ancient temples were often surrounded by gardens, and the gardens were thought to yield their fruit in response

<http://www.bibelwissenschaft.de/nc/wiblex/das-bibellexikon/details/quelle/WIBI/zeichen/b/referenz/10445/cache/bd8dbd8e00030e0d2b6901000fbdae2a/>; Manfred Görg, “Bdlh (‘Bdellium’): zur Etymologie,” *BN* 48 (1989): 12–16.

<sup>52</sup>Most translations render שֹׁהַם (*šōham*) as onyx, but it is probably cognate to Akkadian *sāmtu*, “carnelian,” a red gemstone. So also *HALOT*, 4:1424. On the Akkadian word, see *CAD* 15 (S), 121–24.

<sup>53</sup>For the former, generally Ex 25:7; one on the breastpiece representing one of the twelve tribes (25:7; 28:20, 35:9, 27; 39:13), and two on the ephod, each inscribed with the names of six tribes (28:9; 39:6); for the latter, see Ez 28:13.

<sup>54</sup>*ANET*, 89; *CAD* 15 (S), 124.

<sup>55</sup>Thus Stordalen, *Echoes of Eden*, 161.

<sup>56</sup>Stordalen, *Echoes of Eden*, 286.

<sup>57</sup>Gn 2:8, 9, 10, 15, 16; 3:1, 2, 3, 8a, 8b, 10, 23, 24; see also 13:10.

<sup>58</sup>*HALOT*, 1:198.

<sup>59</sup>Like *pardēsu* in Akkadian. *CAD* 12 (P), 182. On royal gardens, see further, Dietrich, “Das biblische Paradies,” 287–90; K. Gleason, “Gardens in Preclassical Times,” *OEANE* 2:383.

<sup>60</sup>For discussion, see Stordalen, *Echoes of Eden*, 257–61; also Alan R. Millard, “The Etymology of Eden,” *VT* 34 (1984): 103–6.



to divine forces, but the gardens themselves were not the sanctuary. Cornelius declared rightly that “theologically the garden of Eden represented the blissful state lost by humankind (Gen 3).”<sup>61</sup> Exhibiting features of ancient royal gardens (cf. Eccl 2:5),<sup>62</sup> this one was planned and planted by YHWH, the divine king, who committed it to the care of his vice-regent with the charge, “Serve it and guard it” (Gn 2:15).

*The garden as a mountain.* While the downward flow of the rivers of this garden in four directions suggests an elevated source, the absence of explicit reference to a mountain is striking. Either this text was composed before Mount Zion had been identified as YHWH’s permanent residence (Dt 12:5, 11; Ps 132:13–16), or the author intentionally suppressed linkage of the garden with the sanctuary, perhaps to prevent association with Baal’s residence on Şaphan.<sup>63</sup> Equally striking is the narrator’s avoidance of any hint that YHWH may dwell at the source of the rivers, comparable to El’s residence “at the headwaters of the two rivers, at the confluence of the deeps” in Ugaritic mythology.<sup>64</sup>

*Wisdom and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Gn 2:9; 3:6).* As noted earlier, while the HB never associates wisdom with the priesthood, its significance for kingship is explicitly declared in Prv 8:12–21 (especially vv. 15–16) and dramatically illustrated in Solomon’s prayer as king in 1 Kgs 3:6–9 and the answer to that prayer in 1 Kgs 3:10–5:13[4:34].<sup>65</sup> Solomon’s plea for wisdom to discern between “good” (טוב; *tôb*) and “evil” (רע; *raʿ*; 3:9) echoes Gn 2:9 and 3:5–6, but note especially the people’s response to his rule: “they stood in awe of the king, because

<sup>61</sup>I. Cornelius, “יָד,” *NIDOTTE* 1:876. While I question Cornelius’s anthropocentric view of the garden, he adds significantly, “[t]he garden of Gen 2 was created for the human race (vv. 8, 15), not for God, although he strolled through it (3:8).”

<sup>62</sup>On ancient royal gardens and Adam’s role as gardener, see Callender, *Adam in Myth and History*, 59–65; Manfred Hutter, “Adam als Gärtner und König (Gen 2:8,15),” *BZ* 30 (1986): 258–62. According to Dietrich (“Das biblische Paradies,” 301), “Der Mensch wurde . . . erschaffen, um als Handlanger Gottes die Pflege des Paradieses zu übernehmen.” For a helpful illustration of the relationships among the king, a secure source of water, and a royal garden, based on the sculptured relief from Ashurbanipal’s North Palace at Nineveh, see fig. 89 by Paul Goodhead, in *Babylon: Myth and Reality* (ed. I. L. Finkel and M. J. Seymour; London: British Museum Press, 2008), 111.

<sup>63</sup>On the Israelite temple as an architectural embodiment of the cosmic mountain, see Lundquist, “What Is a Temple?” 207–8.

<sup>64</sup>RS 24.244, as translated by Pierre Bordreuil and Dennis Pardee, in *A Manual of Ugaritic* (Linguistic Studies in Ancient West Semitic 3; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2009), 187. The link with the thirteenth-cent. B.C. ivory inlay from Aššur, portraying the mountain god framed by two trees and two “cherubim” (winged bulls) and holding a vase from which four streams of water flow out to four vessels, is even more tenuous. Cf. See Stager, “Jerusalem as Eden,” 41.

<sup>65</sup>On the link between wisdom and rule, see also Gn 41:33, 39; Dt 1:13–15; 16:19; 2 Sm 14:17, 20; Is 11:2–3.

they recognized that the wisdom of God was in him to administer justice” (1 Kgs 3:28). Ezekiel 28 portrays the king of Tyre as a royal figure renowned for both his wisdom (28:2–5, 12) and his hubris—he claimed to have achieved that for which Adam was expelled from the garden (28:2–6; cf. Gn 3:5–6). However, the context seems to envision Adam as having possessed all the wisdom needed to fulfill his role as image of God without eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (28:12–15).<sup>66</sup> To associate the wisdom motif with the law stored inside the Holy of Holies and eating the forbidden fruit with touching the ark<sup>67</sup> is farfetched and anachronistic, unless we assume a Persian date for the authorship of Gn 2–3.

