



Genesis 1-2; Moses 2-3; Abraham 4-5

Come Follow Me

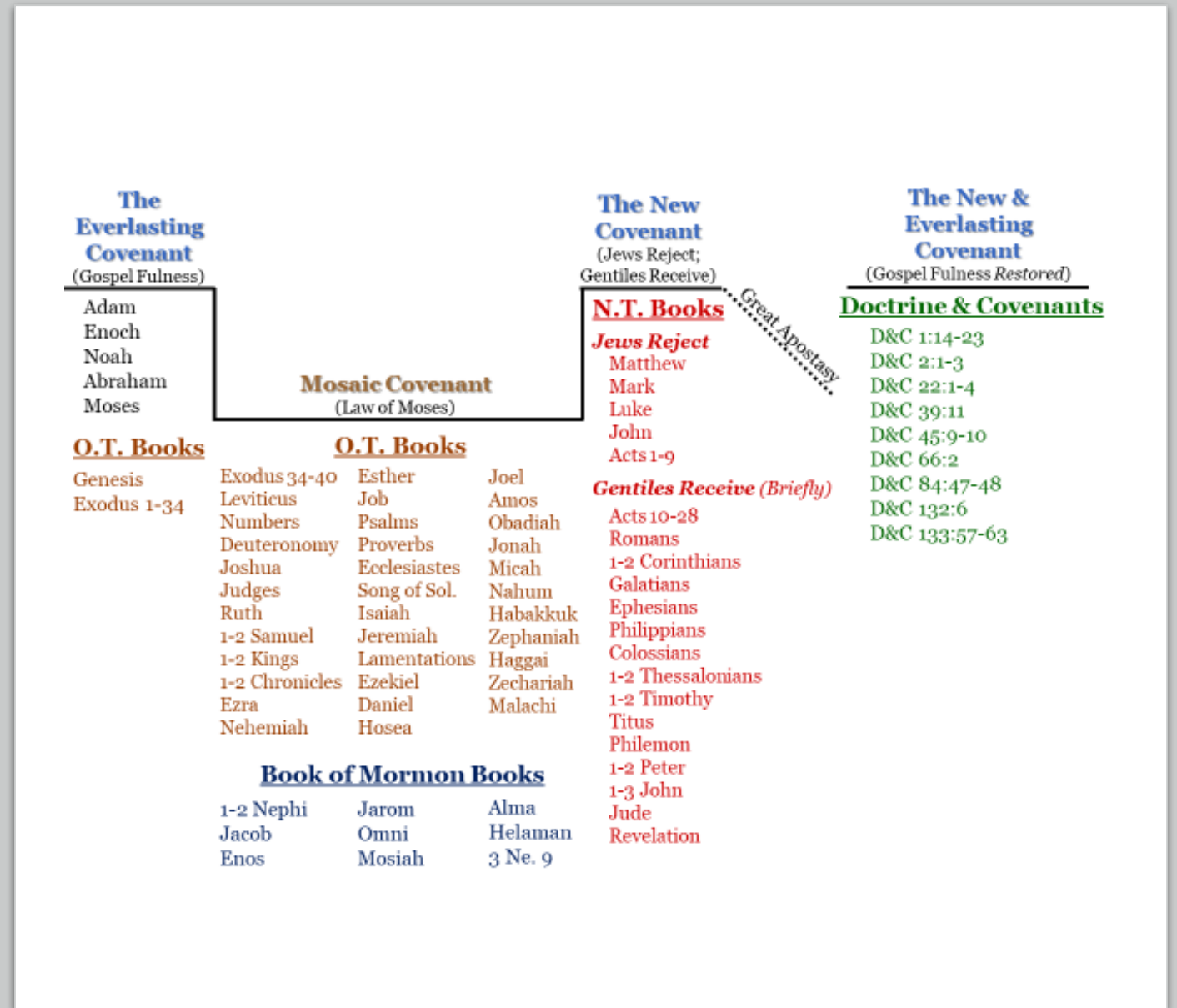
A brief sketch of the Old Testament

The Old Testament covers about 6,000 years of time according to its internal history. **Bishop James Ussher** (1581-1656) dated the creation to October 23, 4004 BCE.

