



1 Nephi 18-15

Wednesday, January 22, 2020

PaRDeS – The Way to Read Scripture

Peshat - (pronounced peh-shaht' - meaning "simple")

Remez - (pronounced reh-mez' - meaning "hint" – it is alluded to but not overtly stated in the text, see Proverbs 20.10)

Derash - (pronounced deh-rahsh' also called "Midrash," meaning "concept"- consider Mormon's "and thus we see...")

Sod - (pronounced either sawd, or sood [like "wood"] - meaning "hidden"- think temple, coming into God's presence)

A painting of a large, gnarled tree with white fruit, a river, and a building in the background. The tree is the central focus, with its thick trunk and spreading branches. The fruit is small and white, hanging from the branches. In the background, a river flows, and a building is visible on the left. The overall scene is misty and atmospheric.

The main images of 1
Nephi 8

The Guide	The Building
The Tree	The Mist
The River	The Path
The Rod	The Fruit



When I was younger than most of you, growing up in a little town in Idaho, I thought the great moment of my life would be that I would be a successful baseball player for the New York Yankees. We would be in the World Series; the games would be three and three. Now, the seventh game—the deciding game—the ninth inning, score tied. And guess who would get up to bat? The pitcher would put the ball in just where I would like it, and I would knock it out of Yankee Stadium. The ball would become lost in the parking lot. I would be the hero of the World Series. I thought that would be the great moment of my life. But I want you to know that that isn't so. Not that the World Series happened; however, I found the moment.

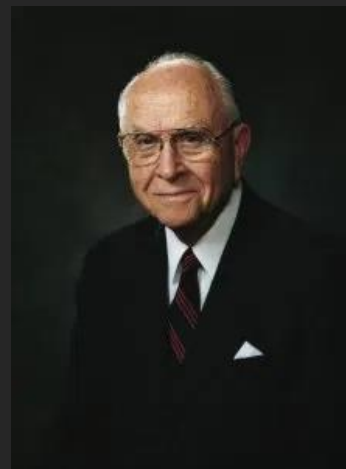
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A few years ago I sat in a little white room in the Los Angeles Temple—a little, plain, simple room with no fancy adornments on the wall. My wife was there by my side. One son and his wife were there along with our daughter and her new husband. Our other son was kneeling at the altar holding the hand of the young lady he was about to marry. As I looked around the room, I thought, “David, you had your priorities out of order. Some athletic event or being the hero of some worldly event isn’t the great moment of your life.” I knew the great moment of my life was there, then, because all I had that was really important—remember, really important—was in that room. Some bishops and stake presidents somewhere had found all of my family worthy to be in that room. It is not the number of cars you own, or the number of white-faced cattle you might have in the hills, or the size of your bank account, but the eternal values that count. You remember the Lord said something about moth and rust getting through to our worldly possessions (see Matthew 6:20). I knew that the greatest moment in my life was having all of our family in that room in the Los Angeles Temple. Moments, reflection, blessings—these are the great moments of our lives. (Come, Listen to a Prophet’s Voice, David B. Haight was a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints when this fireside address was given at Brigham Young University on 7 March 1976.)



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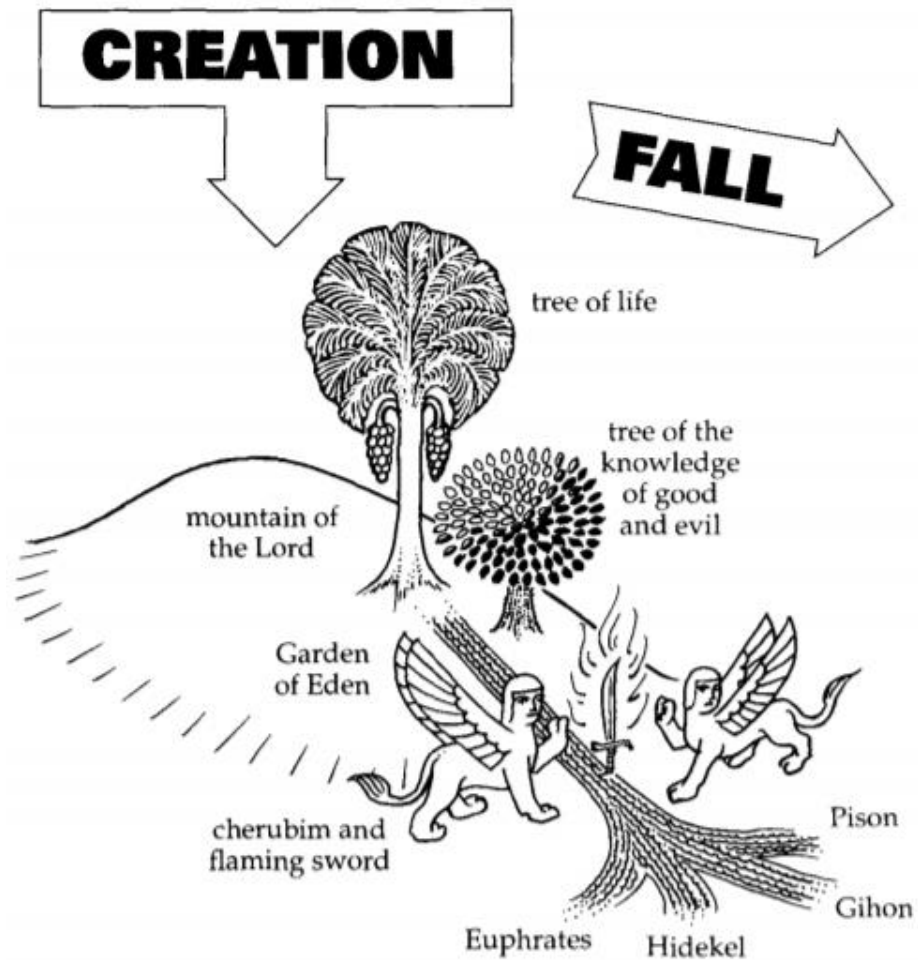
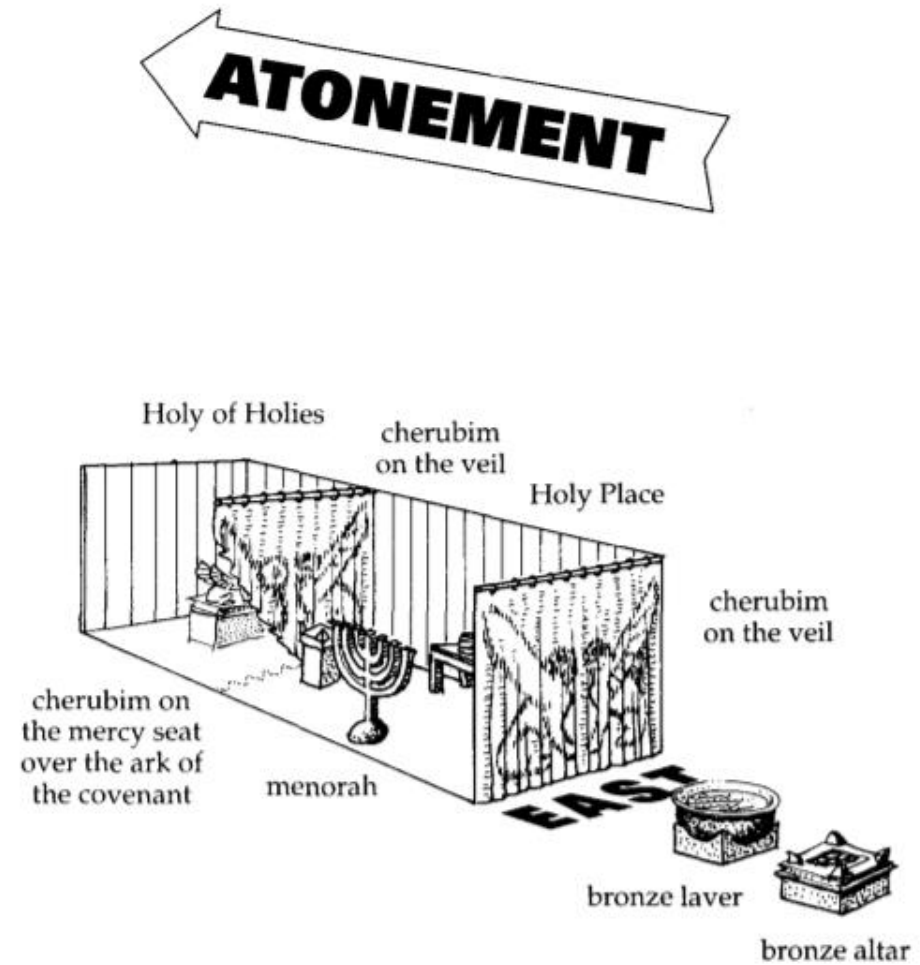


Figure 27. This schematic drawing attempts to depict the sacred landscape of Genesis in simplified form. The first land to arise from the waters became the Mountain of the Lord, where the Lord created Adam. It is from this divine center that creation begins and extends out in all directions. The Hebrew for *east* means "faceward or frontward"; thus, driving Adam from before his face is part of the continuing eastward movement (see Alma 42:2).