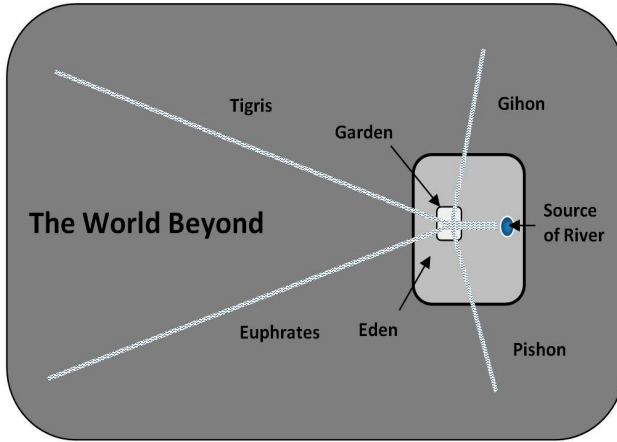
*The eastern entrance to the garden (Gn 3:24).* The gate to the garden may have been located in the east, but the narrator does not speak of the entrance to the garden, either here or in the preceding description. He says simply that the garden was “in Eden in the east” (2:8).<sup>68</sup> If the guardian cherubs were stationed at the gate, Gn 3:24 has suppressed this fact; their primary function was to prevent access to the tree of life. That later sanctuary designs had entrances to the east may reflect a tradition that the gate to the garden was to the east, but the narrator of Gn 2–3 neither anticipated nor reflected those designs.

*The tripartite structure of the garden (Gn 2:8–15).* Read superficially, Gn 2:8–15 may suggest a three-tiered environment. However, the relationship between Eden and the garden is uncertain. Since YHWH “planted a garden toward the east, in Eden” (v. 8) and the river flowed from Eden to water the garden (vv. 10–14), Eden seems to have been larger than the garden, and if any part is to be associated with the Holy of Holies, it would be the garden. Although the luxurious features of the landscape were concentrated in the garden, the name Eden, “land of bliss,” suggests that the surrounding space was also desirable. However, as noted earlier, the verb שָׁמַר (*šmr*) in v. 15 implies that the garden needed to be protected from outside threats, in which case the territory around the garden functioned as a buffer zone between the wider world that needed to be subdued and governed (1:28) and the garden itself. We may reconstruct the scene schematically as follows.

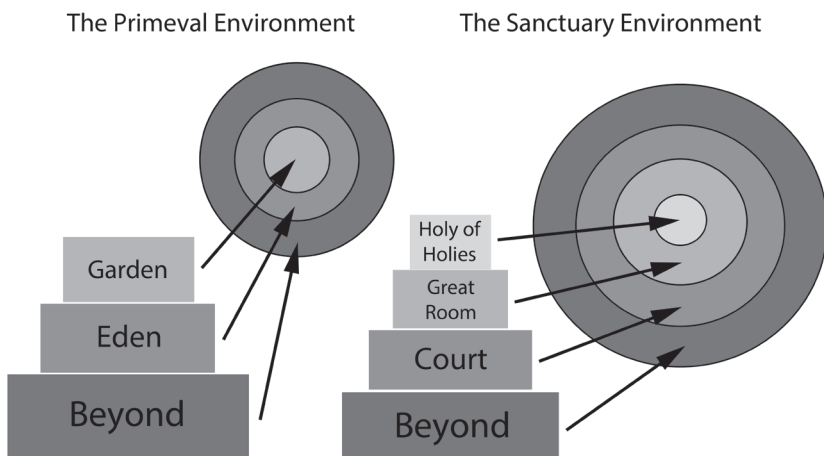
<sup>66</sup>From outside the HB, Stordalen (*Echoes of Eden*, 462) cites the characterization of Enkidu as “wise as a god” (*ANET*, 75). However, Andrew George’s more recent translation (*The Epic of Gilgamesh: A New Translation* [London: Penguin, 1999], 8) translates the sentence, “You are handsome, Enkidu, you are just like a god!”

<sup>67</sup>Thus Wenham, “Sanctuary Symbolism,” 402–3. According to Stordalen (*Echoes of Eden*, 461), the tree of life serves as a conventional symbol for either תּוֹרָה (*tōrā*), which he translates as “Law,” or חֵכְמָה (*hokmā*), “wisdom.”

<sup>68</sup>Heb. מִקְדָּם (*miqqedem*), literally “from the east,” i.e., as part of the eastern landscape. On the construction, see Westermann, *Genesis 1–11*, 184.



At first glance the three-tiered structure seems analogous to the structure of the tabernacle/temple environment. However, in the latter the sequence of concentric circles involves four tiers. More significantly, while it is possible these spheres represent increasing degrees of sanctity as one moves from the outside in, this does not render the entire structure a temple, unless a temple is defined more generally as “sacred space” rather than “the house/residence of the deity.”<sup>69</sup> Furthermore, inasmuch as the garden was located in Eden (Gn 2:8), the “Eden-temple” interpretation reverses the prevailing relationship between temples and gardens; normally, temples (the *adytum* specifically) represented the most sacred spaces and sacred gardens surrounded the temples, rather than vice versa.



<sup>69</sup> See further below.

