

Genesis 1-2

University of Utah Institute

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Some things we know

Although we are not told exactly how the Lord brought about the creative processes, we are taught several essential concepts:

First, God, the Father of all men, instituted the creation of this world as a place for men to come to mortality and progress toward their eternal destiny.

Second, man is the offspring of deity.

Third, the world was not created by chance forces or random accident.



Some things we know

Fourth, Adam was the first man and the first flesh on the earth (see Reading 2-16 for a definition of “first flesh” [Moses 3:7]).

Fifth, Adam fell from a state of innocence and immortality, and his fall affected all life upon the earth as well as the earth itself.

Sixth, the Atonement of Jesus Christ was planned before the world was ever created so that men could come to a fallen earth, overcome death and their sins, and return to live with God.

Some things we do not

We do not know exactly how old the earth is.

We do not totally understand how the diversity of life came to be, nor the exact processes by which these life forms came to be in their present condition.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints does not have an official position regarding evolution or the age of the earth. (<https://ldsscriptureteachings.org/2014/01/19/gospel-doctrine-notes-old-testament-lesson-3/>)

Science and Mormonism: Past, Present, Future

David H. Bailey

IN 1832, WHILE JOSEPH SMITH was organizing the Mormon church, Ralph Waldo Emerson wryly observed, "The Religion that is afraid of science dishonours God and commits suicide."¹ One hundred sixty-four years later, as the church faces a new century and a new millennium, issues in the arena of science and religion are still before us.

Will the church be able to retain the essence of its theology in the face of challenges from science? Will the church's discourse on scientific topics be marked by fundamentalism, isolationism, or progressivism? Will the church be able to retain its large contingent of professional scientists? Will it be able to produce new scientists in fields germane to this discussion? Will Mormon youth be able to sort out conflicts between faith and science? What will be the likely outcome of the faith *versus* science issues currently being discussed in LDS literature? What entirely new issues will emerge? What is the likelihood that the church will be able to deal with these new issues?

A GLANCE AT THE PAST

Before answering these questions we first need to review briefly the history of scientific thought in the LDS movement. Additional information can be obtained in the helpful works by Duane Jeffery² and Erich Robert Paul.³

At a time when other Christian faiths were still smarting from the

1. From Ralph Waldo Emerson's journal, cited in J. L. Davis et al., eds., *A Treasury of American Literature* (New York: Grolier, 1948), 1:703.

2. Duane Jeffery, "Seers, Savants and Evolution: The Uncomfortable Interface," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 8 (Autumn 1974): 41-75.

3. Erich R. Paul, *Science, Religion, and Mormon Cosmology* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992). Sadly, Paul died of cancer in October 1994.

Seers, Savants and Evolution: The Uncomfortable Interface

DUANE E. JEFFREY

Ever since his great synthesis, Darwin's name has been a source of discomfort to the religious world. Too sweeping to be fully fathomed, too revolutionary to be easily accepted, but too well documented to be ignored, his concepts of evolution¹ by natural selection have been hotly debated now for well over a century.² The facts of evolution as a current and on-going process are there for the observation of any who will exercise the honesty and take the time to look. The question of whether species evolve is no longer open; it has long since been resolved affirmatively.

This is not to say, however, that we understand all the processes at work in evolving populations, or that we can answer unequivocally all the detailed questions concerning life forms in the distant past. But such shortcomings do not negate



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Mormon Rhetoric and the Theory of Organic Evolution

Kurt Wilford Laird

Brigham Young University - Provo

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Peshat: The literal level of meaning, the simple level, what the text actually says.

Remez: The allegorical level, what the text represents – ideas, philosophic truths, scientific principles, historical trends, and so forth.

Derash: The sermonic level, what the text means to people in terms of bettering their daily lives and spiritual situation.

Sod: The mystical level, what the text signifies to mystics and how it reveals God to them.

(Stephen M. Wylen, *Setting of Silver: An Introduction to Judaism*, 17.)

Ways to read Genesis – or any religious text

PaRDeS

Peshat פְּשָׁט - “surface” or the literal (direct) meaning.

Remez רִמְזָה – “hints” or the deep (allegoric: hidden or symbolic) meaning beyond just the literal sense.

Derash דְּרָשָׁה from Hebrew *darash*: “inquire” (“seek”) – the comparative midrashic or sermon type meaning.

Sod סוֹד pronounced with a long O as in ‘lore’ - “secret” (“mystery”) or the esoteric/mystical meaning, as given through inspiration or revelation.