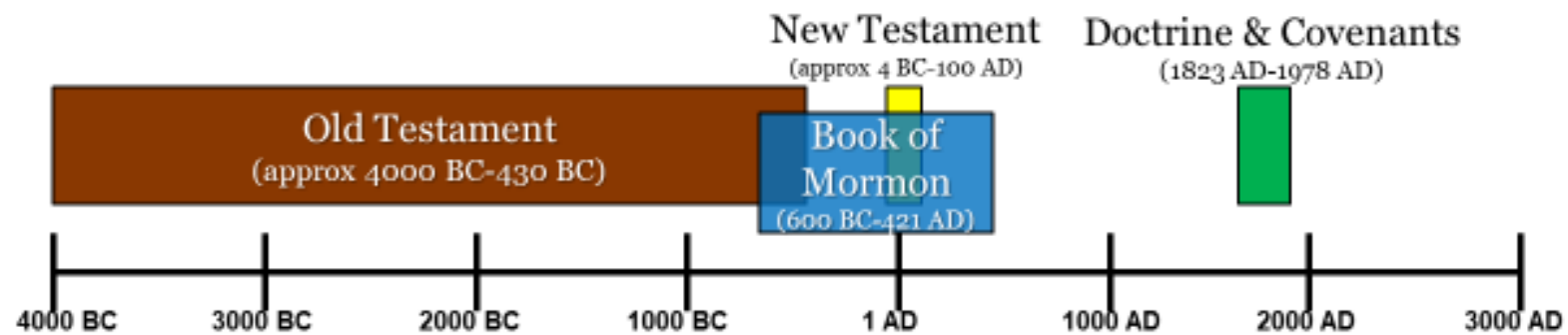


What the Old Testament covers

The Old Testament covers the events of the creation to Malachi (circa 400 BCE), so it may be covering a time period much longer.



Timeline of the Scriptures



The Old Testament: A Divine Library

The Law

The 5 Books
of Moses

Genesis
Exodus
Leviticus
Numbers
Deuteronomy

The History

Joshua
Judges
Ruth
1 Samuel
2 Samuel
1 Kings
2 Kings
1 Chronicles
2 Chronicles
Ezra
Nehemiah
Esther

Poetry & Wisdom

Job
Psalms
Proverbs
Ecclesiastes
Song of Solomon

The Prophets

Isaiah
Jeremiah
Lamentations
Ezekiel
Daniel
Hosea
Joel
Amos
Obadiah
Jonah
Micah
Nahum
Habakkuk
Zephaniah
Haggai
Zechariah
Malachi

A Collection of texts

Often referred to as the “Tanakh,” or the Torah, the Ketuvim, and the Nevi’im = The First 5 Books of Moses, the writings, and the prophets.



Canonization is difficult to pin down

When was the Old Testament “canonized”? This is a complicated question, but a simple answer is that the Hebrew Bible was canonized between 200 BCE and 200 CE.



Which Tanakh did Jesus use?

Jesus likely heard Scripture read in Hebrew and in Greek, and then paraphrased and interpreted the text in Aramaic. How much of this paraphrase was written down in Jesus' day is difficult to tell.



Jesus' Hebrew Bible

Perhaps the data is inconclusive as to which version Jesus most used, but one thing is certain: the authors of the New Testament texts that we have today used the Septuagint.



In the Beginning

In the Beginning “*be-rosh-iyt*” בְּרֵאשִׁית “*En arche*”
Ἐν ἀρχῇ ... both complete the idea of “The First.”

John obviously understood the concept that the author of Genesis 1.1 was employing. When John created his account of the Logos coming into the creation, he saw that in the first/chief/head the Logos existed and the Logos was “*pros ton Theon,*” with God, or near unto God, and that the Logos was also God.

See the Greek of John 1.1:

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος καὶ ὁ λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν θεόν καὶ θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος.

Invoking the Council as Witness

In one of the Akkadian literary texts from Ur, the invocation of the gods to act as witnesses in a judicial decision assumes an important role in the appeal made by one Kuzulum against his adversary Elani:

He swore, 'I am doing you no wrong;

He said, 'These gods are my witnesses.'

U.I6900 F as cited in C.J. Gadd, "Two Sketches From the Life at Ur," *Iraq* (1963): 179.



Prophets Standing in the Council



“[A true prophet] has
stood in the council of
the Lord, and seen,
and heard his word”
(Jer. 23:18; JPS)



“The Head One of the Gods called together the Gods and the grand councillors sat in grand council at the head in yonder heavens to bring forth the world and contemplated the creation of the worlds that were created at that time.



....

“In the beginning the Head of the Gods called a council of the Gods. The Gods came together and concocted a scheme to create this world and the inhabitants.”

—Joseph Smith
7 April 1844

The Divine Council



Bene Elohim, or Bene El Elyon – The sons of the Gods, or The sons of the Most High God...
The *Qodeshim* – The Holy Ones (literally “Saints”)

The divine council

KJV Psalm 89:5-7

⁵And the heavens shall praise thy wonders, O LORD:

thy faithfulness also in the congregation of the saints.

⁶For who in the heaven can be compared unto the LORD?

who among the sons of the mighty can be likened unto the LORD?

⁷God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints,

and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him.

NRSV Psalm 89:5-7

⁵Let the heavens praise your wonders, O LORD,

your faithfulness in the assembly of **the holy ones**.

⁶For who in the skies can be compared to the LORD?

