

# Coronation of the Saviour in Third Nephi , LeGrand Baker

[this was written about ten years before the paper of a similar name that I delivered at the Maxwell Institute in Sept. 2008]

And behold, I say unto you, this is not all. For O how beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that is the founder of peace, yea, even the Lord, who has redeemed his people; yea, him who has granted salvation unto his people; (Mosiah 15:18.)

But I observed that I believe in order to understand the meaning and background of Abinadi's statement, one would do well to know (among other things) that this prophecy should have been fulfilled as a conclusion of the Saviour's Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem, but instead was probably fulfilled when He came to his temple at Bountiful. Today, I would like to pursue just the very surface of that matter.

If, as I believe, Mormon intended Third Nephi to be a translucent--if not an altogether transparent --rendition of the ancient Israelite New Year's festival and enthronement ceremonies, {1}

(This is the place for me to stop and remind you that notwithstanding the fact that the words in the last and the following paragraphs sound like I think I am writing pure truth, I understand that what I am writing today is only my opinion.)

It seems likely to me that Mormon followed the outline of the Israelite New Year's festival in order to accomplish two objectives. First, to show that Jesus fulfilled the Law. That is, in his coming to America, he did all the things he was supposed to do. In relation to our Abinadi context, it means that he was made King, in precisely the way the Law prescribed. Second, to teach his readers how one might become a "son of god" and be enthroned in God's presence. To do the latter, Mormon shows his readers the process by which the disciple Nephi, and others, experienced the real events which they would have recognized as having been depicted symbolically during the drama of the New Year's festival.

To demonstrate what I mean, and to comment on Mosiah 15:18 at the same time, let me just review the events of what appears to be Jesus' coronation ceremony at the temple at Bountiful.

Last week I gave an overview of my understanding of the temple rites of the ancient Israelite New Year festival, with special attention to the events of the 7<sup>th</sup> day of the Feast of Tabernacles. Today, I will just quickly run through some of the events of Third Nephi and suggest you might notice their correlation with the ceremonies I described last week.

The story begins with the heavens themselves testifying that Jesus is the Son of God, then there is a war where an alternate plan is proposed (3 Nephi 3). There is a war where the enemies of righteousness are defeated by the powers of obedience, prayer, and testimony; then the land is settled by an obedient people. There follows an apostasy, and all of the forces of evil are

marshaled to destroy the Church and the Saints. Whereupon the God of Israel asserted his military authority by destroying those enemies.

In America, on the fourth day of the new year (3 Nephi 8:5-7) the earth shook and all the warning words of the prophets were fulfilled. {2} There followed three days of darkness, during which time the spirit of Jehovah descend to the world of the dead. In the Temple festival ceremonies it was the earthly king who was symbolically saved from the underworld by the power of Jehovah. But in the real story, Jehovah himself goes into the spirit world where he establishes his Kingdom among the "meek," and conquers their immortal enemies: death and hell.

During the chaos of the darkness, the people who survived heard the voice of the Lord.

O all ye that are spared because ye were more righteous than they, will ye not now return unto me, and repent of your sins, and be converted, that I may heal you?

Yea, verily I say unto you, if ye will come unto me ye shall have eternal life. Behold, mine arm of mercy is extended towards you, and whosoever will come, him will I receive; and blessed are those who come unto me. (3 Nephi 9:13-14)

In those two verses the Lord sums up all of the drama which might have been performed before in the pageantry of the festival. The best way to understand the phrase "come unto Christ" or "return unto me" is that it means what it says - for one to go the place where he is. The place on earth where one goes to be closest to heaven is the temple. When one gets there, and after one has received the healing power of his grace, then He extends the arm of his mercy so that one can (symbolically at least) enter his presence. The symbolism of that gesture is an invitation to its reality. As he said, "if ye will come unto me ye shall have eternal life."

Having said that, the Saviour introduced himself with that apparently followed with remarkable exactitude the coronation sequences of the New Year's drama.

Our Book of Mormon records that the Saviour began, "I am Jesus Christ the Son of God," however, that is a translation: He would have not have used the Greek forms of his names when he spoke to the people in America. "Jesus" is the Greek form of Joshua, which in Hebrew means "Jehovah saves," or "Saviour." "Christ" is the same as the Hebrew "Messiah" which means one who is anointed. {3} So I suppose what the Nephites actually heard was, "I am the Anointed Saviour, the Son of God." If that is what they heard, they would have understood! Then he spoke of his own pre-earth life, in the beginning when he created the heavens and earth and all things, when he was with his Father. He spoke of his humiliation and ultimate triumph, of his authorship and ownership of the Law, and thus of his authority to fulfill the Law. He concluded by affirming that he is the light and life of the world, not only its beginning, but also its end.