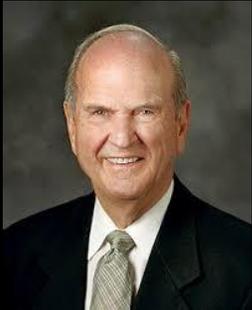
Genesis 2:21-25

Message of the Rib

An example of *Remez & Derash*

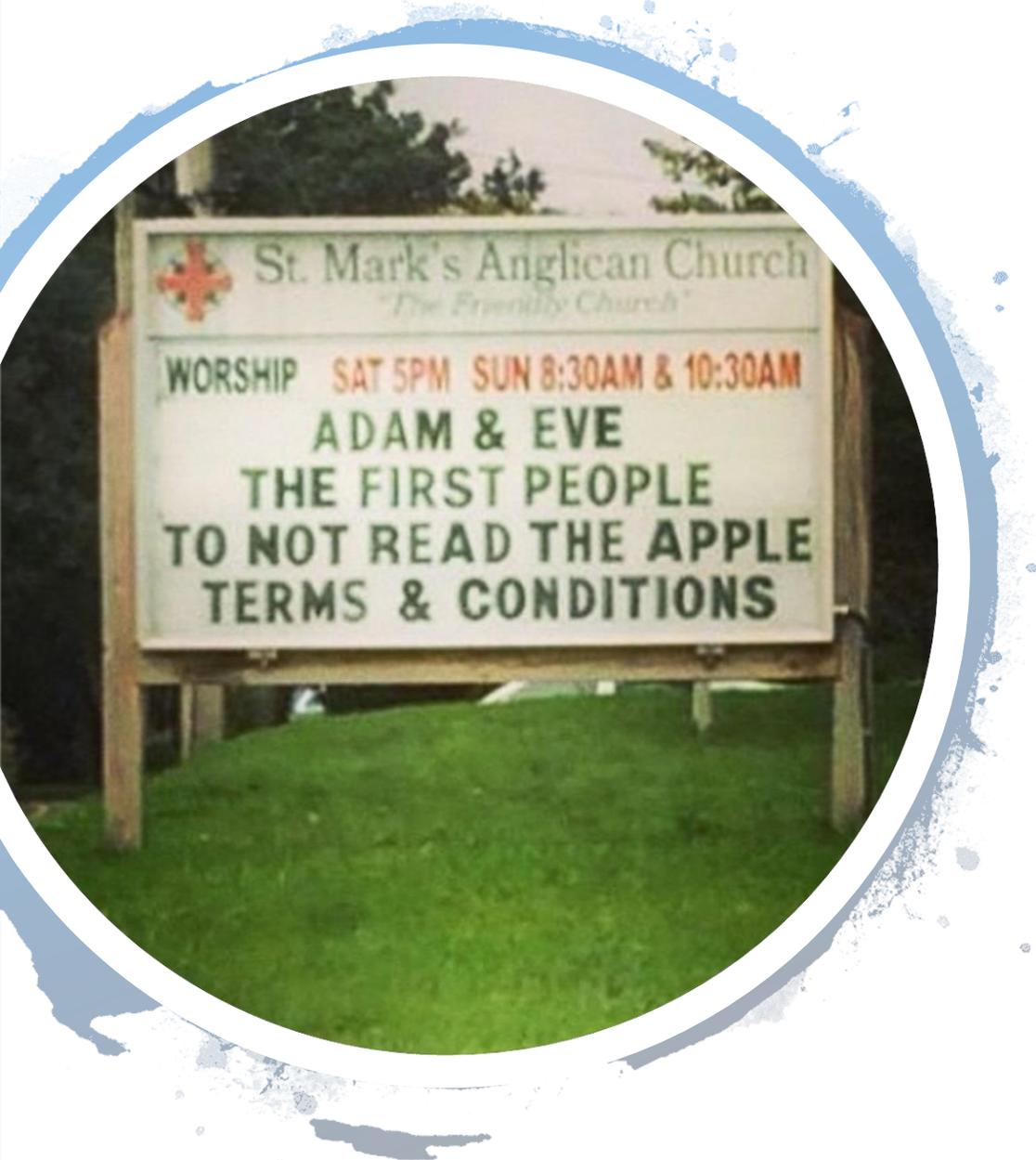
From the rib of Adam, Eve was formed... The rib signifies neither dominion nor subservience, but a lateral relationship as partners, to work and to live, side by side.

(Elder Russell M. Nelson, Lessons from Eve, Ensign November 1987. See also: <http://bit.ly/nHYInL>)



The role of woman was fixed even before she was created, and God is the same yesterday, today, and forever. It is written: “And I, God, created man in mine own image, in the image of mine Only Begotten created I him; male and female created I them. [The story of the rib, of course, is figurative.] (President Kimball, The Blessings and Responsibilities of Motherhood, Ensign, April 1975) see also: <http://bit.ly/oen7LM>





What is our understanding of the Fall of Adam and Eve?

What questions do you have?

How does this affect how we read scripture?

What do Adam and Eve represent?

How can we read this story as *derash*, in other words, how can we spiritually grow from this story?

Effects of the Fall:

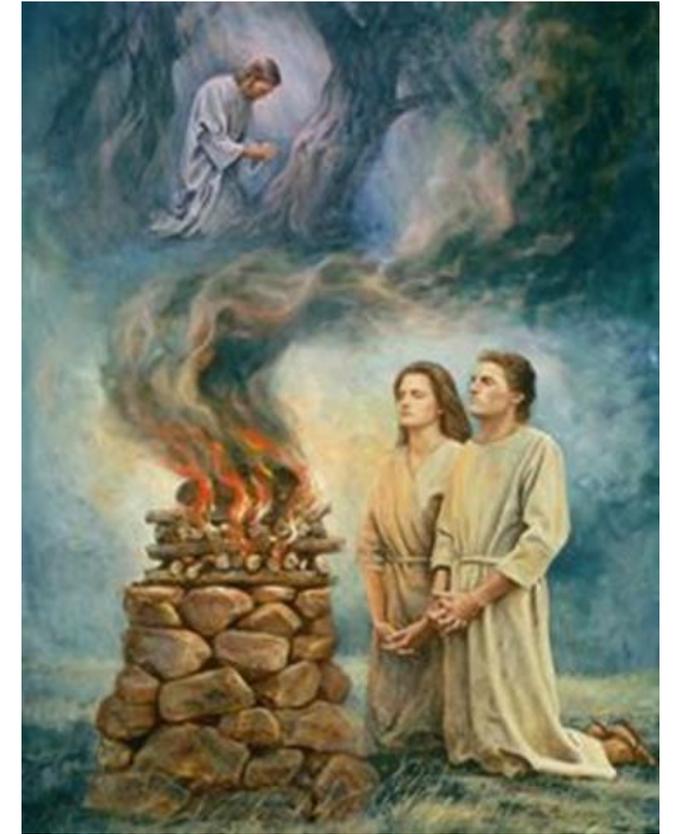
1. 2 Nephi 9:7-9
2. Moses 4:19-32
3. Alma 12:32
4. Genesis 2:17
5. D&C 29:40-42
6. Romans 5:12
7. 1 Corinthians 15:22

The Fall of Adam & Eve

1. The first judgement – Genesis 2:17, Moses 3:16-17- note the difference

Conditions of life before the Fall-

1. No death- 2 Nephi 2:22
2. No children- 2 Nephi 2:23
3. No sin- 2 Nephi 2:23
4. No spiritual death- Moses 5:4



LDS Approaches to the text

Why didn't God just "make man mortal" to begin with?

Now, perhaps those who are not in the habit of reflecting upon this matter, may suppose that when Adam was placed on the earth, and Eve, his wife, they were mortal, like unto us; but that was not so. God did not make a mortal being. It would be contrary to this great goodness to make a man mortal, subject to pain, subject to sickness, subject to death. When he made this creation, and when he made these two intelligent beings and placed them upon this creation, he made them after his own likeness and his own image. He did not make them mortal, but he made them immortal, like unto himself. If he had made them mortal, and subject to pain, there would have been some cause, among intelligent beings, to say that the Lord subjected man, without a cause, to afflictions, sorrows, death and mortality. But he could not do this; it was contrary to the nature of his attributes, contrary to the nature of that infinite goodness which dwells in the bosom of the Father and the Son, to make a being subject to any kind of pain. (Orson Pratt, Journal of Discourses, 26 vols. [London: Latter-day Saints' Book Depot, 1854-1886], 21: 290 – 291.)

The Fall & (conflicting) Commandments

In the words of President Joseph Fielding Smith: “Now this is the way I interpret that. The Lord said to Adam, here is the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. If you want to stay here then you cannot eat of that fruit. If you want to stay here then I forbid you to eat it. But you may act for yourself and you may eat of it if you want to. And if you eat it you will die.”

(Robert L. Millet and Kent P. Jackson, eds., *Studies in Scripture, Vol. 2: The Pearl of Great Price* [Salt Lake City: Randall Book, 1985], 94.)



The Fall & (conflicting) Commandments

“What, therefore, did God really say to them in the garden? I suggest that He might have said something like the following: ‘If you want to stay in the Garden of Eden with no cares and no possibility of growth, you should not eat from the tree of knowledge of good and evil. However, if you desire to grow and receive all that I have in store for you, you will have to leave the garden. If you eat of the tree, you will be cast out of the garden into the earth and into mortality, and you will die both temporally and spiritually, but you will open the door for yourselves and for all humanity to receive eternal life like I have. The choice is yours.’ In other words, God gave them information.”

(Keller, Roger R. 1990. *Adam: As Understood by Four Men Who Shaped Western Christianity*. In Joseph Fielding McConkie and Robert L. Millet, eds. *The Man Adam*. [Salt Lake City, UT: Bookcraft.], p. 104)

The Cosmos as a Temple

Rest is the goal of creation

The cosmos is portrayed as a temple complex in the Bible

The temple is constructed and viewed as a microcosm in the Bible

Finding rest

Texts describing the creation of the world and those describing the construction of a shrine are parallel. The Temple and the world stand in an intimate and intrinsic connection. The two projects cannot ultimately be distinguished or disengaged. Each recounts how God brought about an environment in which he can find “rest.”