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1 NEPHI 8

28 And after they had ^atasted of the fruit they were ^bashamed, because of those that were ^cscoffing at them; and they ^dfell away into forbidden paths and were lost.

ALMA 32

42 And because of your ^adiligence and your faith and your patience with the word in nourishing it, that it may take root in you, behold, by and by ye shall pluck the ^bfruit thereof, which is most precious, which is sweet above all that is sweet, and which is white above all that is white, yea, and pure above all that is pure; and ye shall feast upon this fruit even until ye are filled, that ye hunger not, neither shall ye thirst.

1 NEPHI 8

30 But, to be short in writing, behold, he saw other multitudes pressing forward; and they came and caught hold of the end of the ^arod of iron; and they did press their way forward, continually holding fast to the rod of iron, until they came forth and **fell down** and partook of the **fruit of the tree**.

1 NEPHI 11:

Knowest thou the meaning of the ^atree which thy father saw?

22 And I answered him, saying: Yea, it is the ^alove of God, which ^bsheddeth itself abroad in the hearts of the children of men; wherefore, it is the ^cmost desirable above all things.

23 And he spake unto me, saying: Yea, and the most ^ajoyous to the soul.

24 And after he had said these words, he said unto me: Look! And I looked, and I beheld the Son of God ^agoing forth among the children of men; and I saw many **fall down at his feet and worship him**.

The Tree

Jesus Christ

Kingship

The Throne: of God and the King

God's Presence

The Divine Mother

God's Love

The Navel of the Earth

The Connection to all things

Wisdom





Asherah

The rabbinic authors of the Jewish Mishna (second–third century AD) explain **the asherah as a tree that was worshipped**. In 1 Nephi 11, Nephi considers the meaning of the tree of life as he sees it in vision. In answer, he receives a vision of “a virgin, . . . the mother of the Son of God, after the manner of the flesh.” The answer to his question about the meaning of the tree lies in the virgin mother with her child. **The virgin is the tree** in some sense and Nephi accepted this as an answer to his question. As an Israelite living at the end of the seventh century and during the early sixth century before Christ, he recognized an answer to his question about a marvelous tree in the otherwise unexplained image of a virginal mother and her divine child—not that what he saw and how he interpreted those things were perfectly obvious. **What he “read” from the symbolic vision was culturally colored. Nephi’s vision reflects a meaning of the “sacred tree” that is unique to the ancient Near East.** Asherah is also associated with biblical wisdom literature. Wisdom, a female, appears as the wife of God and represents life.

[\(Daniel C. Peterson, Nephi and his Asherah, *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 9/2 \(2000\): 16–25, 80–81.\)](#)

Asherah

Asherah seems to have been known and venerated among the Hebrews as well. At least some Israelites worshipped her over a period extending from the conquest of Canaan in the second millennium before Christ to the fall of Jerusalem in 586 B.C.—the time of Lehi’s departure with his family from the Old World. Ancient Israelite women, for instance, were sometimes buried in “Asherah wigs,” and she may also be reflected in Israelite temple architecture. Additionally, thousands of mass-produced goddess figurines have been found at Israelite sites.

[\(Daniel C. Peterson, Nephi and his Asherah, Journal of Book of Mormon Studies 9/2 \(2000\): 16–25, 80–81.\)](#)





Isis

Note the throne depicted on her head. She is usually represented as a woman with the throne-hieroglyph on her head, symbolizing her as the wife of Osiris, the king of the afterlife. Isis can also be represented as a bird (called a kite) wearing the same headdress. In another form, she bears the headdress used by Hathor, consisting of a sun-disk and cow horns.



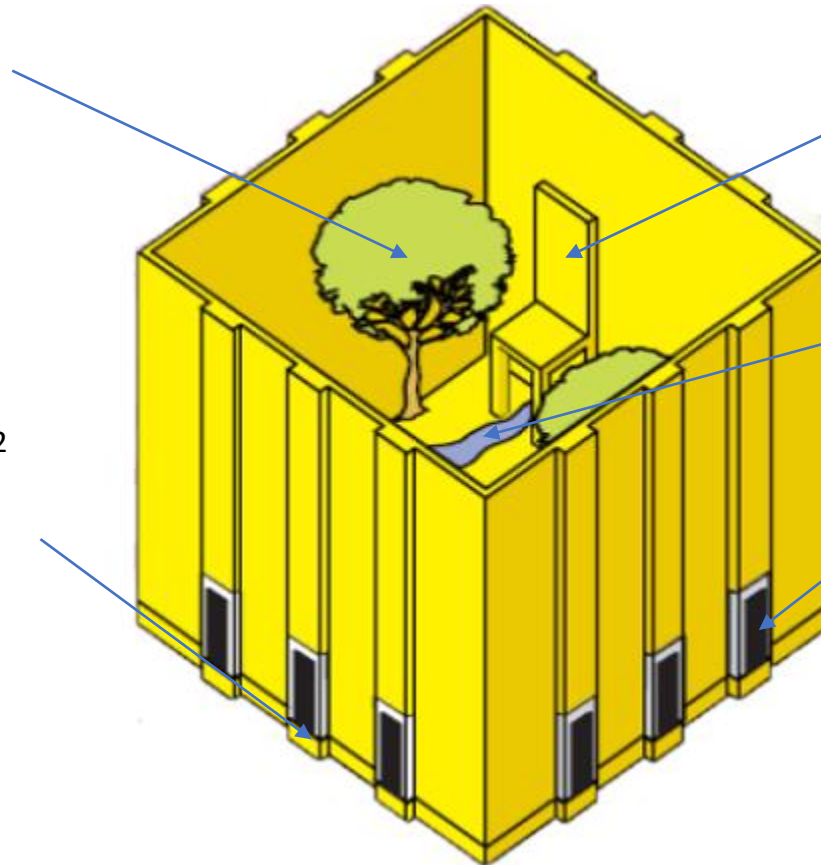


The Holy of Holies/New Jerusalem Comes to Earth – Revelation 21-22

The Tree is restored to its proper place in the Holy of Holies – Rev. 22.2, Joshua 24.26, Ezekiel 47.1-12, Barnabas 11.6. The tree is “The Love of God.” See 1 Nephi 11.22, 25.

The Holy City is described as a cube, thus fitting the dimensions of the Holy of Holies described in Exodus 26.22-33. 1

The 12 foundations contained the names of the 12 apostles of Jesus (Rev. 21.14), as well as the 12 stones worn on the heart of the High Priest (Exodus 28.17-20). Since Jesus was the Great High Priest (Heb. 4.14), and since the names of the 12 tribes were engraved upon these stones (Exodus 28.21), multiple symbols exist here with powerful implications.



The throne of God is restored in the Holy of Holies – Rev. 22.3-4, Psalm 2, Psalm 110. The throne is similar to the Rod, the symbol the king’s power. See 1 Nephi 8.19-20, 24, 30.

A river flows from the sacred space, the sacred mountain of the Lord. See 1 Nephi 8.13, 17, 19, 26.

12 gates exist, in this aspect, the city resembles the temple in Ezekiel’s vision (Ezekiel 48.31-35). In John’s vision, each gate had an angel standing as a sentinel (Rev. 21.12).

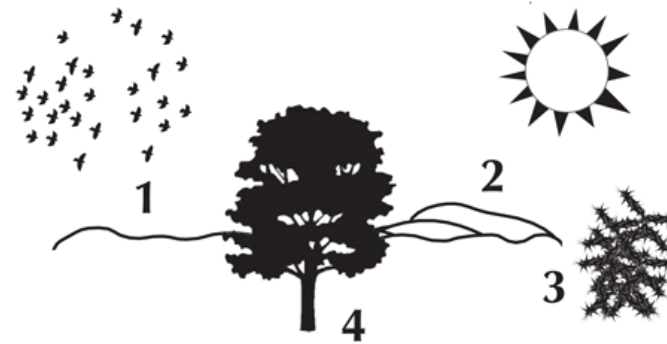


4 types of people in the vision

These people match up to the parable of the Sower (Matt 13):

1. Wayside = Head straight to the building
2. Rocky = Lost in the mists of darkness
3. Thorny = Get to the tree, but fall away
4. Fruit = Get to the tree and partake and stay