Who among **the heavenly beings** is like the LORD,

⁷a God feared in **the council of the holy ones**,

great and awesome above all that are around him?

Elohim, *bara* – Gen.

1.1

Bara בָּרָא is something God alone does – he does this kind of creating. Joseph Smith explained it as an organization.

Elohim אֱלֹהִים “God” in the plural. Joseph will use this word to give us “gods” in the Abraham creation account.

Tohu wa

Bohu

תְּהוֹ וּבְהוֹ =

without

form and

void

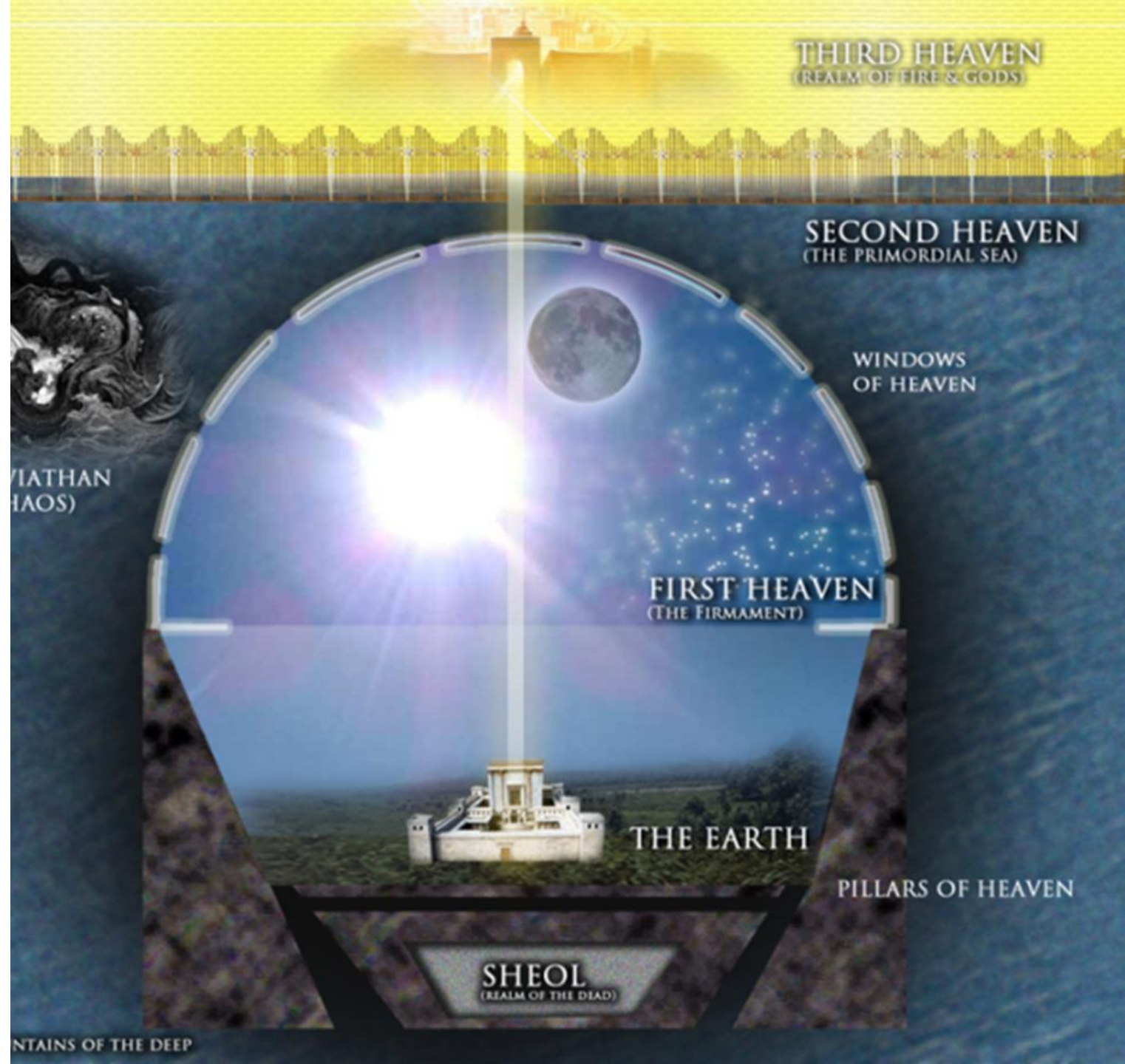
This is an acknowledgement of the creation stories in the ANE, where the Gods conquer the deep-Tehom, or the Chaos Dragon, and through the destruction of the chaos, order is created and life may come to be. We see this in Babylon and Greece as well as Ugaritic materials. We also see this come up in Nephi's narrative where Nephi slays the Dragon, or the Goliath figure, and then creates a temple/boat and crosses waters and builds another temple/order/people/kingdom. **Chaos plays a role in creation** and life in these materials as it does here.