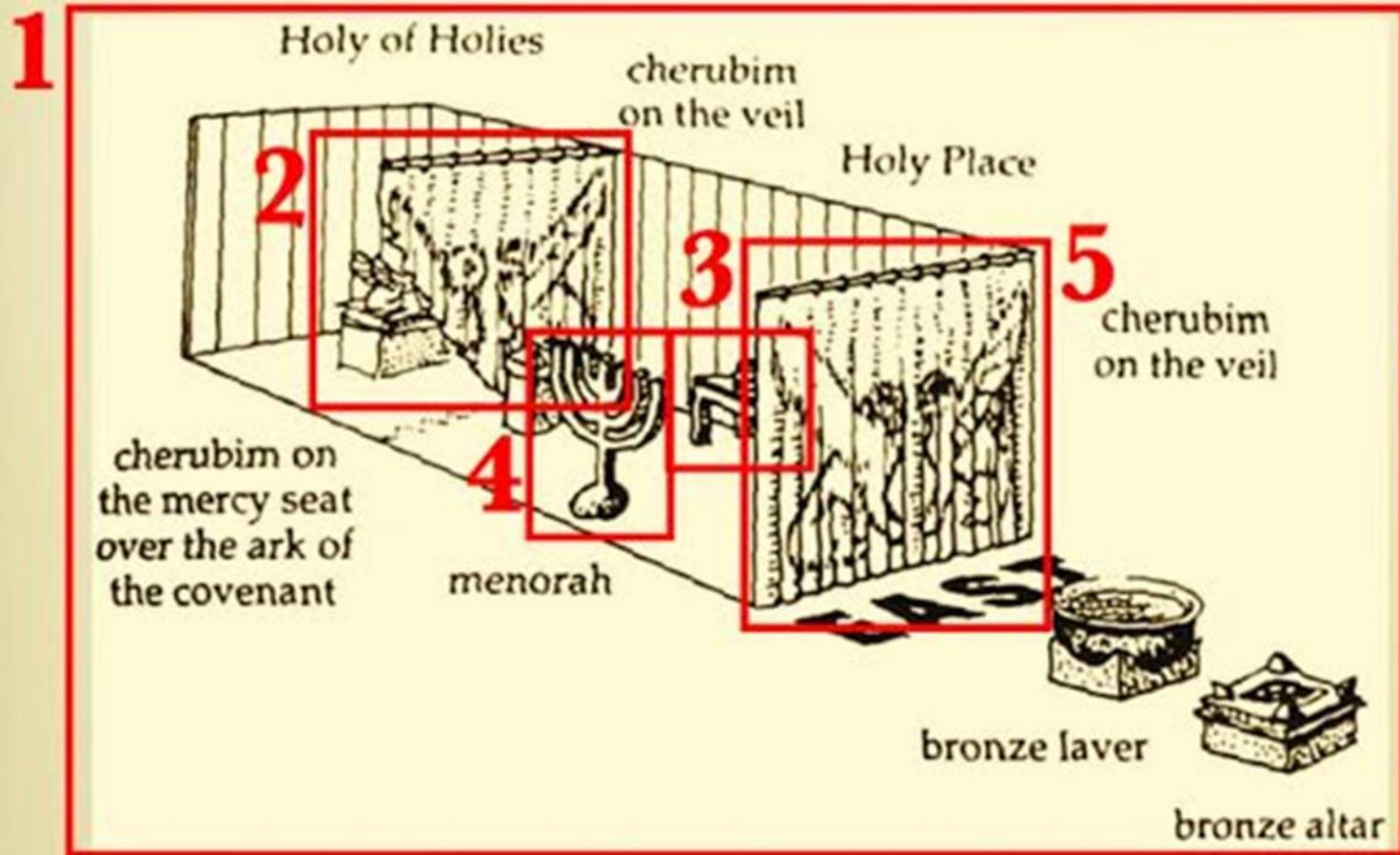
(Jon D. Levenson, *The Temple and the World*, *The Journal of Religion*, Vol. 64, No. 3, July 1984, p. 288.

	Work Declared Good	Completion Formula	Blessing Pronounced	Multiply and Fill the Earth	Curious Workmanship	Mountain Theophany
Creation	Gen. 1:31 "And God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good"	Gen. 2:1 "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them"	Gen. 2:3 "And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it"	Gen. 1:28 "And God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth"	Gen. 1:11–12, 20–22, 24–25 The variety of species is emphasized.	
Deluge	Gen. 9:11–17 God establishes a covenant	Gen. 6:22; 7:5 "Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he"	Gen. 9:1 "And God blessed Noah and his sons"	Gen. 8:17; 9:1 "Bring forth with thee every living thing . . . that they may breed abundantly in the earth, and be fruitful, and multiply upon the earth"	Gen. 6:14–16 Divine pattern for building the ark specified	
Tabernacle	Ex. 39:43; cf. 39:43 "And 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. 39:32; cf. 39:43; 40:33 "And the children of Israel did according to all that the Lord commanded Moses, so did they"	Ex. 39:43 "And Moses blessed them"	Josh. 18:1 "And 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"	Ex. 31:3–4 "I have filled [Bezaleel] with the spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship. To devise cunning works in gold, and in silver, and in brass"	Ex. 24:12 "And the Lord said unto Moses, Come up to me into the mount"
Nephi's Ship	1 Ne. 18:4 "And it came to pass that after I had finished the ship, according to the word of the Lord, my brethren beheld that it was good"	1 Ne. 18:4 "And it came to pass that after I had finished the ship, according to the word of the Lord . . ."	1 Ne. 18:24 "Wherefore, we were blessed in abundance"	1 Ne. 18:24 "And it came to pass that we did begin to till the earth, and we began to plant seeds"	1 Ne. 18:1; cf. 18:2 "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. 17:7; cf. 17:8 "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"

Alan Goff, Boats, Beginnings, and Repetitions, *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 1/1 (1992). See:

<https://bit.ly/2QexDOh>

DAYS OF CREATION AND THE TEMPLE



Michael P. Lyon, 1952-; *Sacred Topography of Eden and the Temple*, 1994 (detail)