### *The Creation Narrative (Gn 1:1–2:4a)*

Scholars have noticed numerous links between the tabernacle and the creation of the cosmos: (1) corresponding to the six days of creation marked by divine speech (“And God said”), the instructions for the tabernacle involved seven speeches, each introduced with “And YHWH spoke/said to Moses”;<sup>70</sup> (2) six speeches deal with creative activity and the seventh with the Sabbath, which is explicitly grounded in creation (Gn 31:12–17); (3) the reference to “seasons” (מוֹעֲדִים; *mô‘ăḏîm*) in Gn 1:14 uses the expression applied to Israel’s cultic festivals;<sup>71</sup> (4) both end with a reference to YHWH “finishing” (בלה; *klh*) his instructions for the new creation (Gn 2:1; Ex 31:18); (5) the seven lights of the menorah (Ex 25:31–40) recall the seven days of creation; (6) Lv 19:30 and 26:2 explicitly link the tabernacle with sabbaths: “You shall keep my sabbaths and revere my sanctuary; I am YHWH”; (7) the erection of the tabernacle on New Year’s Day (Ex 40:2, 17) signals a new creation and the beginning of a new era in cosmic history; and (8) the symmetry and proportion in the design of the tabernacle reflect the symmetry and order built into the universe.<sup>72</sup>

The prominence of the number seven in the account of the later construction of the temple seems also to link this project intentionally with the creation accounts in Genesis: (1) the temple was seven years in construction (1 Kgs 6:38); (2) it was dedicated in the seventh month at Sukkoth (Festival of Booths), a seven-day observance (1 Kgs 8:2); and (3) Solomon’s dedicatory prayer includes seven petitions (1 Kgs 8:31–53). Levenson concludes that creation and temple building were “congeneric” and that the cosmos itself is considered a temple.<sup>73</sup> He sees this interpretation reinforced by the declaration of the seraphim in Is 6:3: “YHWH Sebaoth is holy, holy, holy! His glory is the fullness of the whole earth.”<sup>74</sup> Based on these links it is tempting to conclude that “creation in Genesis 1 uses the language of temple-building.”<sup>75</sup> That extrabiblical accounts of

<sup>70</sup> Ex 25:1; 30:11, 17, 22, 34; 31:1, 12.

<sup>71</sup> Nm 10:10; 15:3; 29:39; Is 1:14; Ez 36:38; 46:9, 11; Neh 10:34; 1 Chr 23:31; 2 Chr 8:13; 31:3.

<sup>72</sup> We also hear verbal allusions to Genesis in the account of the construction of the tabernacle. Compare Ex 39:32 and Gn 2:1; Ex 39:43 and Gn 1:31; Ex 40:33 and Gn 2:2.

<sup>73</sup> Levenson, “The Temple and the World,” 286–89. Others speak of the relationship between the cosmos and the temple as being homologous: “the cosmos is a temple; the temple is the cosmos.” See Walton, *Genesis 1 as Ancient Cosmology*, 109, 178.

<sup>74</sup> The Heb. reads, קָדוֹשׁ קָדוֹשׁ קָדוֹשׁ יְהוָה יְבָאוֹת קֹלָא כְּלֵהֲאָרֶץ כְּבוֹדוֹ (*qāḏōš qāḏōš qāḏōš yhw̄h šēḇā’ōt mēlō’ kol-hā’āreš kēḇōḏō*).

<sup>75</sup> Mark S. Smith, *The Ugaritic Baal Cycle*, vol. 1: *Introduction with Text, Translation, and Commentary of KTU 1.1–1.2* (Leiden: Brill, 1994), 78; Beale, *Temple*, 60–63; cf. Walton, *Genesis 1 as Ancient Cosmology*, 181; claiming the support of Victor Avigdor Hurowitz, “I have built you an exalted house”: *Temple Building in the*

cosmic creation follow divine defeat of chaos and creation of the world with divine rest in their temples appears to reinforce this interpretation.<sup>76</sup>

However, this understanding of the cosmos generally as a temple suffers from the same weaknesses as the interpretation of Eden in particular as a temple. When interpreting Genesis extrabiblical analogues should be used with caution. *Enuma Elish*'s association of the defeat of chaos with cosmic creation and the construction of a temple for the gods (including Marduk) has no parallel in Gn 1. The biblical text says nothing about chaotic forces resisting the work of God, let alone of a divine defeat of chaos.<sup>77</sup> Whereas extrabiblical texts speak of gods resting in the temples that have just been built,<sup>78</sup> neither Gn 2:2–3 nor any texts that look back on this moment (Ex 20:11; 31:17) has God dwelling in the structure just constructed. Rather, figuratively speaking, having completed the work of creation he will have retreated to his heavenly throne room. Although Ex 31:17 speaks anthropomorphically of YHWH “catching his breath”<sup>79</sup> and Ex 20:11 of him resting (נוח; *nwh*), the Genesis account speaks only of cessation of divine work. Technically, the Hebrew verb, שבת (*šbt*), does not mean “to rest” but “to cease.” In the words of the narrator, “God ceased from his entire project, that is, what he had created by his actions,”<sup>80</sup> because the project was finished (כלה; *klh*) on the sixth day (v. 2).

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*Bible in the Light of Mesopotamian and Northwest Semitic Writings* (JSOTSup 115; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1992), 242. However, in fairness, in this context Hurowitz does not explicitly speak of creation as temple building; he speaks more generally of “the world as a building, the Creation as an act of building, and the Creator as a wise, knowledgeable and discerning architect.” On the construction of the temple after Marduk’s defeat of Tiamat, see Janowski, “Himmel auf Erden,” 238–42.

<sup>76</sup>Beale, *Temple*, 60–66; Walton, *Genesis 1 as Ancient Cosmology*, 178–84; Moshe Weinfeld, “Sabbath, Temple, and the Enthronement of the Lord—The Problem of the Sitz im Leben of Genesis 1:1–2:3,” in *Mélanges bibliques et orientaux en l’honneur de M. Henri Cazelles* (ed. A. Caquot and M. Delcor; AOAT 212; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag/Butzon & Bercker Kevelaer, 1981), 507–8. For extrabiblical evidence for the link between temple building and divine rest, see Hurowitz, “I have built you an exalted house,” 330–31.

<sup>77</sup>Opposition to the divine work does not surface explicitly until Gn 3. So also Richard Averbeck, “Ancient Near Eastern Mythography as It Relates to Historiography in the Hebrew Bible: Genesis 3 and the Cosmic Battle,” in *The Future of Biblical Archaeology: Reassessing Methodologies and Assumptions* (ed. J. K. Hoffmeier and A. R. Millard; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004), 344–51. If the origins of “the world of tooth and claw” outside the garden is to be linked with a revolt of Satan and his minions against God, this might be located between the creation of the animals and humankind in Gn 1:25–26, but this motif is totally suppressed.