The Saviour then gave two instructions. Both had to do with the temple and both may readily be seen as necessary instructions for their preparations for the next New Year festival.

The Saviour said, "in me is the law of Moses fulfilled," but he apparently gave only one example

of what that meant. That example had ramifications which would necessitate the remodeling of the temple court yard and perhaps part of the temple itself. He continued:

And ye shall offer up unto me no more the shedding of blood; yea, your sacrifices and your burnt offerings shall be done away, for I will accept none of your sacrifices and your burnt offerings. And ye shall offer for a sacrifice unto me a broken heart and a contrite spirit... (3 Ne. 9:19-20a.)

One can hardly wish for a stronger evidence than that, that the Nephites knew and understood the meaning of the Psalms in their ceremonies, for here the Saviour himself had just quoted Psalms 51:16-17. {4}

For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it: thou delightest not in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise. {5}

The ramifications of the instruction that there should be no more sacrifices and burnt offerings were complex and very far reaching. The sacrifices the Lord mentioned pre-dated the Law of Moses, even though they were incorporated in the Law. The first sacrifice was performed by Adam soon after he left the Garden, {6} Noah also sacrificed when he left the ark. {7}

The reason that sacrifices could be done away was that, "The purpose of the sacrifice is to seal and to sanctify the covenant." {8} But now the Saviour's sacrifice had permanently sealed and sanctified the covenant, so no further symbolic sacrifice was necessary. What remained - indeed, what always had remained - was the sealing and sanctifying of the covenant on the people. The sacrificing of animals had symbolized the Saviour's part, but the act of ratification on the part of the people remained. That ratification, too, had to be sealed and sanctified in the same way that the Saviour's was. That was to be accomplished in the same way the Psalms suggest, by each individual sacrificing his own broken heart and contrite spirit.

For the Saints in America, if sacrifices and burnt offerings were to be done away, then that would require that they make significant changes in the temple and temple grounds. For one thing, the great sacrificial altar which was no doubt in the court yard of the temple must be dismantled and removed. Blood would no longer be sprinkled in the temple and the Holy of Holies, and incense would no longer be burned since those practices were a part of the sacrificial ceremonies. The barns to hold the sacrificial animals would have to be removed, and many of the tools and implements that had been used in the services would have to be put away.

The second instruction which the Saviour gave at that time also seems to have had something to do with the temple. But it is not explicit and would, no doubt, ultimately require additional revelation to the presiding High Priest before he could implement it. The Saviour said,

Behold, I have come unto the world to bring redemption unto the world, to save the world from sin. Therefore, whoso repenteth and cometh unto me as a little child, him will I receive, for of such is the kingdom of God. Behold, for such I have laid down my life, and have taken it up again; therefore repent, and come unto me ye ends of the earth, and

be saved. (3 Ne. 9:21-22)

Such a statement may, of course, be read as only beautiful symbolic words, and not as instruction at all. But even so the symbolism alone is sufficient to bring one to the veil which separates man from God. The key phrase is "come unto me." What implications that may have had on the remodeling of the interior of the temple, one cannot know.

Almost a year passed. Mormon tells us nothing about the remodeling of the temple, perhaps because in the sequence of the New Year's festival which he seems to be following with such care, the temple would have been remodeled only symbolically, and to include those details in the story would have disrupted the pattern he is trying to establish. Another possible reason the temple needed to be remodeled is the fact that there will soon be the establishment of the new government, and anciently such governmental changes required the building or the re-dedication of the temple. Mowinckel asserts that "Together with the enthronement of the god goes the building and construction of his temple." {9} Lundquist explains why that is so.

In the Near East, temple building/rebuilding/restoring is an all-but-quintessential element in state formation and often represents the sealing of the covenant process that state formation in the ancient Near East presumes. {10}

One can expect that any major remodeling of the temple in Bountiful would have required a rededication, and if that were to occur it should probably have happened during the next New Year's festival, {11} because that was the traditional time when temple's are dedicated. {12} Snaith asserts that,

Solomon would have no choice as to the date when the Temple should be dedicated. he was bound to wait until the next annual feast after the completion of the building operations. It was in the proper month and at the proper full moon that the people would appear with their gifts. {13}

In Third Nephi, the Saviour was about to appoint Nephi to be the head of a new millennial-type state that was to last for the next four hundred years. Lundquist statement shows how relevant that is.