Parable of the Sower Recorded in the Book of Matthew



Symbol

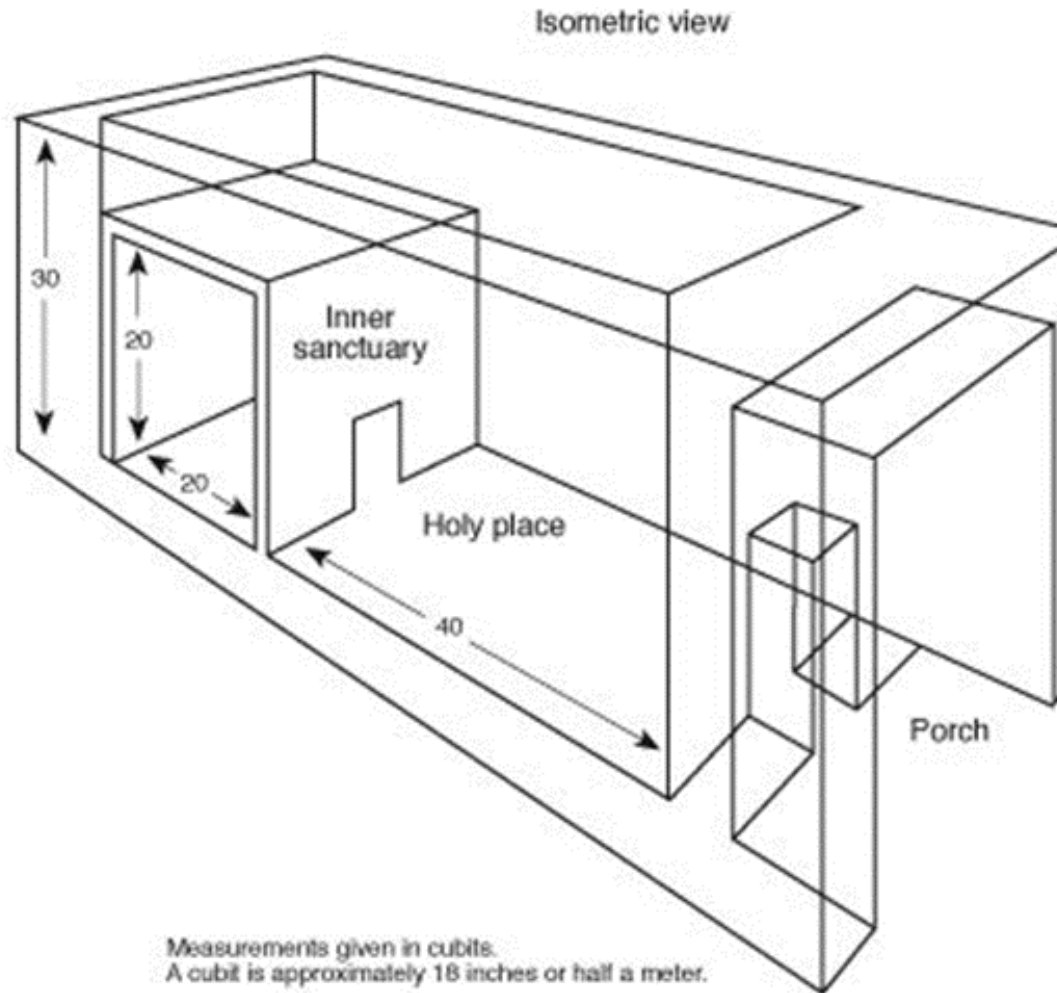
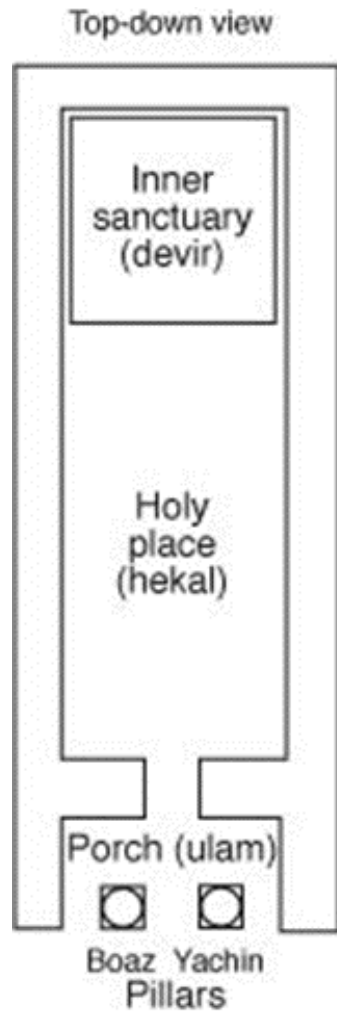
Jesus' Interpretation

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 Seeds by the wayside (13:4)
Fowls which come and devour (13:4) | "When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not" (13:19)
"wicked one ... catcheth away that which was sown in his heart" (13:19) |
| 2 Seeds in stony places with no root (13:5)
Sun which scorches seeds (13:6) | "he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; yet hath he not root in himself" (13:20-21)
"tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, and by and by he is offended" (13:21) |
| 3 Seeds among thorns (13:7) | "he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful" (13:22) |
| 4 Seeds in good ground (13:8) | "he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty" (13:23) |

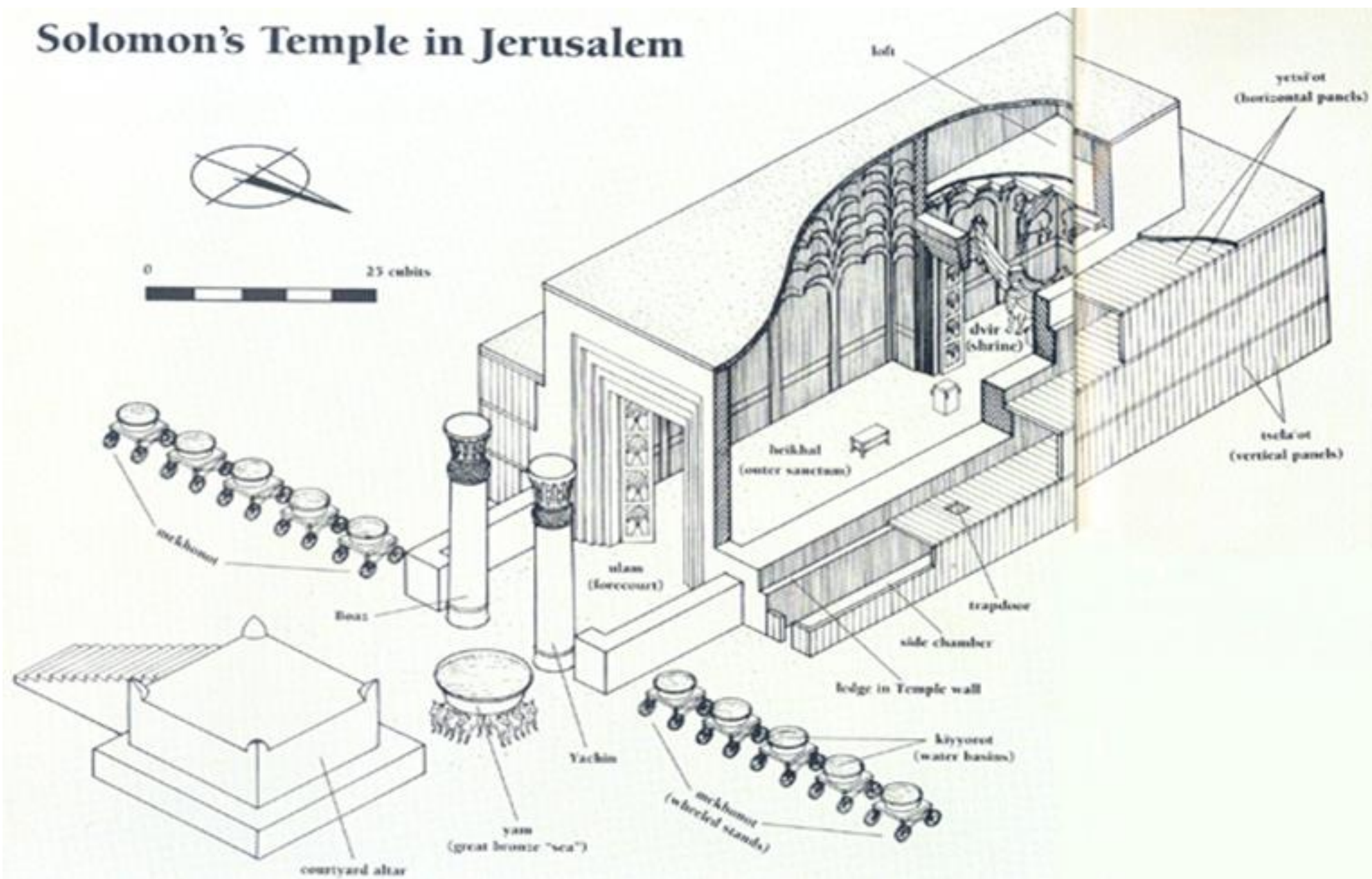
And six branches going out of the sides thereof; three branches of the candlestick out of the one side thereof, and three branches of the candlestick out of the other side thereof: Three bowls made after the fashion of almonds in one branch, a knop and a flower; and three bowls made like almonds in another branch, a knop and a flower: so throughout the six branches going out of the candlestick. And in the candlestick were four bowls made like almonds, his knops, and his flowers: And a knop under two branches of the same, and a knop under two branches of the same, and a knop under two branches of the same, according to the six branches going out of it. Their knops and their branches were of the same: all of it was one beaten work of pure gold. (Exodus 37)