<sup>78</sup>For example, Ningirsu rests in the temple that Gudea of Lagash built for him in Gudea Cylinder B, xiv 21–24.

<sup>79</sup>Heb. וַיִּנָּפֵשׁ (*wayyinnāpaš*). Cf. Ex 23:12 and 2 Sm 16:14, which speak of humans and draft/pack animals catching their breath.

<sup>80</sup>Heb. שָׁבַת מִכָּל-מְלַאכְתּוֹ וַאֲשֶׁר-בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים לַעֲשׂוֹת (*šābat mikkol-mēla’ktō ’āšer-bārā ’ēlōhīm la’āšôt*).

When later texts speak of YHWH resting they are less concerned with the creation of the cosmos than with Zion theology, which views the temple in Jerusalem to be his dwelling place. Isaiah 66:1–2 is particularly notable:

Thus says YHWH:

Heaven is my throne  
 and the earth is my footstool;  
 where is the house that you will build for me,  
 and where will my resting place (מְנוּחָיִי; *māqôm mēnûhāîf*) be?  
 All these things my hand has made,  
 and thus they came to be,  
 The declaration of YHWH.

Rather than referring to a cosmos-sized temple,<sup>81</sup> v. 1 speaks merismically of the cosmos (“heaven and earth”) as the realm over which YHWH rules. If anything, the cosmos is contrasted with the earthly temple that humans build as a place for this extra-cosmic deity’s dwelling<sup>82</sup> and from which peace and well-being may radiate out to the world. The psalmist had this image in mind in Ps 132:7–8 and 13–14:

Let us go to his dwelling place (לְמִשְׁכַּן־יְהוָה; *lēmīškēnôṭāyw*);  
 let us fall down at his footstool!  
 Arise, O YHWH, and go to your resting place (לְמִנְחָתְךָ; *limnûhāîtekā*),  
 you and your mighty ark.

For YHWH has chosen Zion;  
 he has desired it for his dwelling (מוֹשָׁב; *môšāb*):  
 This is my resting place (מְנוּחָיִי; *mēnûhāîf*) forever;  
 here I will dwell (אֶשְׁבֵּ; *’ēšēb*), for I have desired it.

As for Is 6:3, rather than declaring, “The world in its fullness is the temple,”<sup>83</sup> the seraphim acknowledge that YHWH’s holiness is concentrated in the temple. Like the psalmist in Ps 19:2[1], they declare that YHWH’s glory is imprinted in all that he has created.<sup>84</sup>

In my response to reading Gn 1–3 as temple-building texts, I have hinted at the fundamental hermeneutical problem involved in this ap-

<sup>81</sup> Thus Walton, *Genesis 1 as Ancient Cosmology*, 179.

<sup>82</sup> The noun מְנוּחָה (*mēnûhā*), “resting place,” may denote a place where people rest and recover from their weariness (e.g., Is 28:12), but it usually refers to a secure retreat/base in the midst of a chaotic and threatening world. In the threatening desert YHWH went before the people seeking safe resting places for his people (Nm 10:33); the land of Canaan became the Israelites’ resting place once the Canaanites had been defeated (Dt 12:9; 1 Kgs 8:56; cf. Is 32:18); Damascus as the security for Hadrach (Zec 9:1); a personal place of quiet (Ru 1:9; Ps 23:2; Mi 2:8–10); the temple as YHWH’s secure base (Is 66:1; Ps 132:8, 14); and a place of security for his people (Ps 95:11).

<sup>83</sup> Contra Levenson, “The Temple and the World,” 296.

<sup>84</sup> Cf. Rom 1:20.

proach. The question is, should we read Gn 1–3 in the light of later texts, or should we read later texts in the light of these? If we read the accounts in the order given, then the creation account provides essential background to the primeval history, which provides background for the patriarchal, exodus, and tabernacle narratives. By themselves and by this reading the accounts of Gn 1–3 offer no clues that a cosmic or Edenic temple might be involved. However, as noted above, the Edenic features of the tabernacle, the Jerusalem temple, and the temple envisioned by Ezekiel<sup>85</sup> are obvious.<sup>86</sup> Apparently their design and function intended to capture something of the original creation, perhaps even to represent in miniature the original environment in which human beings were placed. However, the fact that Israel's sanctuaries were Edenic does not make Eden into a sacred shrine. At best this is a nonreciprocating equation.

### The Nature and Function of Temples in the HB and in the ANE

This assessment of interpretations that view Gn 1–3 as temple-building texts is reinforced by a conceptual consideration of the function of temples in the ANE. However, before we consider ancient understandings of “temple,” we should reflect on modern understandings. The popular view, that a temple is “a building for religious practice,”<sup>87</sup> is problematic on two counts. First, although Gn 1 contains vocabulary that could be construed architecturally (e.g., רָקִיעַ; *rāqīaʿ*), it lacks explicit “architectural” cosmic features found elsewhere.<sup>88</sup> Second, whether or not one accepts that the world was created as a home for all creatures and that humankind was placed here to care for the earth in the interest of all its inhabitants, it is doubtful that the human activities mandated in Gn 1:26–28 and 2:15 represent “religious practice,” especially if “religious

<sup>85</sup> Note especially the river that flows from the temple and transforms the landscape to Edenic lushness (Ez 47:1–12); similarly Zec 14:8–11; Jl 4:18, 20–21 [3:18, 20–21]. See further Fishbane, “The ‘Eden’ Motif,” 118–20.

<sup>86</sup> See esp. Stordalen, *Echoes of Eden*, 307–10; Stager, “Jerusalem as Eden,” 36–47; Stager, “Jerusalem and the Garden of Eden,” in *ErIsr* 26 (ed. B. A. Levine et al.; Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, Hebrew University, Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, 1999), 183–94; Bloch-Smith, “Solomon’s Temple,” 83–94 (88), who characterizes the temple in Jerusalem as a “virtual garden of Eden”; Bloch-Smith, “Who Is the King of Glory?” 18–31; Fishbane, “The ‘Eden’ Motif,” 111–20.