An important point

Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ are Creators, and Their creative work with us is not finished. They can make light shine in dark moments in our lives. They can form solid ground in the midst of life's stormy seas. They can command the elements, and if we obey Their word like the elements did, They can transform us into the beautiful creations we were meant to be. That's part of what it means to be created in God's image, after His likeness.

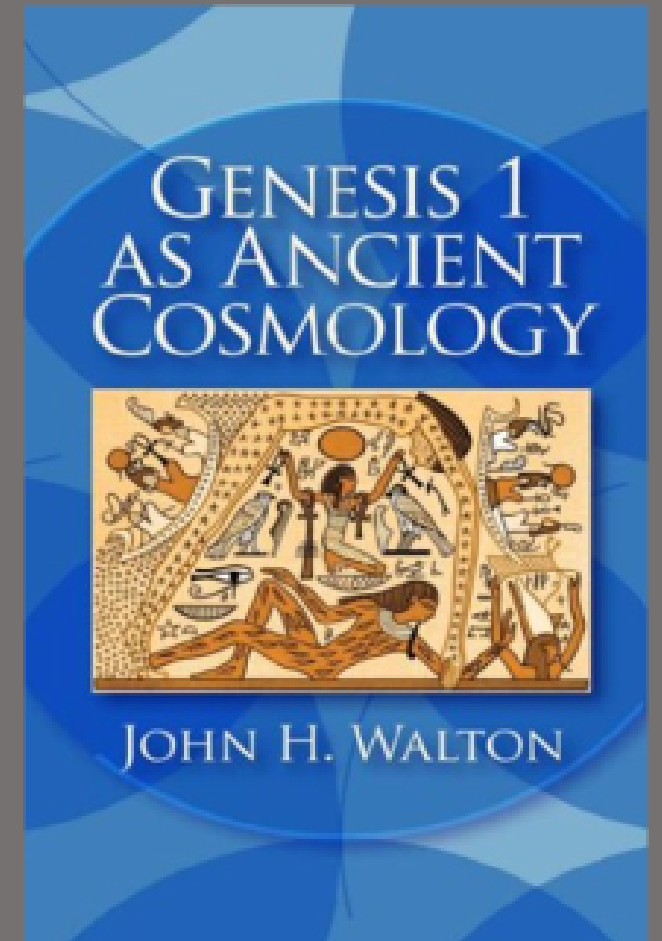


Raqia/Firmament רָקִיעַ
= the *raqia* splits the
waters above from the
waters beneath –
Gen.1.2-8.