However, only with the completion of the temple in Jerusalem is the process of imperial state formation completed, making Israel in the fullest sense "like other nations" (1 Samuel 8:20). The ideology of kingship in the archaic state is indelibly and incontrovertibly connected with temple building and with temple ideology. {14}

When the Saviour came to the temple, he made the Twelve the leaders of the church and apparently the head of the new governing body of a new theocracy. If that was true in America, as it was in Palestine, then the remodeling of the temple was a necessary prerequisite to the establishment of the theocracy of Fourth Nephi. And if the temple at Bountiful were to be remodeled and rededicated, the most likely time for that ceremony (if Lundquist's statement holds true here) would be during the New Year celebration.

Lundquist gives us another bit of good circumstantial evidence that this was the time of a temple rededication. He wrote that on such occasions in antiquity, new kings would typically do the five important things. 1) Cite their divine calling. 2) Issue new laws. 3) Ordain officers. 4) Erect monuments. 5) Enter into a new legal order by way of covenant with a ritually prepared community. {15}

Mormon records that the Saviour did four of those five: 1) Cite their divine calling - He introduced himself by saying, "Behold, I am Jesus Christ the Son of God." 2) Issue new laws. That includes not only the Sermon at the Temple, but a whole new understanding of the gospel. 3) Ordain officers. The Saviour called and ordained Nephi and the rest of the Twelve. 4) Erect monuments. There is no evidence of monuments. 5) Enter into a new legal order by way of covenant with a ritually prepared community. The Saviour established the governmental system that is described in 4th Nephi.

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Having laid that background, now lets go back to where we left Mormon's narrative, in the thick darkness which followed the earthquakes.

After a long silence the people heard the voice of the Lord speak again. {16}

This time the Saviour spoke of mercy and judgement. ( 3 Ne. 10:4-7.) Those statements reflect the most important characteristics of the Hebrew kings, for they are judges in Israel and until the institution of the office of the Chief Judge, the kings were also judges in America. This is also a type of celestial things, for in heaven, Jehovah was/is the judge among the gods at the Grand Council. {17}

After the voice had spoken, the oppressive darkness remained for three days; after that, when morning came, and it was light again. {18}

Mormon then inserts his own testimony that Jehovah has the right to judge the people, and he also uses this place to quote the prophecies of Zenos and Zenock and Jacob concerning the coming of Christ. (3 Ne. 10: 12-17.)

By inserting these reminders, Mormon provided a kind of conjunction which allow his narrative to move from the events which began on the 4th day of the thirty-fourth year to "the ending of the thirty and fourth year" (3 Ne. 10:18) without a break in the continuity of his thought. So, even though a year had passed, and we are now at the beginning of a different New Year's festival, he can pick up the sequence of the festival in the same place where he left it.

Mormon tells us nothing about what happened during that year. He spares us all account of the aftermath of the wind, and fire, and earthquake. But he has introduced us to one of the most important elements of the New Year festival, the establishment of a new order and a new world--"the prime element of the enthronement festival being a new creation." {19} A new world must, of necessity, follow the destruction of the old, and the central feature of that new creation must be a temple.

A community is made cosmic through the foundation of the temple. The elaborate ritual,

architectural, and building traditions that lie behind temple construction and dedication are what allow the authoritative, validating transformation of a set of customary laws into a code.

The temple creates law and makes law possible. It allows for the transformation of a chaotic universe into a cosmos. It is the very capstone of universal order and by logic and definition creates the conditions under which law is possible....

Thus order cannot exist, the earth cannot be made cosmic, society cannot function properly, law cannot be decreed, except in a temple established on earth that is the authentic and divinely revealed counterpart of a heavenly prototype ....It is the creation of the temple, with its cosmic overtones, that founds and legitimizes the state or the society, which, in turn makes possessible the formal promulgation of law. {20}

These systems of thought, Mormon evokes with great grace, and, typically, without his calling undue attention to the fact that he is doing so. Coincidentally, Mormon tells us nothing about the changes in the temple and its immediate environs which, presumably, had been necessitated by the Saviour's instructions that sacrifice and burnt offerings should no longer be performed.