<sup>87</sup> The first definition in the latest edition of Merriam-Webster, accessible at <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/temple>.

<sup>88</sup> E.g., “windows” (רָבָת; *ʾarubbāt*) of heaven (Gn 7:11; 8:2; Is 24:18; Mal 3:10), “foundations” (מוֹסְדוֹת; *mōsēdōt*) of the earth/heaven (2 Sm 22:8; Is 24:18; Jer 31:37; Mi 6:2; Ps 82:5; Prv 8:29); “pillars” (מְצָקִים; *mēšsuqīm*) of the earth/heaven (1 Sm 2:8; Jb 9:6; 26:11; Ps 75:4[3]).



practice” means liturgical actions performed in a cultic context before a deity. There is nothing overtly cultic or even religious about being fruitful, filling and subduing the earth, and ruling over the creatures (1:29), or serving and guarding the garden (2:15)<sup>89</sup>—unless one redefines “religious practice” more broadly as “reverential performance of one’s duties in honor of a deity.” However, this definition requires no building.

To interpret the cosmos or Eden as a temple becomes even less likely if one follows the more restricted definition of temples represented in the *Oxford English Dictionary*: “An edifice or place regarded primarily as the dwelling-place or ‘house’ of a deity or deities; hence, an edifice devoted to divine worship.”<sup>90</sup> The narratives of Gn 1–3 are silent on either the earth or Eden as a dwelling place for God, and they are silent on divine worship, if the latter means veneration of a divine being “with appropriate acts, rites, or ceremonies.”<sup>91</sup> A broader definition of “worship” as “reverential actions of homage in honor of a deity” could include the actions mandated in Gn 1:26–28 and 2:15, but again, the performance of these tasks requires no temple.

Finally, one could define a temple vaguely as “sacred space marked by the presence of deity.”<sup>92</sup> We may indeed view the world as originally created and Eden in particular as sacred space, space that has been desecrated by human sin. In a sense, God is everywhere, and everything God touches is holy. However, this does not mean that either the cosmos or Eden was a temple, any more than calling the land of Israel “the holy land” (גְּבוּל קְדֻשׁוֹ; *gēbūl qodšō*, Ps 78:54; אֲדַמַת הַקֶּדֶשׁ; *ʾadmat haqqōdeš*, Zec 2:16[12]) makes it a temple. Furthermore, rather than emphasizing divine presence in the cosmos or Eden, and in contrast to pantheistic and panentheistic perspectives of many ancients, Gn 1–3 highlights God’s separation from the created world. Apparently the first humans did not eat the forbidden fruit in the direct presence of God; the fact that his arrival in the garden in the evening caused them to hide cautions against interpreting הִתְהַלֵּךְ (*hiṭhallēk*) in Gn 3:8 in a durative sense.

In the end, we must read Gn 1–3 not through the lenses of modern views of temple but within the text’s ancient conceptual environment. Unlike Christian sanctuaries, which are often designed to satisfy the interests of worshipers, the primary function of ancient temples was to provide an earthly residence for the deity (Pss 84:2, 3, 5, 8[1, 2, 4, 7];

<sup>89</sup>This interpretation is rendered even less likely by Gn 2:5 and 3:5, which speak of the man “serving the land” (לְעַבֵּד אֶת־הָאֲדָמָה; *laʿābōd ʿet-hāʾādāmā*).

<sup>90</sup>Accessible at <http://www.oed.com/search?searchType=dictionary&q=temple&searchBtn=Search>.

<sup>91</sup>Note the full definition of the *Oxford English Dictionary*: “To honour or revere as a supernatural being or power, or as a holy thing; to regard or approach with veneration; to adore with appropriate acts, rites, or ceremonies.” Accessed at <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/230346?rskey=XZXVff&result=2#eid>.

<sup>92</sup>John Walton, in private conversation.



132:13–14).<sup>93</sup> This meant that when devout Israelites made pilgrimages to the temple, they knew they were in God’s real, immediate presence.<sup>94</sup> Outside Israel people celebrated the completion of a temple construction project by bringing images of the deities into their cellae, where they could rest and from where their rule would extend throughout the land. Similar principles applied to Israelite temples. The tabernacle, a portable temple, was designed by YHWH himself (Ex 25:1–31:11). After inspired Israelite craftsmen, supervised by Bezalel (Ex 35:30–36:8), had produced the components needed for the structure, and Moses had assembled the prefabricated materials and installed the ark of the covenant inside the *adytum* (40:18–33), the cloud—the symbol of YHWH’s presence—covered the tabernacle and his *כְּבוֹד* (*kābôḏ*) filled the building. No human transported YHWH into his palace; he entered of his own free will and in his own time.

The phenomenon was repeated when Solomon had completed the temple project in Jerusalem. Having installed the ark of the covenant in the Holy of Holies, as soon as the priests emerged from the sanctuary, the *כְּבוֹד* (*kābôḏ*) of YHWH filled the building, whereupon Solomon declared, “I have built you an exalted house, a place for you to dwell in perpetuity” (1 Kgs 8:13). Psalm 132:7–8 and 13–14 (cited above) declare unequivocally the eternity of YHWH’s choice of Zion as his dwelling place. The destruction of the temple in 586 B.C. cast doubts on the veracity of YHWH’s word.<sup>95</sup> However, in Ez 43:1–12 the exiled prophetic priest observes the return of the *כְּבוֹד* (*kābôḏ*) and hears the divine voice affirming the temple as “the place of my throne [מְקוֹם כִּסְאִי; *məqôm kis’î*], and the place for the soles of my feet [מְקוֹם כַּפּוֹת רַגְלֵי; *məqôm kappôṭ raglay*], where I will dwell [אֶשְׁכֵּן; *’eškān*] in the midst of the descendants of Israel forever” (v. 7). A generation later, after the reconstruction of the temple, the failure of the *כְּבוֹד* (*kābôḏ*) to reappear caused the community of returned exiles to despair, necessitating YHWH Sebaoth’s reassurance: “I will shake all the nations, so that the treasure of all nations shall come, and I will fill this house with *כְּבוֹד* [*kābôḏ*]. . . . Indeed the latter *כְּבוֹד* [*kābôḏ*] of this house will be greater than the former” (Hg 2:7, 9).<sup>96</sup>

<sup>93</sup> Cf. Hurowitz, “YHWH’s Exalted House,” 96–101. On the archaeological evidence for the nature and function of ancient Syro-Palestinian temples, see Beth Alpert Nakhai, “Syro-Palestinian Temples,” *OEANE* 5:169–74.