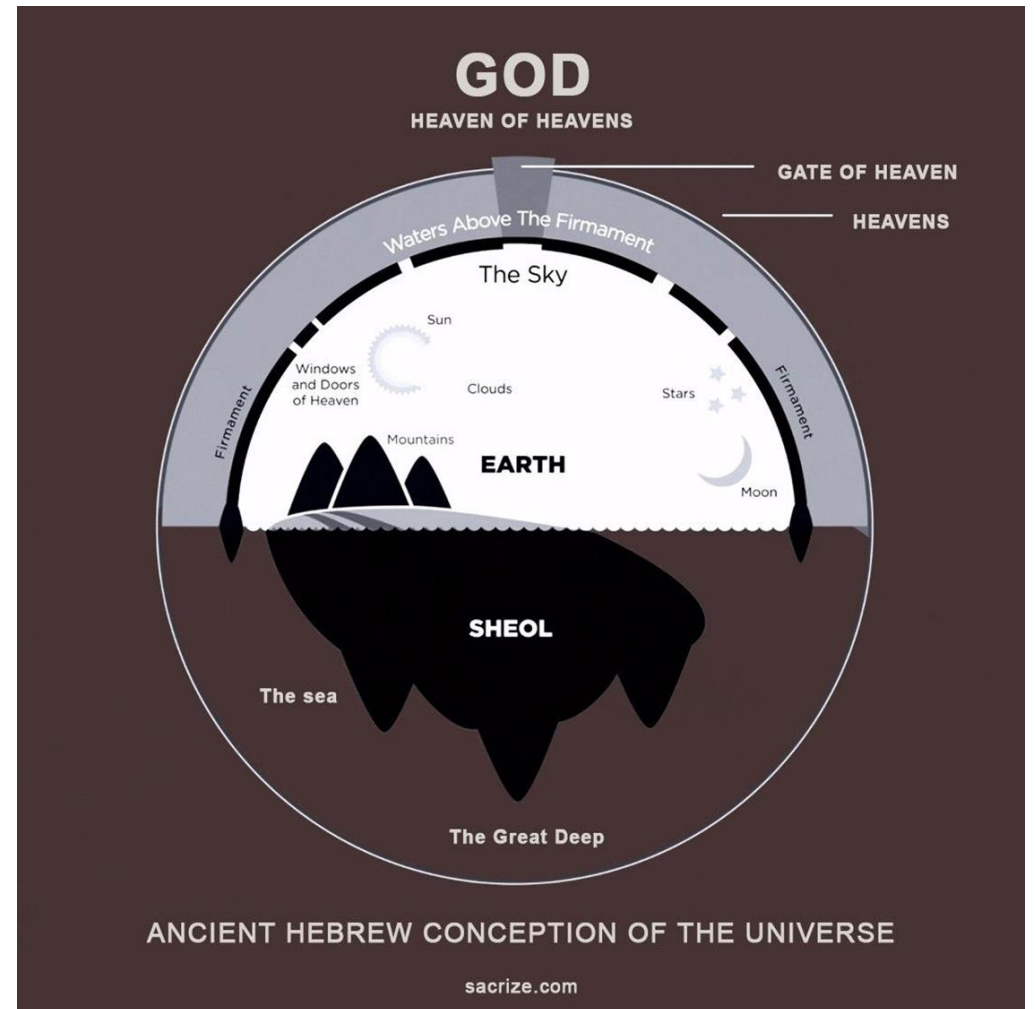
Cosmos = Order

In reference to Mesopotamia... “The cosmogonies do not express nonexistence abstractly as nothingness, but as a period when essential institutions did not yet exist.” In the past, the precosmic condition was often labeled “Chaos,” and this terminology often included a personification or characterization of this condition as evil. In the Classical world, Chaos in Hesiod’s *Theogony* and in Virgil’s *Aeneid* is personified as the primal state in which earth, sky, and seas were all merged. More generally, chaos is the opposite of cosmos, which refers to the ordered whole. It is this latter juxtaposition that is particularly evident in the ancient Near East... In the ancient Near East, creation involves bringing order and organization to the cosmos. (Walton, John H. *Genesis 1 As Ancient Cosmology*. Eisenbrauns, 2011, p 27).



What the *raqia* teaches us about scripture

The ***Raqia*** רָקִיעַ introduces us into the world of early Hebrew Cosmology. This all ties into D&C 1.24, in that God speaks to man after the manner of his language, according to his understanding.



This entire story is a **temple text** used in a liturgical setting.

- This story is our foundation stone, our beginning, hence it is tied to the temple, for the temple and creation cannot be separated.[\[1\]](#)
 - **Adam and Eve are us**, male and female.
 - They will be made “Lords of the whole earth.”
 - This is an invitation for us to create an Edenic state on the earth.
 - Adam is to garden as God is a gardener. Jesus’ resurrected kingly body is first portrayed after his resurrection in a garden where Mary thought he “was the gardener.”
-
- [\[1\]](#) “In short,” Jon Levenson states, “the temple is a visible, tangible token of the act of creation, the point of origin of the world, the “focus” of the universe,” Jon Levenson, *The Temple and the World*, *The Journal of Religion*, July 1983, Vol. 64, No. 3, University of Chicago Press, p. 283.

A prototypical sanctuary

Donald Parry gives **eleven examples of how the Garden of Eden is a prototypical sanctuary**: 1) The Tree of Life was located in the garden and the temple, 2) Both the temple and garden had sacred waters, 3) Eastward orientation played a role in both centers, 4) The Cosmic Mountain was affiliated symbolically with both, 5) The account of the earth's creation is closely connected to the account of the creation of the temple, 6) Cherubim serve as guardians in both places, 7) Revelation was an important aspect of both the garden and the temple, 8) Sacrifice existed in both the garden and in the temple, 9) Similar religious language existed in both spaces, 10) Sacred vestments were associated with Adam and Eve as well as the priests in the temple, 11) Abundance was associated with both spaces. See: [Donald Parry, Garden of Eden: Prototype Sanctuary, in *Temples of the Ancient World*, p. 126-127.](#)