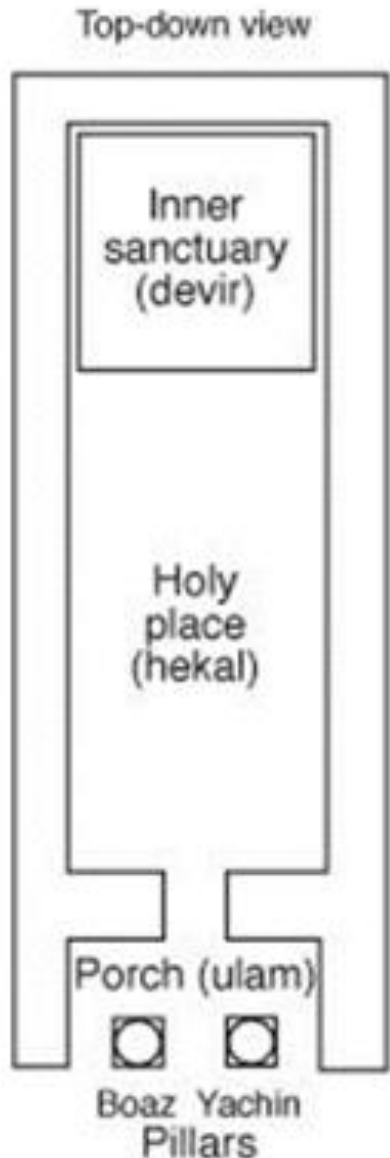
And six **branches** going out of the sides thereof; three **branches** of the candlestick out of the one side thereof, and three **branches** of the candlestick out of the other side thereof: Three bowls made after the fashion of **almonds** in one **branch**, a **knop** and a **flower**; and three bowls made like **almonds** in another **branch**, a **knop** and a **flower**: so throughout the **six branches** going out of the candlestick. And in the candlestick were four bowls made like **almonds**, his **knops**, and his **flowers**: And a **knop** under two **branches** of the same, and a **knop** under two **branches** of the same, and a **knop** under two **branches** of the same, according to the **six branches** going out of it. Their **knops** and their **branches** were of the same: all of it was one beaten work of pure gold. (Exodus 37)

Solomon's Temple (First Temple)



Solomon's Temple in Jerusalem





Room One: The 'ULAM

1 Kings 6-8

Two Pillars

Very Tall

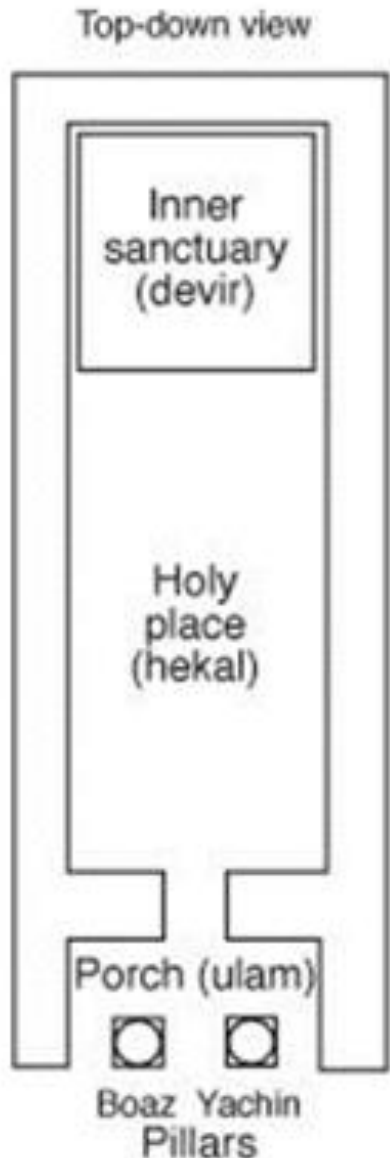
Open to sky, no roof?

'Olam עוֹלָם The world, time, eons, very multivalent word in Hebrew

See: 1 Nephi 8.20

For more on the word olam, see: <https://www.jewishlinknj.com/features/22659-what-is-the-meaning-of-the-word-olam>

אֵלֶּם
'uwlam



Room Two: The HEKAL הֵיכָל

Incense Altar

Table(s), Menorah(s)

Bread, vessels

Manna was white & sweet (Exodus 16)

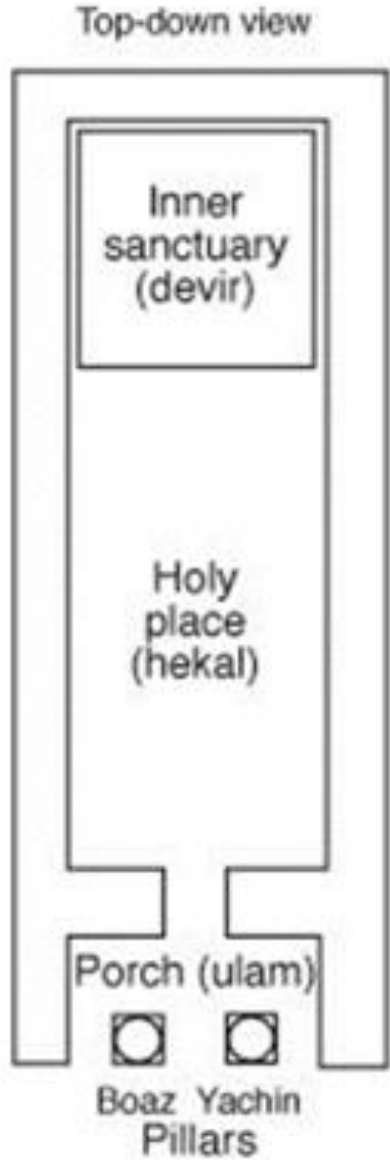
Manna was in the temple (Exodus 16 & Hebrews 9)

Jesus identifies himself with manna (John 6)

Shewbread had frankincense, eaten in the Hekal (Lev. 24)

Jesus identifies himself with shewbread (Luke 22)

Hekal means any large or spacious building. The name of this room is also applied to a king's palace and to the temple as a whole.



Room Three: The DEBIR

דְּבִיר

Debir was the “oracle” or the place of speaking
Behind a door or a veil... probably steps up to this room

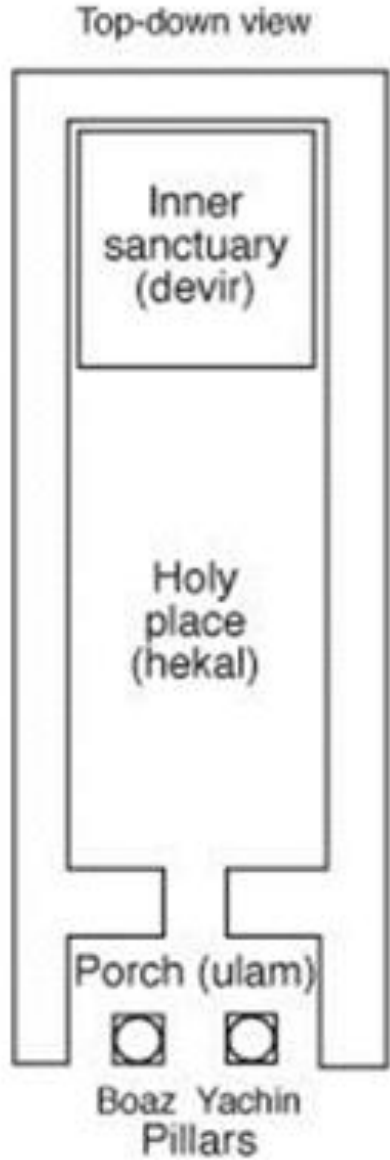
Cherubim (2 or 4?)

Waters (Ezekiel 47). Cistern/well of the souls?

Contains the Ark (God’s throne/glory/kavod)

The Ark rests on the foundation stone. (originally a threshing floor! (See 2 Sam. 24.18-25)

15 And it came to pass that I beckoned unto them; and I also did say unto them with a loud voice that they should come unto me, and partake of the fruit, which was desirable above all other fruit.



Before the temple: Chaos

1 Nephi 8.4 “a dark and dreary wilderness”

1 Nephi 8.7 “a dark and dreary waste”

Everything outside of the temple was considered “the sea” or chaotic space. The word profane comes from *profannum*, meaning outside of temple space.

Ocean/Sea = Chaos

2 Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name; worship the LORD in the ^abeauty of holiness.