<sup>94</sup> See further Ian Wilson, *Out of the Midst of the Fire: Divine Presence in Deuteronomy* (SBLDS 151; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1995).

<sup>95</sup> Cf. Ezekiel’s vision of the departure of the *כְּבוֹד* (*kābôḏ*) in Ez 8–11.

<sup>96</sup> Many understand the rending of the curtain in Herod’s temple when Jesus was crucified (Mt 27:51; Mk 15:38; Lk 23:45) to signal the end of the old sacrificial order—even though Christians continued to worship in the temple after the death of Christ (Acts 2:46; 3:1–10; 21:26–30; 22:17). However, we may also interpret the event as exposing the sanctuary’s lack of integrity; having been constructed by a pagan for political reasons, it never received the divine seal of approval and the *כְּבוֹד* (*kābôḏ*) never returned.

The opening chapters of Genesis lack any hints of these notions. God does not create the world because he is homeless or needs a place for his throne. His real residence is in heaven, as the Torah, the Psalter, and the Prophets declare:

Look down from your holy habitation (מִמְעֹן קִדְשְׁךָ; *mimmēʿōn qodsšēkā*), from heaven [מִן־הַשָּׁמַיִם; *min-haššāmayim*], and bless your people Israel and the ground that you have given us, as you swore to our ancestors—a land flowing with milk and honey. (Dt 26:15 NRSV)

Turn again, O God of hosts; look down from heaven [מִשָּׁמַיִם; *miššāmayim*], and see; have regard for this vine. (Ps 80:15[14] NRSV)

Look down from heaven [מִשָּׁמַיִם; *miššāmayim*] and see, from your holy and glorious habitation [מִזְבֵּל קִדְשְׁךָ וְתַפְאֵרְתְּךָ; *mizzēbul qodsšēkā wētīpʾartekā*]. Where are your zeal and your might? The yearning of your heart and your compassion? (Is 63:15 NRSV)

At the dedication of the temple, after asking, “Will God actually reside with humankind on earth?” (2 Chr 6:18; cf. 1 Kgs 8:27), Solomon recognized where YHWH’s true dwelling place is: “When they pray to this place, listen from your residence, from heaven.”<sup>97</sup> References to YHWH’s heavenly throne reinforce this notion:

YHWH is in his holy temple [בְּהֵיכַל קִדְשׁוֹ; *bēhēkal qodsšō*]; YHWH—in heaven is his throne. (Ps 11:4)

YHWH has established his throne in the heavens, and his kingdom rules over all. (Ps 103:19)

Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool;  
what is the house that you would build for me,  
and what is the place of my rest? (Is 66:1)

Whatever God’s reason for creating the world, it was not to provide a home for himself. As suggested earlier, the reference to YHWH walking about (הִתְהַלֵּךְ; *hithallēk*) in the garden (Gn 3:8) does not contradict this conclusion. Unlike יָשַׁב (*yšb*), “to dwell,” the verb does not speak of residence but suggests occasional presence. As the creator of the garden, YHWH exercises authority over it; it is his domain. But the verb also contributes to an extraordinary domestic image. In ancient times, people would relax and go for a walk in “the cool of the day” (רִיחַ הַיּוֹם; *rūaḥ hayyôm*), when the evening breezes blow. YHWH’s appearance in the garden reflects his confidence and openness to its inhabitants. However, instead of welcoming their “extraterrestrial” Suzerain, the man and his wife hid from him. Because of sin, an evening visit was transformed into a call to account and ended in a tragic disturbance of all relationships. In Israelite thought the temple was a symbol of the fallen world on the one hand and the divine

<sup>97</sup> 2 Chr 6:21; cf. 1 Kgs 8:30; also vv. 32, 34, 36, 39, 43, 45, 49.

desire to continue to relate to that world on the other. A pre-fall world needed no temple; relationship with God was free and open. Whatever the significance of temples elsewhere, in the HB it represents a brilliant and gracious divine solution to alienation caused by sin.

Since the temple of Baal at Ugarit was a replica of his heavenly temple on Şaphan,<sup>98</sup> we should not be surprised that the HB presents the tabernacle and temple as microcosms of YHWH's heavenly abode.<sup>99</sup> This was obvious to the author of Hebrews, whose perception of the relationship between the two is reflected in the expressions used to characterize the two.

Designations for the Heavenly Dwelling of God	Designations for the Earthly Dwelling of God
“type” (τύπος; <i>typos</i> , Ex 25:40; Acts 7:44; Heb 8:5)	“replica” (ὑπόδειγμα; <i>hypodeigma</i> , Heb 8:5; 9:23) “antitype” (ἀντίτυπος; <i>antitypos</i> , Heb 9:24)
“true” (ἀληθινός; <i>alēthinos</i> , Heb 8:2; 9:24)	“shadow” (σκιά; <i>skia</i> , Heb 8:5; 10:1)
“heavenly” (ἐπουράνιος; <i>epouranios</i> , Heb 8:5; 9:23)	“earthly” (κοσμικός; <i>kosmikos</i> , Heb 9:1) “of this creation” (κτίσις; <i>ktisis</i> , Heb 9:11) “hand-made” (χειροποίητος; <i>cheiropoiētos</i> , Heb 9:11, 24)

But this conception is anticipated by several HB texts. Exodus 25:8–9, 40 has YHWH instructing the Israelites to construct a residence for him, according “to the structure of the dwelling place” (תְּבִנֵּית הַמִּשְׁכָּן; *tabnūt hammiškān*) and the structure of all the furniture and utensils (תְּבִנֵּית כָּל־יָדָיו; *tabnūt kol-kēlāyw*) that he would show Moses. Although תְּבִנֵּית (tabnūt) is usually translated “pattern,” apparently Moses saw more than a blueprint or model.<sup>100</sup> Since elsewhere the word usually refers to the object itself,

<sup>98</sup> See Loren R. Fischer, “Creation at Ugarit and in the Old Testament,” *VT* 15 (1965): 318–19.