DAY	UNIVERSE	MISHKAN
1	"He stretches out the heavens <i>like a curtain.</i> " Psalms 104:2	"You shall make <i>curtains . . .</i> " Exodus 26:7
2	"Let there be an expanse in the middle of the waters, and <i>let it divide . . .</i> " Genesis 1:6	". . . and the veil <i>shall divide</i> the holy place from the most holy for you." Exodus 26:33
3	God said, "Let the water under the sky be gathered together..." Genesis 1:9	"You are to make a basin of bronze...for washing. Place it between the tent of meeting and the altar, and put water in it." Exodus 30:18
4	"Let there be lights in the dome of the sky..." Genesis 1:14	"You are to make a menorah of pure gold..." Exodus 25:31
5	". . . let birds fly above the earth in the open dome of the sky." Genesis 1:20	"The cherubim will have their wings spread out above..." Exodus 25:20
6	"God created man in his own image..." Genesis 1:27	"Bring Aaron your brother..." Exodus 28:1
7	"The heavens and the earth were finished, and all their vast array." Genesis 2:1	"Thus all the work of the tabernacle of the Tent of Meeting was finished..." Exodus 39:32

CREATION

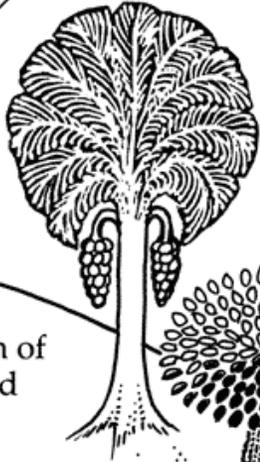
Moving East

FALL

Moving West

ATONEMENT

throne in heaven



tree of life

tree of the knowledge of good and evil

mountain of the Lord

Garden of Eden



cherubim and flaming sword

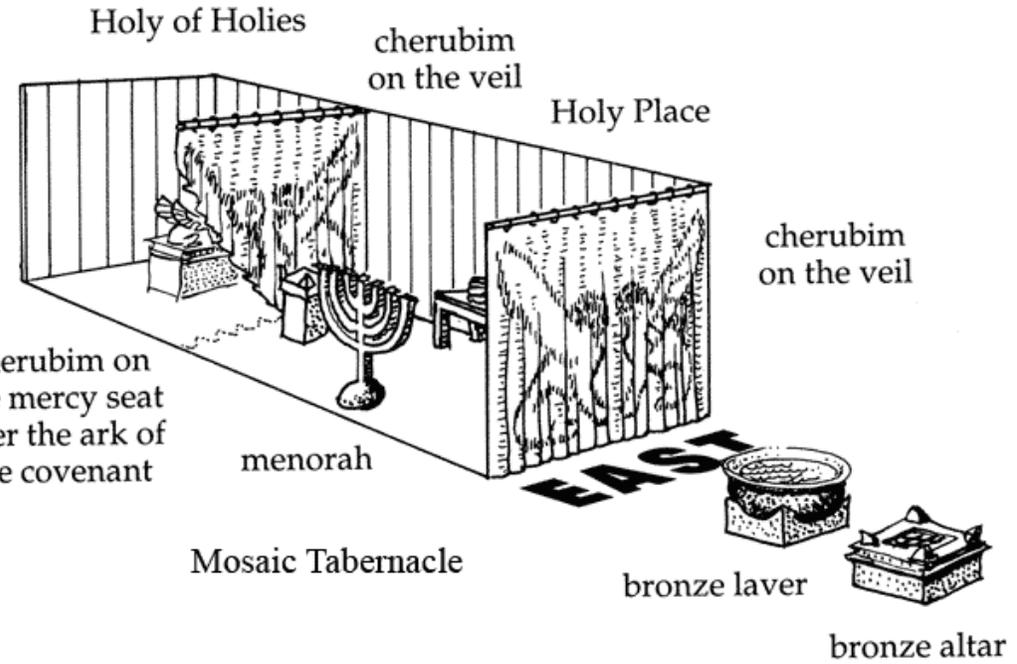
Euphrates

Hidekel

Pison

Gihon

Adam & Eve worship at altar



Daniel Parry, *Temples of the Ancient World*, "Garden of Eden, Prototypical Sanctuary"

Louis Ginzberg's reconstruction of ancient Jewish sources is consistent with this overall idea that Genesis 1 may have been used as part of Israelite temple liturgy:

God told the angels: On the first day of creation, I shall make the heavens and stretch them out; so will Israel raise up the tabernacle as the dwelling place of my Glory.^[1] On the second day I shall put a division between the terrestrial waters and the heavenly waters, so will [my servant Moses] hang up a veil in the tabernacle to divide the Holy Place and the Most Holy.^[2] On the third day I shall make the earth to put forth grass and herbs; so will he, in obedience to my commands, prepare shewbread before me.^[3] On the fourth day I shall make the luminaries;^[4] so he will stretch out a golden candlestick [menorah] before me.^[5] On the fifth day I shall create the birds; so he will fashion the cherubim with outstretched wings.^[6] On the sixth day I shall create man; so will Israel set aside a man from the sons of Aaron as high priest for my service.^[7]