3 The voice of the LORD *is* upon the ^awaters: the God of glory thundereth: the LORD *is* upon many waters.

To the south-east of the temple there was bronze 'sea'. This was an enormous bronze basin of water, ten cubits in diameter, i.e. half as wide as the temple itself. It was supported on twelve bronze oxen, in four groups of three, and it was for the priest to wash in (1 Kings 7.23; 2 Chron. 4.1-6). There were ten smaller lavers, each four cubits across, which stood five on each side of the courtyard to the north and south (1 Kings 7.38; 2 Chron. 4.6). In later interpretation, as we shall see, **the whole of this courtyard represented the sea; the entire temple complex 'was' the creation, with the temple as the created and ordered firmament in the midst of a hostile sea.** The bronze sea was probably the concrete representation of the sea which features in so many of Israel's (stories). (Barker, *The Gate of Heaven*, p. 30)

The Court = The Sea

The house of the holy of holies was made to correspond to the highest heaven. The outer Holy House was made to correspond to the earth, and the courtyard was made to correspond to the sea... (Patai, *Man and the Temple*, p. 108). The interpreters of the Pentateuch said, “**The court surrounds the temple just as the sea surrounds the world**” (*Numbers Rabbah* XIII.19). The Babylonian Talmud remembers that the white and blue marble of the temple walls looked like the waves of the sea (b. *Sukkah* 51.b). All these are later texts, written after the temple had been destroyed, but **Josephus**, who knew the temple, also said that **the outer courtyard represented the sea**. He said that the tabernacle on which it was modeled, was divided into three parts: ‘and giving up two of them to the priests, as a place approachable and open to all, Moses signifies the earth and the sea since these too are accessible to all; but the third portion he reserved for God alone because heaven also is inaccessible to men’ (*Antiquities*, III. 181)

The Sea

Texts which undoubtedly refer to Solomon's temple associate the temple with the seas subdued before the creation, and thus it is very possible that the complex symbolism found in first-century writers such as Philo and Josephus was not a later interpretation but a memory of the original. Ps. 93, for example, describes the Lord enthroned and robed in majesty, established as mightier than the floods and the waves of the sea. **Ps. 29.10** is similar:

**The Lord sits enthroned over the flood;
the Lord sits enthroned forever.**

The Sea

Since the throne was in the temple, this is a picture of the creator who has triumphed and is literally enthroned in his sanctuary over the floods he has subdued. Ps. 24 says that the Lord has established the world upon the seas, and immediately asks: 'Who shall ascend to the hill of the Lord?' (Ps. 24.3), implying that the established place is the holy hill, the place of security for his people. The ancient poem now incorporated into Exodus (The Song of the Sea, Ex. 15) tells of the Lord bringing his people through the terrifying sea (hence the inclusion in this story) but it does not end with the rest of the Exodus story. In its original setting it did not describe the events of the Exodus. **The poem in fact tells the ancient story of the creation:**

**Thou wilt bring them in, and plant them on thy own mountain,
the place, O Lord, which thou hast made for thy abode,
the sanctuary, O Lord, which thy hands have established. (Ex. 15.17)**

The Sea

This, incidentally, is a good example of myth at work; **the events of history are set in an existing framework, and the creation of the chosen people as a result of the Exodus is told in terms of the creation of the world from the primeval seas.** There are many other descriptions of the Lord subduing the seas, e.g. Ps. 33.7; 74.13; 89.9; Jer. 5.22, and the stories about King David subduing the subterranean waters before building the temple are a variation on the same theme. (Barker, *Gate of Heaven*, p. 65-66)

Three Biblical Archetypes Compared to Nephi's Construction of the Ship

The events in history are sent in the existing framework. The framework is the story of the temple.

Here Nephi packages the construction of his ship into creation/temple themes:

Work Declared Good	"God saw every-thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good" (Gen. 1:31).	God establishes a covenant (Gen. 9:11-17).	"Moses did look upon all the work, and, behold, they had done it as the Lord had commanded, even so had they done it" (Ex. 39:43).	"After I had finished the ship, according to the word of the Lord, my brethren beheld that it was good" (1 Ne. 18:4).
Completion Formula	"Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them" (Gen. 2:1).	"Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he" (Gen. 6:22; cf. 7:5).	"The children of Israel did according to all that the Lord commanded Moses, so did they" (Ex. 39:32; cf. 39:43; 40:33).	"I had finished the ship, according to the word of the Lord" (1 Ne. 18:4).
Blessing Pronounced	"God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it" (Gen. 2:3).	"God blessed Noah and his sons" (Gen. 9:1).	"Moses blessed them" (Ex. 39:43).	"We were blessed in abundance" (1 Ne. 18:24).
Multiply and Fill the Earth	"God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth" (Gen 1:2).	"Bring forth with thee every living thing . . . that they may breed abundantly in the earth, and be fruitful, and multiply upon the earth" (Gen. 8:17; cf. 9:1).	"The whole congregation of Israel assembled together at Shiloh, and set up the tabernacle of the congregation there. And the land was subdued before them" (Josh. 18:1).	"We did begin to till the earth, and we began to plant seeds" (1 Ne. 18:24).
Curious Workmanship	The variety of species is emphasized (Gen. 1:11-12, 20-22, 24-25).	Divine pattern for building the ark specified (Gen. 6:14-16).	"I have filled [Bezaleel] with the spirit of God, in wisdom, . . . and in all manner of workmanship, to devise cunning works . . . in gold, and in silver, and in brass" (Ex. 31:3-4).	"We did work the timbers of curious workmanship. And the Lord did show me from time to time after what manner I should work the timbers of the ship" (1 Ne. 18:1; cf. 18:2).
Mountain Theophany			"The Lord said unto Moses, Come up to me into the mount, and be there. . . . And Moses rose up, and . . . went up into the mount of God" (Ex. 24:12-13).	"The voice of the Lord came unto me, saying: Arise, and get thee into the mountain. And it came to pass that I arose and went up into the mountain, and cried unto the Lord" (1 Ne. 17:7; cf. 17:8).

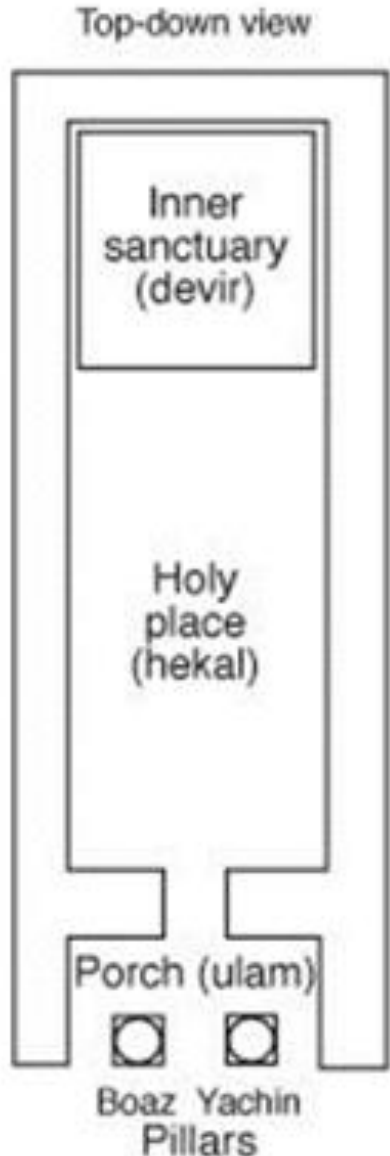
Stage One: The field

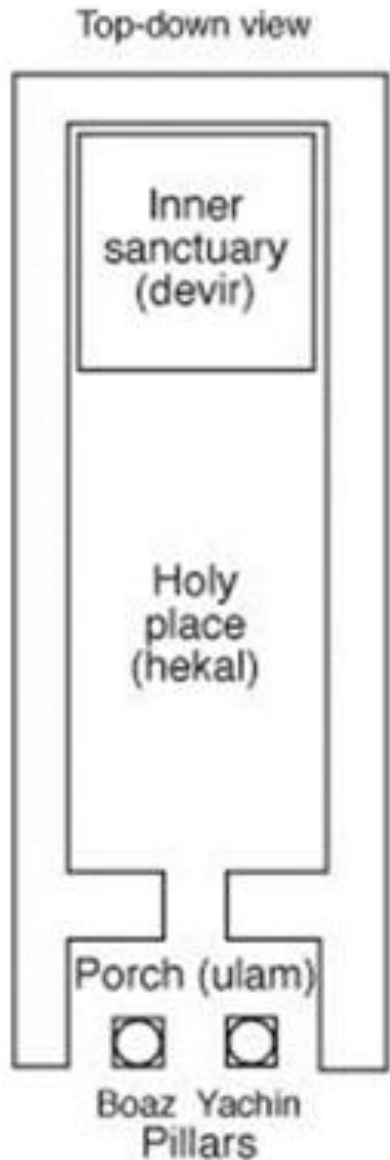
1 Nephi 8.9, 19-20

“a large and spacious field, as if it had been a world...”

“numberless concourses of people”

The ‘ULAM and the ‘OLAM





Stage Two: The Journey

1 Nephi 8.21-27

Mists of darkness – incense altar

“High above the earth” (In Hebrew, you ‘ascend’ to the temple)

“Great and spacious building” = Hekal.