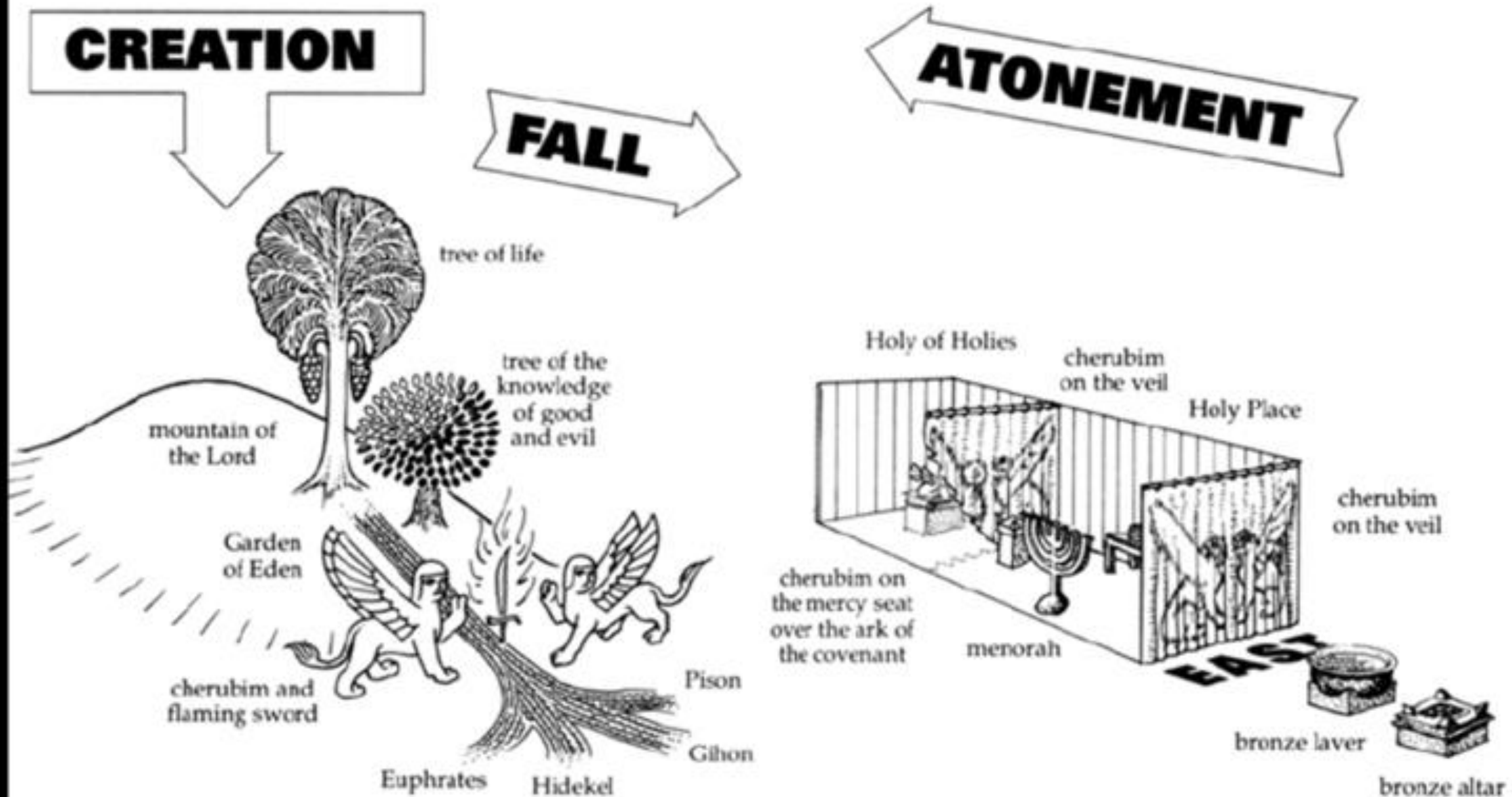


FIGURE 1. Sacred topography of Eden and the temple. Illustration by Michael P. Lyon. Courtesy Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship.

Outer Courtyard
(Telestial World)

Holy Place
Garden of Eden
(Terrestrial World)

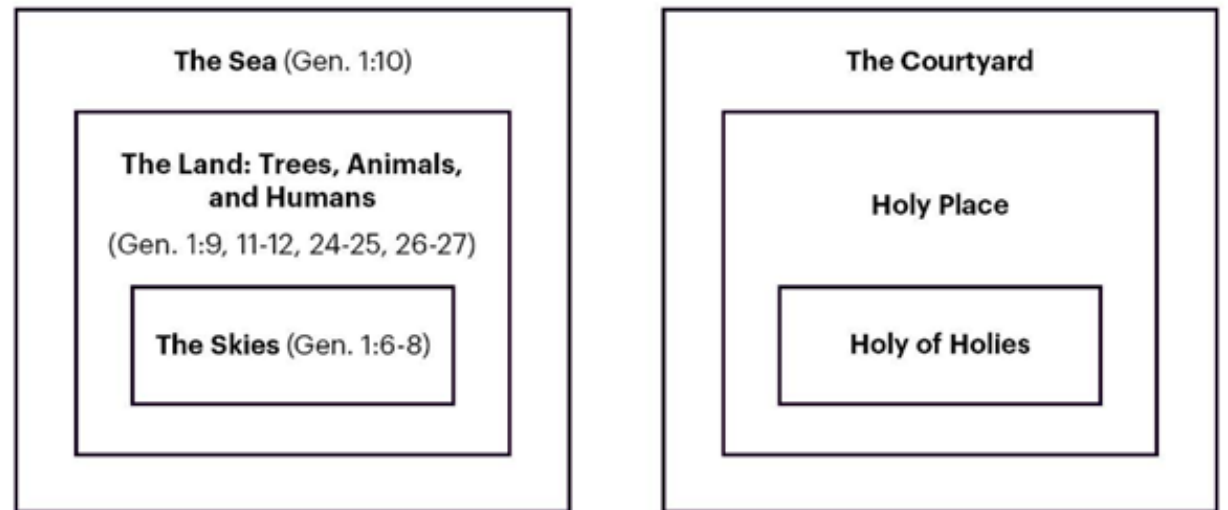
Holy of Holies
Presence of God
Tree of Life
(Celestial World)