<sup>99</sup> As recognized by Josephus in *A.J.* 3.7.7 (§§178–82) (cited from *Josephus* [trans. H. St. J. Thackeray; 10 vols.; LCL; Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1926–1965]), though his allegorization is excessive. Many find stark contrasts between Deuteronomic and Priestly views of divine presence, with the former perceiving YHWH transcendentally as dwelling only in heaven and causing his “name” to reside in the temple, and the latter perceiving him imminently; his presence is concretized in the כְּבוֹד (kəbōd) (cf. Hurowitz, “YHWH’s Exalted House,” 97–101). However, as was the case at Sinai, YHWH was simultaneously present in heaven and at the place where he would stamp his name. So also Michael Hundley, “To Be or Not to Be: A Reexamination of Name Language in Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic History,” *VT* 59 (2009): 539–40.

<sup>100</sup> 1 Chr 28:19 suggests YHWH revealed to David in writing all the structural details of the temple (בְּלִמְלֶאכֶת הַתְּבִנִּית; *kōl mal’ākōt hattabnūt*).

rather than a copy or plan of the object,<sup>101</sup> it seems that YHWH opened the windows of heaven, allowing Moses a glimpse into the heavenly reality, of which the tabernacle to be constructed would be a replica. The LXX translation of תְּבִנִית (*tabnîṭ*) as “paradigm” (παράδειγμα; *paradeigma*) in Ex 25:9 and as τύπος (*typos*) in 25:40 reinforces this interpretation.<sup>102</sup> In the only other occurrence of τύπος (*typos*) in the OG the word clearly refers to an idolatrous image, and not to a plan for an image (Am 5:26).<sup>103</sup>

However, tabernacle and temple also represent microcosms of Eden, and herein lies the key to the relationship between Gn 1–3 and Israel’s sanctuaries. It is doubtful we should characterize the creation accounts of Gn 1–3 as being built “on a platform of temple theology,”<sup>104</sup> but characterizing the temple-building accounts as being built “on a platform of creation theology” is legitimate. Indeed, the Eden narrative provides much of the conceptual vocabulary for Israel’s sanctuary tradition: כְּרֻבִים (*kērubîm*) guarding the way to the tree of life, reflected in the menorah; the charge to Adam “to serve and to keep” the garden; the river flowing out from Eden to water the garden; references to gold and precious stones; lush arboreal imagery, and the eastern orientation of the Edenic landscape.<sup>105</sup> This is significant for grasping the function of the temple in Israelite thinking. To be sure, the sanctuary provided an earthly dwelling for YHWH in the midst of a fallen people, and its rituals provided a means whereby covenant relationship with him could be maintained even in a fallen world. In its design as a miniature Eden the Israelite temple addressed both the alienation of humanity from the divine Suzerain and the alienation of creation in general. From Zion Eden-like prosperity would flow out to the land that YHWH had given Israel as their grant (Lv 26:1–13; Dt 28:1–14; Ez 34:25–31). While the rabbis surely went too far in suggesting that the heavens and the earth were created from Zion,<sup>106</sup> the temple represented the source of Israel’s and ultimately the world’s re-creation. The temple

<sup>101</sup> Jo 22:28 (the structure of an altar); Ps 144:12 (the structure of a palace); Dt 4:16–18 (the forms of idolatrous images); Is 44:13 (the form of a man); Ez 8:10 (the forms of all kinds of creatures); Ps 106:20 (the form of an ox); Ez 8:3; 10:8 (the form of a hand). According to 2 Kgs 16:10: “King Ahaz sent to Uriah the priest a model (דְּמוּת; *dēmût*) of the altar, that is, its form/structure (תְּבִנִית; *tabnîṭ*) according to its entire construction.” Here the depiction is represented by model דְּמוּת (*dēmût*), “likeness,” not תְּבִנִית (*tabnîṭ*), “structure, form.”

<sup>102</sup> In classical Greek τύπος (*typos*) had a wide range of meanings, including “cast” or “replica” made in a mold. LSJ, 1835.

<sup>103</sup> If the tabernacle and temple represented replica objects of the heavenly residence of God, then the sacrifices, especially the sin and guilt offerings, represented replica actions of the heavenly sacrifice of Christ, slain before the foundation of the world. Cf. Mt 13:35; 25:31–34; Jn 17:24; Eph 1:3–10; 1 Pt 1:12–21; Rv 13:8; 17:8.

<sup>104</sup> Thus Walton, *Genesis 1 as Ancient Cosmology*, 187.

<sup>105</sup> For references, see p. 6 above.

<sup>106</sup> *B. Yoma* 54b; *Midr. Tanh.* 10. For discussion, see Levenson, “The Temple and the World,” 282–84.

symbolized the gracious divine determination to lift the effects of the curse from the land and the people, and the place from which YHWH's blessing and rule (the delights of Eden) could radiate forth (Ps 50:2–4) to the land and nation of Israel.

But YHWH's commitment to Israel was not for Israel's own sake. The redeemed and restored people were to serve as a microcosm of a redeemed humanity, while a prosperous land of Canaan would be microcosmic of the world restored. In his dedicatory prayer, Solomon acknowledged that the temple was built with the world in view (1 Kgs 8:41–43, 59–60). Indeed, in the eighth century B.C., Isaiah and Micah looked forward to the day when peoples from all over the world would “stream”<sup>107</sup> to Zion to learn the way of YHWH and his peace would flow out and envelop the world (Is 2:1–4; Mi 4:1–4).