“Fine” clothing 1 Nephi 8.27, Exodus 28.39

שש

shesh

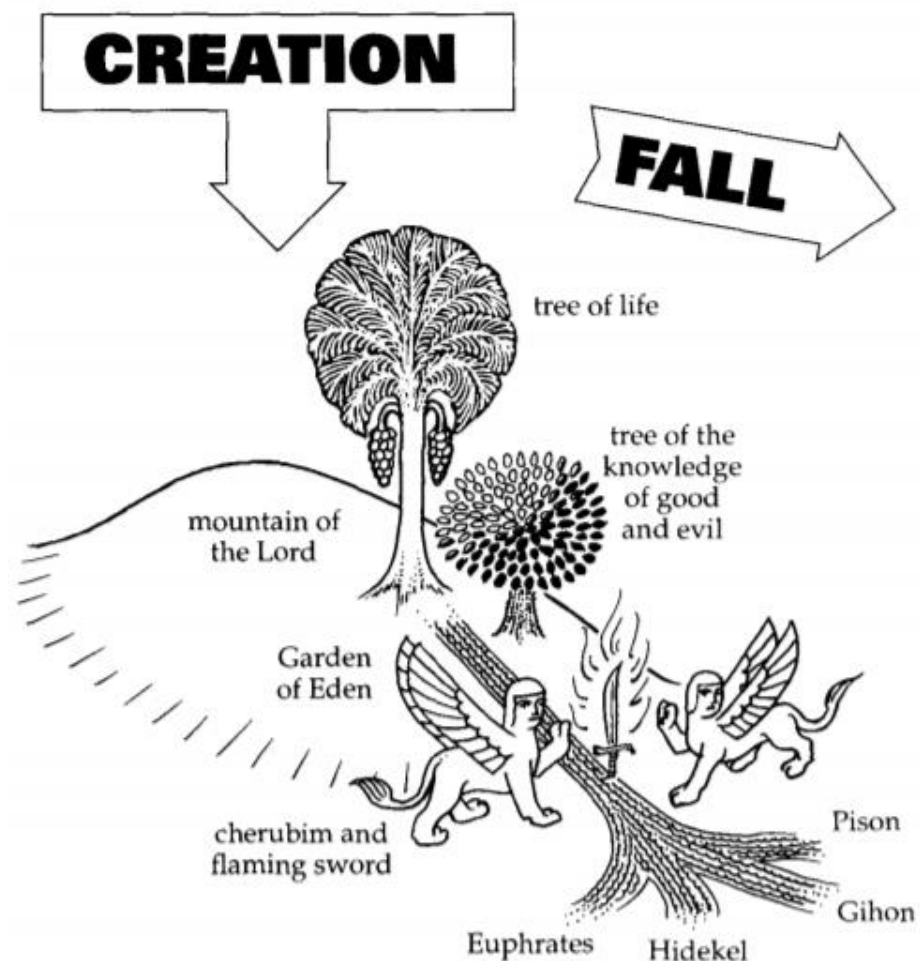
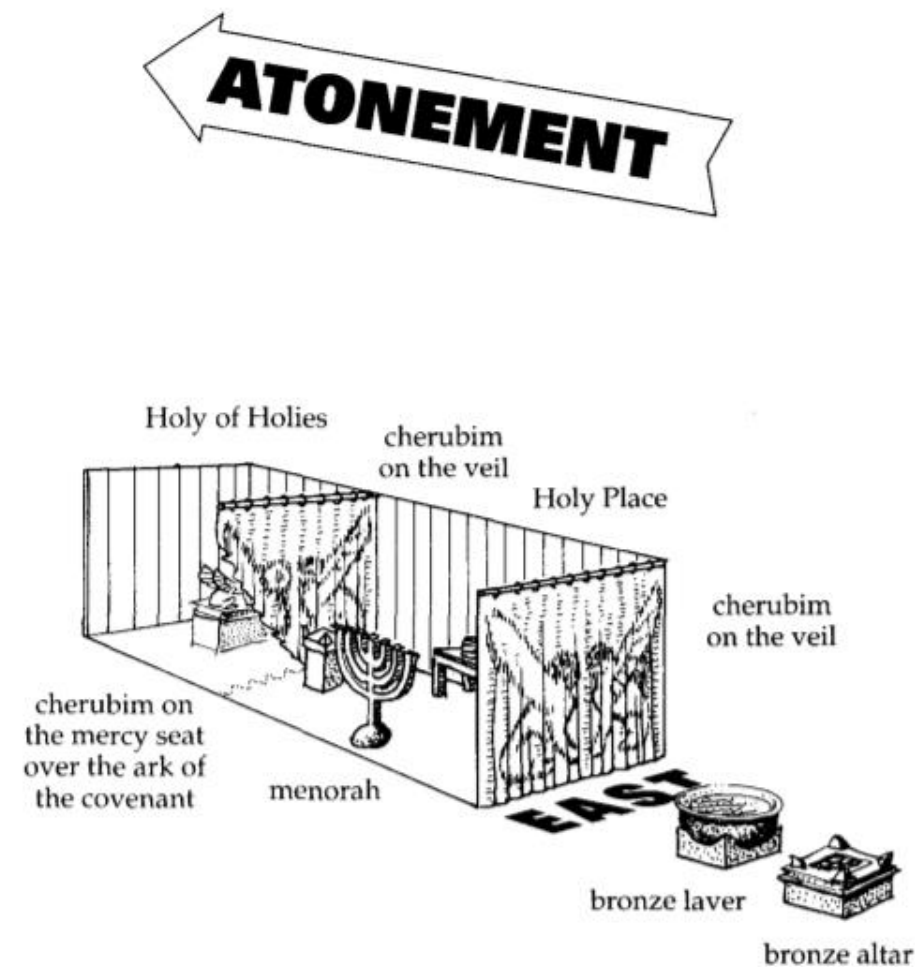
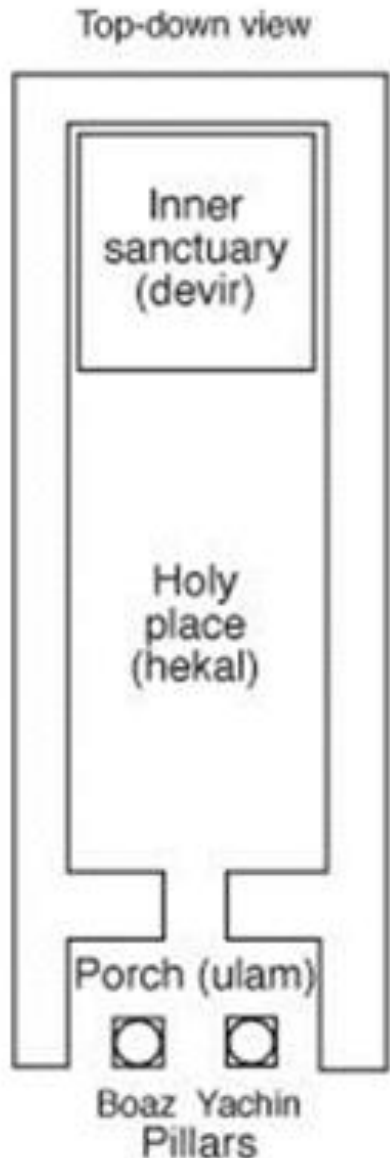


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Stage Three: The Tree

This is the place Lehi speaks – 1 Nephi 8.15

Straight & Narrow path leads here – 1 Nephi 8.20

Waters – v. 13

Fruit eaten – v. 10-11,16

White & sweet – v.11

Iron rod must be grasped –v.24,30; 1 Nephi 11.25

15 And it came to pass that I beckoned unto them; and I also did say unto them with a loud voice that they should come unto me, and partake of the fruit, which was desirable above all other fruit.

TABLE 1
Lehi's Account Compared to Nephi's Account

(A) 1 Nephi 1-9 (Lehi's Account)	(B) 1 Nephi 10-22 (Nephi's Account)
1. Nephi makes a record (or account) of his proceedings but first gives an abridgment of Lehi's record (1:1-3, 16-17).	1. Nephi now commences to give an account of his proceedings, reign, and ministry but first "must speak somewhat of the things of [his] father, and . . . brethren" (10:1).
2. Nephi gives a brief account of Lehi's prophecies to the Jews, based on visions he received in Jerusalem (1:5-15, 19).	2. Nephi reports Lehi's prophecies about the Jews, as given to Laman and Lemuel in the wilderness (10:2-15).
3. Lehi is commanded to journey into the wilderness, and he pitches his tent in the valley he names Lemuel (2:1-7).	3. Nephi desires to see, hear, and know these mysteries; he is shown a great vision by the Spirit of the Lord and by an angel (10:17-14:30).
4. Lehi teaches and exhorts his sons, and they are confounded (2:8-15).	4. Nephi instructs and exhorts his brothers, and they are confounded (15:6-16:6).
5. Nephi desires to know the mysteries of God; he is visited by the Holy Spirit and is spoken to by the Lord (2:16-3:1).	5. Lehi is commanded to journey further into the wilderness, and he pitches his tent in the land he names Bountiful (16:9-17:6).
6. Lehi is commanded in a dream to send his sons for the brass plates of Laban; this he does (3:2-5:22).	6. Nephi is commanded by the voice of the Lord to construct a ship; this he does (17:7-18:4).
7. In response to a command from the Lord, Lehi sends for Ishmael's family (7:1-22).	7. In response to a command from the Lord, Lehi enters the ship and then sails (18:5-23).
8. They gather seeds of every kind (8:1).	8. Lehi's family plants the seeds and reaps in abundance (18:24).
9. Lehi reports to his sons details of the great vision received in the wilderness (8:2-35).	9. Nephi details the distinctions between the two sets of plates (19:1-7).
10. Lehi exhorts Laman and Lemuel, preaching and prophesying to them (8:36-38).	10. Nephi preaches and prophesies to Laman and Lemuel, his descendants, and all Israel (19:7-21:26).
11. Nephi makes a distinction between the two sets of plates (9:1-5).	11. To explain Isaiah's prophecies to his brothers, Nephi draws on the great vision given to him and Lehi (22:1-28).
12. Nephi ends with a general formulation of his thesis and the formal punctuation: "And thus it is, Amen" (9:6).	12. Nephi ends with the highest formulation of his thesis, focusing on the salvation of man, and with the formal punctuation: "And thus it is, Amen" (22:29-31).