1. Exodus 40:17-19.
2. Exodus 40:20-21.
3. Exodus 12:8, 25:30
4. For a discussion how the notion of “priestly time” is reflected in the story of the creation of the luminaries, see Mark S. Smith, *The Priestly Vision of Genesis 1*, pp. 93-94, 97-98. If we take a functional view of Creation, then the luminaries are among the functionaries (J. H. Walton, *Lost World*, pp. 63-66).
5. Exodus 25:31-40, 37:17-24.
6. Exodus 25:18-22, 37:6-9.
7. See Exodus 40:12-15. See also Mark S. Smith, *Priestly Vision of Genesis 1*, pp. 98-102. “Through Genesis 1 we come to understand that God has given us a privileged role in the functioning of His cosmic temple. He has tailored the world to our needs, not to His (for He has no needs). It is His place, but it is designed for us and we are in relationship with Him” (John H. Walton, *The Lost World of Genesis One*, p. 149). See Fletcher-Louis for the idea that certain individuals (e.g., the high priest, as possessor of the “glory of Adam”) were even “deemed worthy of worship because they were God’s Image, his living idols” (C. H. T. Fletcher-Louis, *Jewish Roots*, p. 128; cf. S. Bunta, *Likeness*). Cf. John 14:6-13.

Outer Courtyard
(Telestial World)

Holy Place
Garden of Eden
(Terrestrial World)

Holy of Holies
Presence of God
Tree of Life
(Celestial World)