## Conclusion

As a sort of *axis mundi*, the Israelite temple was a divinely revealed and authorized means whereby God in heaven could continue to communicate with the inhabitants of earth—even after the relationship had been ruptured through human rebellion.<sup>108</sup> The rich combination of features derived from the heavenly temple and the original earthly paradise symbolized YHWH's grace in response to sin. But this combination also prepared the way for developments of the temple motif in the NT.<sup>109</sup> When Jesus cleansed the temple, he announced not only its destruction but also its replacement with his own person:

“Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.”

Then the Jews said, “This temple has been under construction for forty-six years, and will you raise it up in three days?”

But Jesus was speaking of the temple of his body. After he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this; and they believed the Scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken. (Jn 2:19–22)<sup>110</sup>

The incarnation, death, and resurrection of Christ rendered superfluous the temple's role as the link between a fallen world and a heavenly court

<sup>107</sup>The choice of verb, נהר (*nhr*), “to flow, stream,” a denominative verb נהר (*nhr*), “stream, river,” not only reverses the direction of the flow of the rivers in Eden but also applies the word metaphorically to people who will come from all over to learn the way of YHWH.

<sup>108</sup>In the ancient world, among other images, the role of *axis mundi* could be played by sacred places (esp. mountains) or sacred trees. For discussion, see Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion* (trans. W. R. Trask; New York: Harper & Brothers, 1959), 36–42.

<sup>109</sup>Beale's work on this subject is unsurpassed.

<sup>110</sup>Cf. other references to Jesus' statement: Mt 26:61; 27:40; Mk 14:58; 15:29.

reaching out to that world. As Jesus acknowledged to the Samaritan woman: “The time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem” (Jn 4:21). Indeed, this entire conversation deflects attention away from the place of worship and focuses on the person who once sat enthroned above the כְּרֻבִים (*kērubîm*)<sup>111</sup> but is now present incarnationally in Jesus (v. 26), with the result that many from her town recognized that “this One is indeed the Savior of the world” (v. 42). John himself acknowledged Christ as the fulfillment of the hopes represented by the temple in his prologue to the Gospel. Jesus (the Word) is not only the Creator but also the source of life for a world under the curse of death (1:1–5), the true light for a world in darkness (1:9–10), and the one who came into the world to empower all who believe in his name to become children of God, that is, to make them fully functional as images of God like Adam (1:11–13).<sup>112</sup> John’s ode to the Word climaxes in v. 14: “And the Word became flesh and lived (*ἐσκήνωσεν*; *eskēnōsen*, lit., “tabernacled”) among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father’s only son, full of grace and truth.” This one, “God the only Son” (Gk. *μονογενῆς θεός*; *monogenēs theos*, v. 18), has revealed the Father more fully than any tabernacle or temple could.

While Paul’s identification of Christian believers as the temple of God, indwelt by the Holy Spirit,<sup>113</sup> reinforces the irrelevance of the temple as the primary symbol of YHWH’s desire to relate to his world, the Epistle to the Hebrews provides the fullest essay on the relationship between the temple and the incarnation. In light of the appearance of the Son of God—through whom the world was created, who embodies the radiant glory of God and the exact imprint of his being, who sustains all of creation by his strong word, who has solved the problem of human sin, and who is seated at the right hand of the Majesty on high (Heb 1:1–4)—shadow institutions like temple and sacrifices and Aaronic priesthood have been superseded by the reality. Through Jesus Christ’s saving work the people of God participate in God’s Edenic rest.

The movement away from the temple as the locus of divine presence to Jesus Christ climaxes in the vision of a restored cosmos in the book of Revelation. On the one hand, the Apocalypse highlights the heavenly temple, where God is seated on his throne and surrounded by worshipers, and from where he governs the world (Rv 7:15; 11:19; 14:15, 17; 15:5–16:1, 17). On the other hand, the book (and Scripture) closes with a vivid

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<sup>111</sup> The same emphasis is evident in the book of Deuteronomy, which focuses not on the place but on the relationship between the worshipers and YHWH, who is present at the place he has chosen to establish his name. See further Daniel I. Block, “‘In Spirit and in Truth’: The Mosaic Vision of Worship,” in *The Gospel according to Moses: Theological and Ethical Reflections on the Book of Deuteronomy* (ed. Daniel I. Block; Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2012), 272–98.

<sup>112</sup> Cf. Luke’s interpretation of Gn 5:1–2 in Lk 3:38.

<sup>113</sup> Individually in 1 Cor 6:19–20 and collectively in 2 Cor 6:16.

portrayal of the new heavens and the new earth, in the midst of which is the perfectly proportioned and gloriously designed New Jerusalem. John describes this city in magnificently Edenic terms (Rv 21–22). Although the throne of God and of the Lamb will be there, and his vassals (δοῦλοι; *douloi*) will serve him with due reverential awe (Rv 22:3),<sup>114</sup> John declares explicitly that since God is present in person, there is no need for a temple, “for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb.” Nor is there need for “sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God is its light, and its lamp is the Lamb” (21:2–23). While the first statement repudiates Mircea Eliade’s notion of the homologization of world and temple,<sup>115</sup> the second declares that this is not a return to the original Eden but signals a glorious transformation of the original home of humanity. The divine visits will not be limited to appearances “in the cool of the day”; the very presence of the throne of God and the Lamb will guarantee access to the tree of life, the well-being of the city, and the permanent removal of the curse and its effects. Furthermore, it will ensure that his delegated agents will “serve and keep” the earth according to the original divine mandate.

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<sup>114</sup> Underlying the Gk. λατρεύω (*latreuō*), usually rendered “to worship,” is the Heb. הִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה (*hištaḥăwā*), which means literally “to prostrate” before a superior, but which may be used more broadly of reverential service and true vassalage under God. In the Pentateuch the word is repeatedly paired with עָבַד (*‘bd*), “to perform vassal service.” Ex 20:5; 23:24; Dt 4:19; 5:9; 8:19; 30:17; cf. Heb 12:28.

<sup>115</sup> Mircea Eliade, *Patterns in Comparative Religion* (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1958), 373–85; cf. Levenson, “The Temple and the World,” 295.