TABLE 5
Chiasmus in 1 Nephi 1-9 (Lehi's Account)

1. Nephi discusses his record, and he testifies it is true (1:1-3).
2. Lehi's early visions are reported, followed by his preaching and prophesying to the Jews (1:6-15, 18-20).
3. Lehi takes his family into the wilderness (2:2-15).
4. The Lord speaks prophecies to Nephi about Lehi's seed (2:19-24).
5. Lehi's sons obtain the brass plates, and Nephi records the most striking example of the murmuring of his faithless brothers (3:2-5:16).
- 4'. Lehi, filled with the Spirit, prophesies about his seed (5:17-19; 7:1).
- 3'. Ishmael takes his family into the wilderness (7:2-22).
- 2'. Lehi's tree of life vision is reported, followed by his prophecies and preaching to Laman and Lemuel (8:2-38).
- 1'. Nephi again discusses his record, and he records his testimony (9:1-6).

Source: Noel B. Reynolds, "Nephi's Outline," in *Book of Mormon Authorship: New Light on Ancient Origins*, ed. Noel B. Reynolds (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 1982), 53-74.

TABLE 6
Chiasmus in 1 Nephi 10-22 (Nephi's Account)

1. Lehi expands on his great vision, detailing prophecies about the Jews and Gentiles (10:1-16).
2. Nephi explains that all men can know the mysteries of God by the power of the Holy Ghost (10:17-22).
3. Nephi reports the great visions and prophecies given to him (11-14).
4. Overcome by the hardness of his brethren, Nephi interprets the great vision to his family, rehearsing one of Isaiah's prophecies as support (15:2-16:5).
5. Lehi takes his family further into the wilderness (16:9-17:6).
6. Nephi builds a ship and records his most complete reply to the murmuring of his brothers (17:7-18:4).
- 5'. Lehi takes his family across the ocean in the ship (18:5-25).
- 4'. Concerned for those at Jerusalem, Nephi writes for his descendants and all the house of Israel and explains the ancient prophecies of a Redeemer (19:3-23).
- 3'. Nephi quotes chapters of a prophecy from Isaiah which parallels portions of his own great vision (20-21).
- 2'. Nephi explains to his brethren that prophecies are only to be understood by the same Spirit that also manifested these things to the prophets (22:1-3).
- 1'. Nephi offers a final summary of the prophecies about the Jews and the Gentiles, drawing primarily from the language of the great vision but also from the brass plates (22:3-28).

Crossing into the Heavens



1 Nephi 10

1 And now I, Nephi, proceed to give an account upon ^athese plates of my proceedings, and my reign and ministry; wherefore, to proceed with mine account, I must speak somewhat of the things of my father, and also of my brethren.

2 For behold, it came to pass after my father had made an end of speaking the words of his ^adream, and also of exhorting them to all diligence, he spake unto them concerning the Jews—

3 That after they should be destroyed, even that great city ^aJerusalem, and many be ^bcarried away captive into ^cBabylon, according to the own due time of the Lord, they should ^dreturn again, yea, even be brought back out of captivity; and after they should be brought back out of captivity they should possess again the land of their inheritance.

4 Yea, even ^asix hundred years from the time that my father left Jerusalem, a ^bprophet would the Lord God raise up among the ^cJews—even a ^dMessiah, or, in other words, a Savior of the world.

The Nephite Conception of God

Israel's religion prior to the Deuteronomistic reform contained several ideas that Lehi and his family transported to the New World. Elements of that pre-reform religion visible in the Book of Mormon include:

1. A Father-God, "El who is also called *el elyon* or "The Most High God" (1 Nephi 11.6).

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5. Yahweh as Messiah (1 Nephi 10.4).

In the Book of Mormon, Yahweh is the God of Israel and Yahweh is the Messiah [who will die to redeem them]. Those equivalencies are the bedrock of Nephite theology.

(Brant Gardner, The Nephite Understanding of God, in *Second Witness: Analytical and Textual Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, p. 214-217)



Lehi's Dream and Nephi's Visions

Lehi (1 Nephi 8)

Genre= allegory

Personal (individuals)

Mostly uninterpreted

Universal application

Timeless

Nephi (1 Nephi 11-14)

Genre= apocalypse

Social (world cultures & systems)

Mostly interpreted

Historical application

Oriented in time



Nephi's Visions





What was the
“Great
Whore” to
John?

See: Revelation 17.9;
1 Nephi 14.24-28

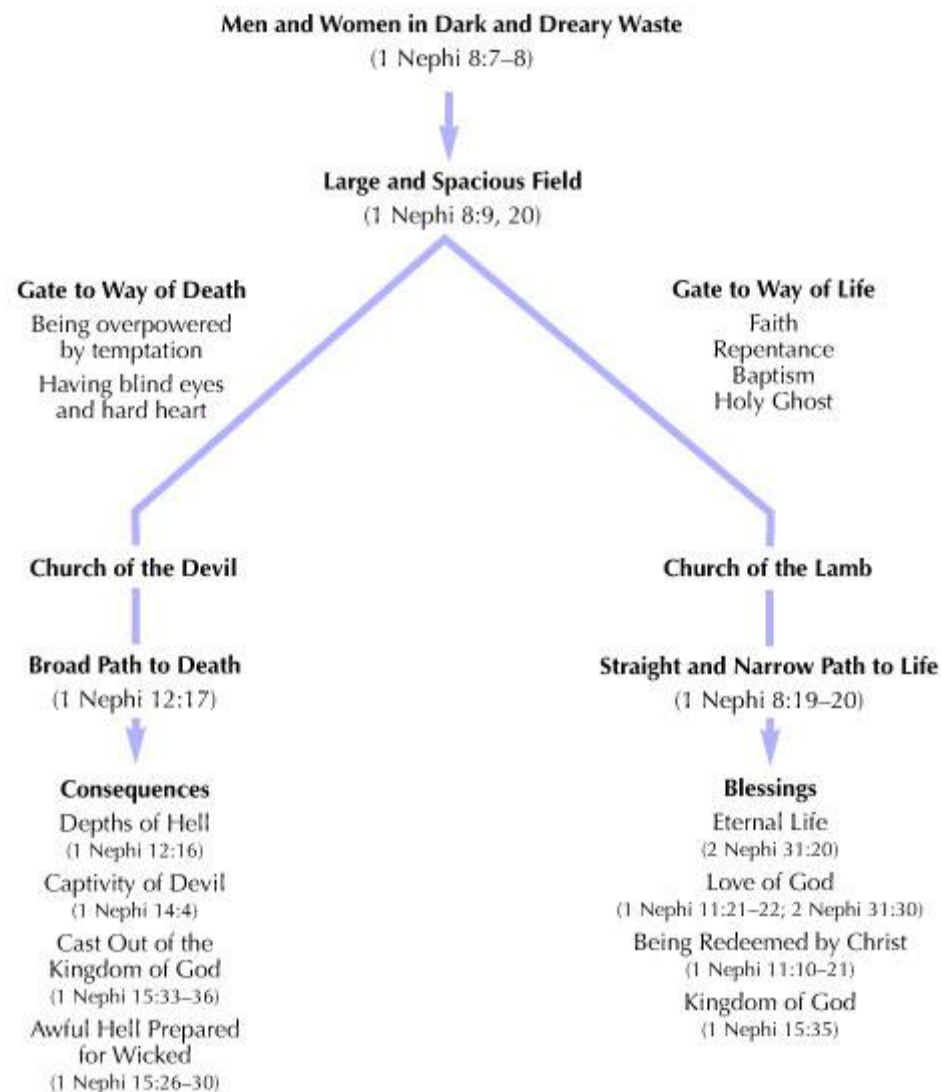


Apocalyptic Literature expresses duality

Behold there are save two churches only... (1 Nephi 14.10)

The Ways of Life and Death

The Visionary Perception of Lehi and Nephi (1 Nephi 8; 11–15; 2 Nephi 31:17–32:5)



My church – [H5712](#) “edah” עֵדָה- assembly

עֵדָה êdâh, ay-daw'; feminine of [H5707](#) in the original sense of fixture; a stated assemblage (specifically, a concourse, or generally, a family or crowd):—assembly, company, congregation, multitude, people, swarm. Compare [H5713](#).