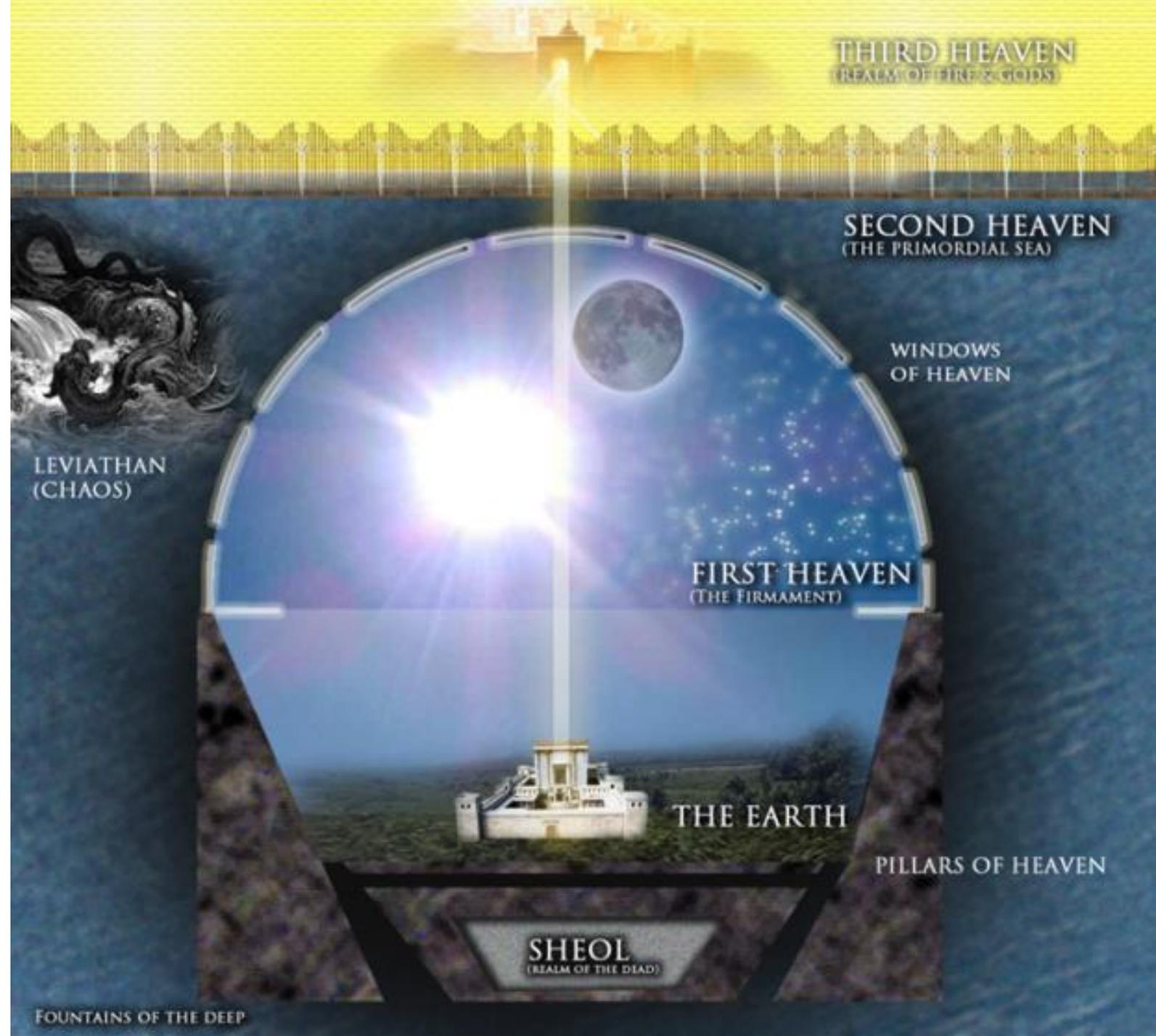
Tree of Knowledge
Veil



Genesis 3:21
Moses 5:5-7



Cosmology



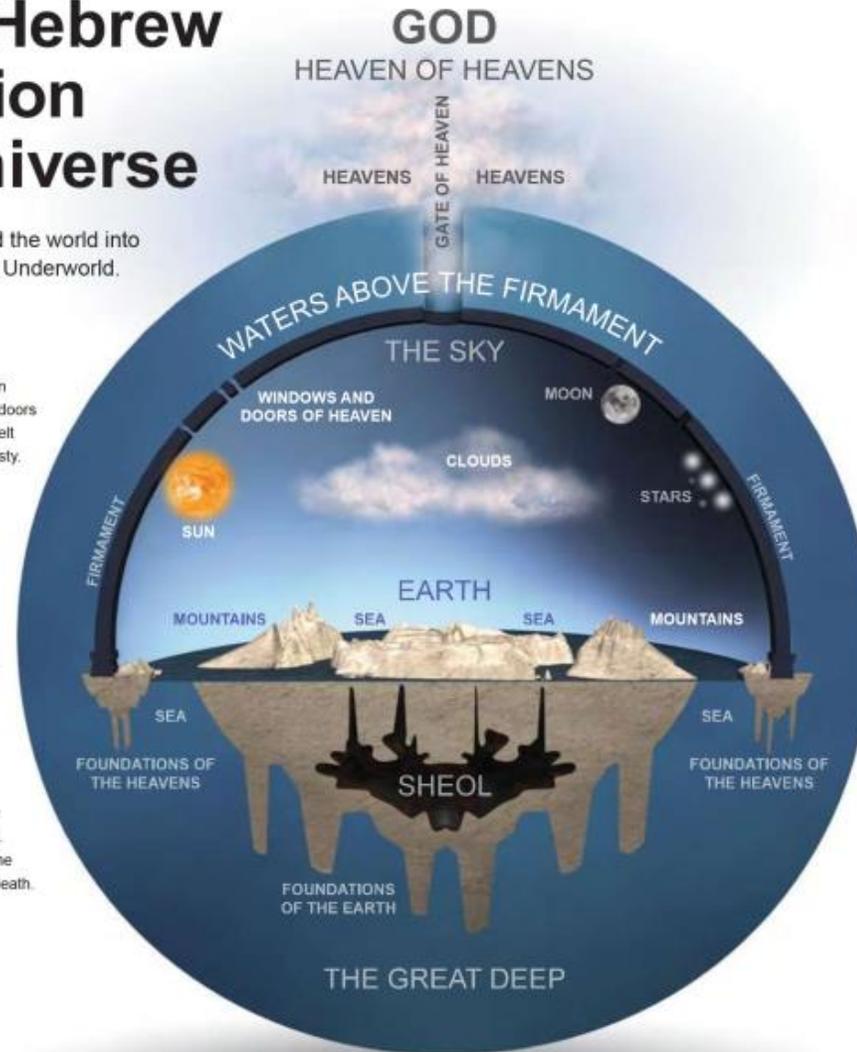
Ancient Hebrew Conception of the Universe

The ancient Israelites divided the world into Heaven, Earth, Sea, and the Underworld.

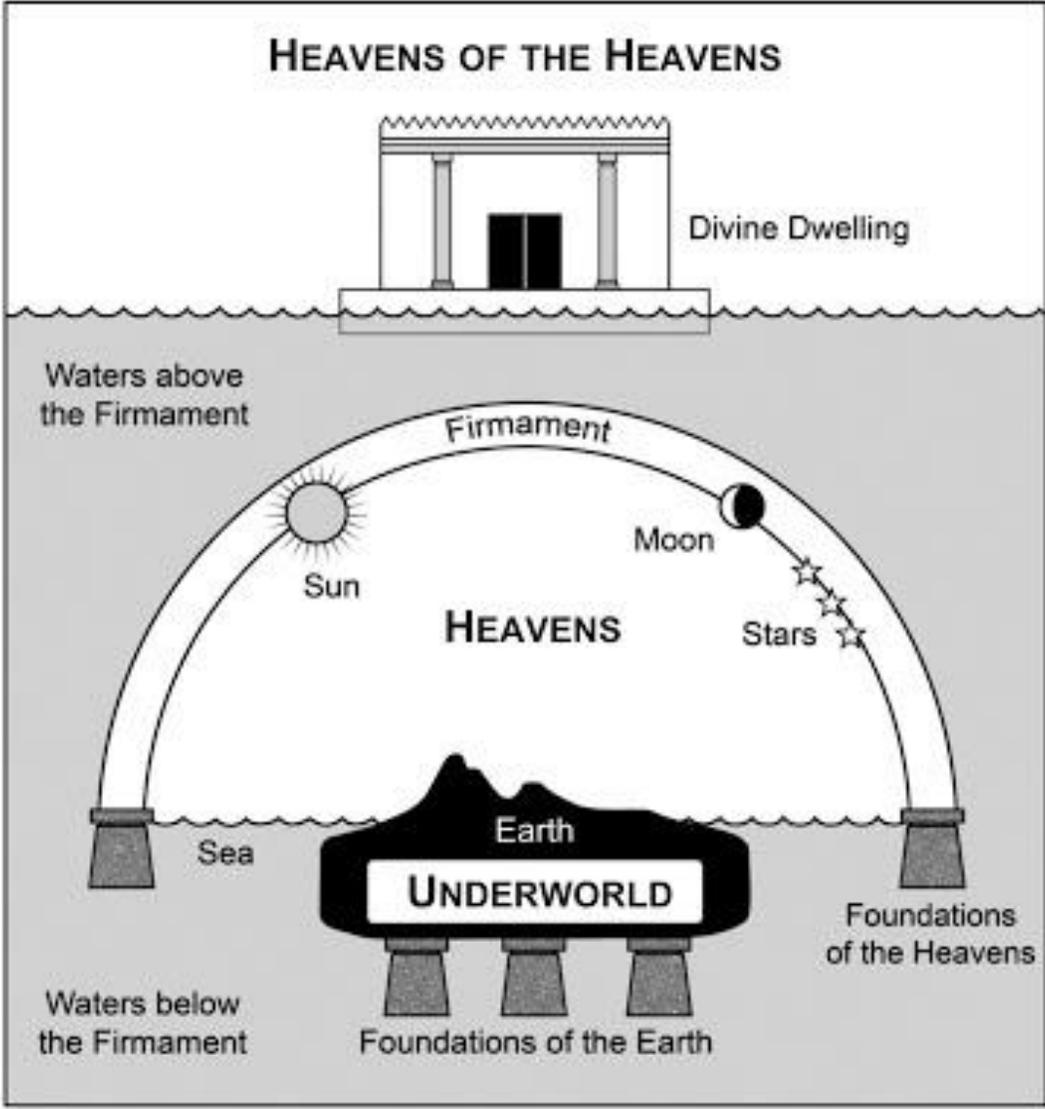
They viewed the sky as a vault resting on foundations—perhaps mountains—with doors and windows that let in the rain. God dwelt above the sky, hidden in cloud and majesty.