Tree of Knowledge
Veil



A recreation of the temple

This is also a literal recreation of the temple. This creation parallels the temple. The design plan of Eden is a prototype of the tabernacle and the temple. This narrative is meant to preview the priesthood and the holy of holies in the Israelite temple. The map of Genesis 2.4-18 imitates this very holy space.



The **How** versus the **Why** of Creation

- Genesis 1-2 is a text that is working to describe creation as a process of God's glory, power, and order. This is a temple text, not a scientific text.
- Whatever the details of the creation process, we know that it was not accidental but that it was directed by God the Father and implemented by Jesus Christ.

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 1852, 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: Gollies, 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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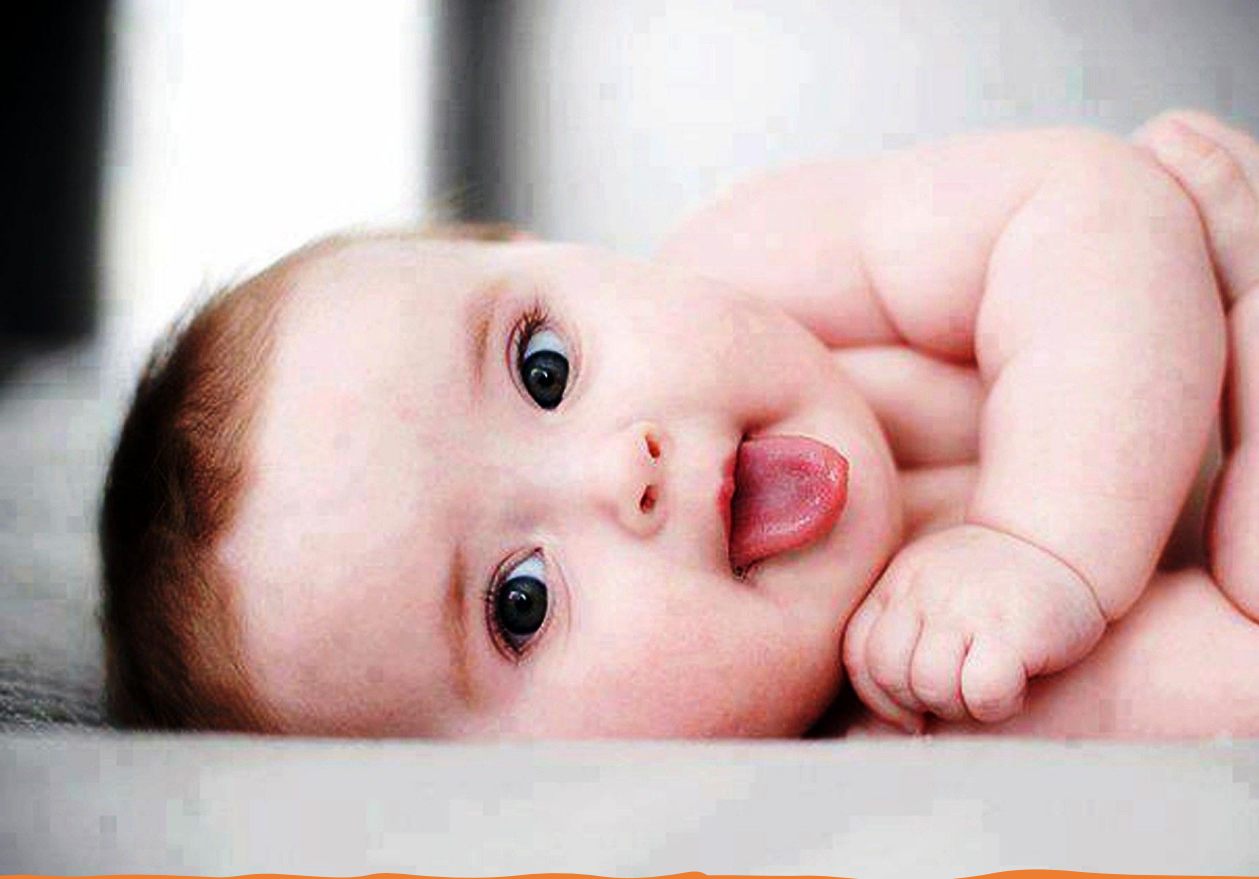
The Documentary Hypothesis