Behold, I do not bring it (the Book of Mormon) to destroy that which they have received, but to build it up. And for this cause have I said... I will establish my church among them. (D&C 10.52-53)

Behold, this is my doctrine- whosoever repenteth and cometh unto me, the same is my church. (D&C 10.67)

Symbols	Meaning	Jews (1 Nephi 11)	Nephites (1 Nephi 12)	Gentiles (1 Nephi 13-14)
Tree of Life	Representation of the Love of God - the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Ne. 11:7,20-21, 25)	Whole life of Jesus Christ: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • :20 – Birth • :27 – Baptism • :28 – Ministry • :29 – Twelve Apostles • :31 – Miracles • :32 – Crucifixion 	: 6 The Lamb of God descended out of heaven	13:35-37; 14:7 – The Restoration of the Gospel
Rod of Iron	Word of God (1 Ne. 11:25-30, 15:24)	Ways the Word of God revealed: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. :27 – Redeemer 2. :27 – Prophet (John the Baptist) 3. :27 – Holy Ghost 4. :29 – Twelve Apostles 5. :30 – Angels 	:7-10 The Twelve Apostles in America	13:38-41 – The Bible, the Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, Pearl of Great Price
Mist of Darkness	Temptations of the Devil: Blind eyes and hardened hearts (1 Ne. 12:17)	:32 Judged the Son of the everlasting God WHY? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • John 19:6-7 – The Jews’ twisted tradition of oral and written law of Moses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • :13-15, 17, 19 – Nephites battle Lamanites • Alma 48:14, 3 Ne. 4:10, 30 – They went to battle without God’s approval or help • Mormon 3:11-13 – Nephites hearts are blinded and hard because they will not repent 	1 Ne. 13:20-29 – Removal of plain and precious truths to “ pervert right ways of the Lord, blind the eyes and harden the hearts of the children of men.”
Great and Spacious Building	Pride of the world, wisdom thereof and vain ambitions (1 Ne. 11:35-36, 12:18) Fall exceedingly great (2 Ne. 26:11)	Building destroyed the Rod of Iron: How? :33-36 <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Son of God crucified 2. Multitudes gathered to fight the twelve apostles of the Lamb 3. Great Apostasy begins 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • :18-19 – Pride of Nephites, temptations of the devil. • Mormon 1:16 – willfully rebelled against God • Mormon 2:15 – day of grace passed with them 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 13:5-9 – Great and abominable seeks riches, harlots, praise of the world, destroy the saints • 13:26 - took away purity of the Bible and the covenants of the Lord • 14:10-13 – whore of all the earth • 2 Ne. 10:16 – Not for me, then against me
Filthy River	Depths of Hell, Filthiness, Misery (1 Ne. 12:16, 15:26-29)	How does misery afflict the Jews because they crucified Christ? 1 Ne. 19:13-14 <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Scourged by all people 2. Wander in the flesh 3. Perish 4. Hiss and byword 5. Hated among all nations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • :20-23, Mormon 5:15 – Wars, dwindle in unbelief, dark loathsome, filthy people, full of idleness and abominations • Mormon 8:7-8 – Nephites destroyed, Lamanites continually at war 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14:15, 17 – Wrath of God poured out on the great and abominable • 14:15-16 – Wars and rumors of wars among all nations
		(1 Ne. 8:18 – Never partake of fruit)	(1 Ne. 8:24-28- Partake, cling, ashamed, lost)	(1 Ne. 8:30-33 – press forward, continually holding, fell down, heeded not)

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Don't write John's vision!

Ἀποκάλυψις

1 Nephi 14.24-29

24 And behold, the things which this ^aapostle of the Lamb shall write are many things which thou hast seen; and behold, the remainder **shalt thou see.**

25 But the things which thou shalt see hereafter **thou shalt not write;** for the Lord God hath ordained the apostle of the Lamb of God that he should ^awrite them.

26 And also **others who have been,** to them hath he shown all things, and they have ^awritten them; and they are ^bsealed up to come forth in their purity, according to the truth which is in the Lamb, in the own due time of the Lord, unto the house of Israel.

27 And I, Nephi, heard and bear record, that the name of the apostle of the Lamb was ^aJohn, according to the word of the angel.

28 And behold, I, Nephi, am forbidden that I should write the remainder of the things which I saw and heard; wherefore the things which I have written sufficeth me; and I have written but a **small part** of the things which I saw.

29 And I bear record that I saw the things which my ^afather saw, and the angel of the Lord did make them known unto me.

Three things that
take us off the
path include:

Forbidden paths
1 Nephi 8.28

Strange roads
1 Nephi 8.32

The broad road
1 Nephi 12.17



The question:

If the rod is so great, why don't Heavenly Father's children take hold of it?



The question is: if the rod is so great, why don't Heavenly Father's children take hold of it? Answer: The mist – it is real, and it blinds us to the love of God. The one thing the mist seems to leave open to view is the building (the false teaching).

Reasons for not seeing the rod (mists in our day):

Anger – Mosiah 10.12-17

Guilt – Mosiah 2.38

Offense – Mosiah 10.12-17

The belief that it will not help us specifically – 1 Nephi 15.8-9

What other reasons exist for young people? What are we missing?



Clinging...

Even with faith, commitment, and the word of God, this group eventually was lost—perhaps because they only periodically read or studied or searched the scriptures. Clinging to the rod of iron suggests to me only occasional “bursts” of study or irregular dipping rather than consistent, ongoing immersion in the word of God.

(Elder Bednar, Holding Fast to the Rod, October conference 2011)

Other examples of clinging

What is the whole point of the rod?

What is its purpose?

Can we be “clinging” to the wrong things?

2 And it came to pass that I beheld my brethren, and they were disputing one with another concerning the things which my father had spoken unto them.

3 For he truly spake many great things unto them, which were hard to be understood, save a man should inquire of the Lord; and they being hard in their hearts, therefore they did not look unto the Lord as they ought.

4 And now I, Nephi, was grieved because of the hardness of their hearts, and also, because of the things which I had seen, and knew they must unavoidably come to pass because of the great wickedness of the children of men.

5 And it came to pass that I was overcome because of my afflictions, for I considered that mine afflictions were great above all, because of the destruction of my people, for I had beheld their fall.

6 And it came to pass that after I had received strength I spake unto my brethren, desiring to know of them the cause of their disputations.

7 And they said: Behold, we cannot understand the words which our father hath spoken concerning the natural branches of the olive tree, and also concerning the Gentiles.

8 And I said unto them: Have ye inquired of the Lord?

9 And they said unto me: "We have not; for the Lord maketh no such thing known unto us.

10 Behold, I said unto them: How is it that ye do not keep the commandments of the Lord? How is it that ye will perish, because of the hardness of your hearts?

11 Do ye not remember the things which the Lord hath said?—If ye will not harden your hearts, and ask me in faith, believing that ye shall receive, with diligence in keeping my commandments, surely these things shall be made known unto you.

12 Behold, I say unto you, that the house of Israel was compared unto an olive tree, by the Spirit of the Lord which was in our father; and behold are we not broken off from the house of Israel, and are we not a branch of the house of Israel?

13 And now, the thing which our father meaneth concerning the grafting in of the natural branches through the fulness of the Gentiles, is, that in the latter days, when our seed shall have dwindled in unbelief, yea, for the space of many years, and many generations after the Messiah shall be manifested in body unto the children of men, then shall the fulness of the gospel of the Messiah come unto the Gentiles, and from the Gentiles unto the remnant of our seed—

14 And at that day shall the remnant of our seed know that they are of the house of Israel, and that they are the covenant people of the Lord; and then shall they know and

come to the knowledge of their forefathers, and also to the knowledge of the gospel of their Redeemer, which was ministered unto their fathers by him; wherefore, they shall come to the knowledge of their Redeemer and the very points of his doctrine, that they may know how to come unto him and be saved.

15 And then at that day will they not rejoice and give praise unto their everlasting God, their rock and their salvation? Yea, at that day, will they not receive the strength and nourishment from the true vine? Yea, will they not come unto the true fold of God?

16 Behold, I say unto you, Yea; they shall be remembered again among the house of Israel; they shall be grafted in, being a natural branch of the olive tree, into the true olive tree.

17 And this is what our father meaneth; and he meaneth that it will not come to pass until after they are scattered by the Gentiles; and he meaneth that it shall come by way of the Gentiles, that the Lord may show his power unto the Gentiles, for the very cause that he shall be rejected of the Jews, or of the house of Israel.

18 Wherefore, our father hath not spoken of our seed alone, but also of all the house of Israel, pointing to the covenant which should be fulfilled in the latter days; which covenant the Lord made to our father Abraham, saying: In thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed.



1 Nephi 15.20