The world was viewed as a disk floating on the waters, secured or moored by pillars. The earth was the only known domain—the realm beyond it was considered unknowable.

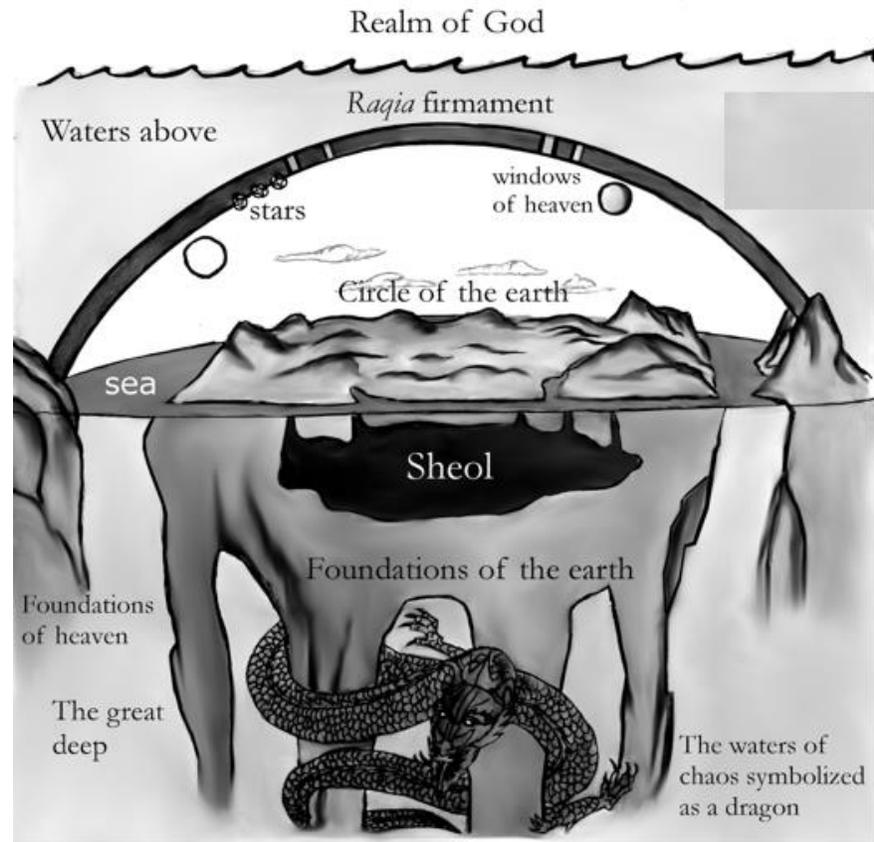
The Underworld (Sheol) was a watery or dusty prison from which no one returned. Regarded as a physical place beneath the earth, it could be reached only through death.



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ANCIENT ISRAELITE COSMOLOGY



THE FIRMAMENT
Gen 1:7-8; Job 37:18;
Ex 24:10; Ezk 1:22-26

CIRCLE OF EARTH
Isa 40:22; Job 26:10;
Prov 8:27

WATERS ABOVE
Gen 1:7-8; Ps 148:4-6

FOUNDATIONS OF EARTH
Job 9:6; Ps 75:3;
102:25

REALM OF GOD
Ps 104:2-3; 29:10;
Job 22:12-14

FOUNDATIONS OF HEAVEN
Job 26:11; 2 Sam 22:8

WINDOWS OF HEAVEN
Gen 7:11; 8:2; Is 24:18

THE CHAOS DRAGON
Ps 74:13-15; Job 7:12;
9:13; 26:12-13