- Genesis 1-2 is called J & P in much of Biblical scholarship. [\[1\]](#)
- The “P” account, or Priestly account goes from Genesis 1.1 -2.4a and identifies the creator as Elohim, or “God” in the KJV. Elohim is the plural of El, the name of God.
- Genesis 2.4b-Gen. 3.24 is the “J” account, or Yahwist account, where the creator is said to be the Lord God: Yahweh Elohim, the Lord God, or Yahweh of the Elohim (another appropriate translation as this can be read as a construct chain.)
- Both creation accounts mention different deities doing the creating.

[\[1\]](#) See: [Richard Friedman, *The Bible with Sources Revealed*, HarperOne, 2005, p. 1-31](#). See also: Bokovoy, [Documentary Sources in the Pentateuch](#), in *Authoring the Old Testament*, Kofford Books, 2014.

Time versus days

- Abraham is calling these periods “times,” and Genesis is calling them “days” – see Abr. 4.8, 4.13, 4.19, 4.23, 4.31.
- Abraham opens up the idea that matter took time to obey the “gods” – “The Gods saw that they were obeyed...” – Abr. 4.10, 4.12. “The Gods watched those things which they had ordered until they obeyed.” – Abr. 4.18... these verses open up the possibility for natural processes of creation and the development of forms of life over time “until they obeyed” ...



Good versus "very good."

The things made in Genesis are "good," but when man is made (ha-Adam), it is "very good."

How God considers man and creation. See D&C 18 on how God views mankind.

Coats of skins – Genesis 3.21

This text is dealing with many things.

Here is the text: וַיַּעַשׂ יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים לְאָדָם וּלְאִשְׁתּוֹ כְּתָנוֹת עוֹר וַיַּלְבִּיֶשֶׂם

My translation: And Yahweh Elohim (יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים) made to Adam and to his wife coats/*kutonet* (plural) of skins עוֹר (pronounced OR) and he clothed them (וַיַּלְבִּיֶשֶׂם)

Light is OR and skins is OR.

In Genesis 3.21 we have עוֹר

In Genesis 1.3 we have God speaking forth light אֹר And so while skins has the *ain* before the O sound vowel with the *vau*, and light has the *aleph* prior to the exact same construction, **the words are pronounced the same. It is a**

pun. See also: [Clothing of Light](#)

The names of Adam and Eve. Their unification or marriage

Adam means man or mankind, while Eve's name denotes the idea of bearing or giving life. Both names are significant names that teach the importance of life and the purpose of life.

Marriage between a man and a woman is ordained of God. The command to multiply and replenish the earth while Adam and Eve are in God's presence seems to denote that they are married by the Lord and that this is an eternal marriage, as they are both in God's presence and have not yet partaken of the fruit of the tree of knowledge.



Marriage

Knowing that “marriage between man and woman is essential to [God’s] eternal plan,” Latter-day Saints persist in the time-honored religious principle that marriage is foremost an institution for the procreation and raising of children. We also adhere to the proven experience that marriage is the best institution for the economic, political, and moral well-being of the human family. As President Spencer W. Kimball said many years ago: “We know that when things go wrong in the family, things go wrong in every other institution in society.”

[Dallin H. Oaks, “As he thinketh in his heart,” S&C devotional February 2013.](#)



Genesis 2.18 – A “help meet” *ezer kenegdo* -

עֵזֶר כְּנֶגְדּוֹ

“An help meet”

KJV Genesis 2:18

And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him **an help meet for him**.

“An help meet for him.”

לּוֹ עֵזֶר כְּנֶגְדּוֹ:

*suitable for,
corresponding to*

*a helper,
companion*

for him

←
“A helper according to the opposite of him.”

Genesis 2.22 – The “rib” עֲצָבָה – side, or “rib.”

- The rib signifies neither dominion nor subservience, but a lateral relationship as partners, to work and to live, side by side.[\[1\]](#)
- This message of the rib teaches through the use of symbols, many things relating to how men should treat women, and how husbands should treat their wives.
- *Azer* is a word used for the Lord’s kind of help (H5828) used 21 times in KJV.
- *Neged* (H5048) corresponding to what is in front, parallel to, or corresponding to.

[\[1\]](#) Elder Russell M. Nelson, [Lessons from Eve, Sept. 1987](#).

The serpent - *nachash*

- The Serpent is going to be seen as Satan by Nephi.
- The Serpent will also be seen as Satan in Early Christianity.
- *Nachash* – briefly read “bronze, shining” from other sources.
- It is important to note that Nephi and Lehi connect the serpent to an angel who fell from heaven and became the Devil (2 Nephi 9).