So when Mormon begins his narrative again, he tells us, simply,

In the ending of the thirty and fourth year....a great multitude gathered together, of the people of Nephi, round about the temple which was in the land Bountiful; and they were marveling and wondering one with another, and were showing one to another the great and marvelous change which had taken place. (3 Ne. 10:18, 11:1)

Mormon gives us no details whatever about who these people were, or why they had gathered to the Temple. Perhaps he thought he didn't need to. In one sense he would have been correct, because there is a good deal we can know about them without his telling us.

Moroni filled in some of the details when he wrote:

For it was by faith that Christ showed himself unto our fathers, after he had risen from the dead; and he showed not himself unto them until after they had faith in him; (Ether 12:7)

The Doctrine and Covenants, Section 93 lists the prerequisites necessary to seeing the Saviour and follows that with a statement which sounds very much like the way the Saviour introduced himself in America.

Verily, thus saith the Lord: It shall come to pass that every soul who forsaketh his sins and cometh unto me, and calleth on my name, and obeyeth my voice, and keepeth my commandments, shall see my face and know that I am; And that I am the true light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world; And that I am in the Father, and the Father in me, and the Father and I are one--The Father because he gave me of his fullness, and the Son because I was in the world and made flesh my tabernacle, and dwelt among the sons of men. I was in the world and received of my Father, and the works of him were plainly manifest. {21}

Additional prerequisites to seeing the Saviour are emphasized in other scriptures. They include: One must be "pure in heart"; "follow peace with all men, and holiness"; and have the authority and the ordinances of the Melchizedek priesthood; and to have seen Christ, one must also have been "quickened by the Spirit of God." One's mind must be single to the God, and "the days will come that you shall see him; for he will unveil his face unto you, and it shall be in his own time, and in his own way, and according to his own will." {22}

Unless those prerequisites are irrelevant to this situation, the people who gathered at the temple that day were not those who just happened to be there. Each individual, in his or her own right, must have been worthy to see the Saviour. That fact strongly suggests that those who were present were there by invitation. That they had been spiritually prepared for the experience, and that no one who was not prepared had been invited. The next day, others would be invited to come also, but that does not suggest a diminution of the preparedness or qualifications of the people in either group. Those same qualifications have always been requisite. The Book of Enoch says,

For from the beginning the Son of Man was hidden,  
And the Most High preserved him in the presence of His might,  
And revealed him to the elect.  
And the congregation of the elect and holly shall be sown.  
And all the elect shall stand before him on that day. {23}

If the date Mormon gives us relative to the Saviour's appearance at the Temple, then "In the ending of the thirty and fourth year," means just before the next new year. {24} That helps us infer some other important things about the timing as well.

When they met, they "were marveling and wondering one with another, and were showing one to another the great and marvelous change which had taken place." (3 Ne. 10:18, 11:1) If substantial changes would have been made to the temple grounds, and perhaps to the temple itself in order to comply with the instructions that there were to be no more burnt offerings, and if these people were marveling when they saw those changes, it is reasonable to assume they had not been privy to the remodeling while that was going on. The most likely reason that might be so is that they lived some distance from Bountiful and had come to attend the re-dedication. Now, it seems reasonable to ask, "Is it possible that the people gathered at the temple had been invited to come just prior to the New Year's festival in order to attend the first session of temple's dedicatory services?" We cannot know the answer, of course. But if the question is reasonable, then it is also reasonable that its answer might be, "Yes."

If this really was a gathering preparatory to the New Year's drama and festival, there would have been a number of other things on the people's mind, as well. Only a year before, the officials who controlled an utterly corrupt civil government had mostly been killed when the earthquakes occurred. Nephi, as leader of the church, had, no doubt, taken command of the situation, but since a new civil government was created in conjunction with a new or remodeled temple, it is unlikely that any formal civil government had been established during that year. So, it is likely that the question of what to do about a new civil government was also a paramount consideration

as the time approached for the New Year's ceremonies. It is possible that if these people did come from a distance to be at the festival, they came as representatives of the people, with the intent of establishing a new government. If that is true, then they were the most appropriate people to whom the Lord should show himself when he arrived at the Temple, and the most appropriate people with whom he should conduct his business, when he established his Kingdom among them.

The matter of a new government was not the only question that needed to be answered, and a gathering of priesthood leaders from all over the country was the appropriate time and place to seek to find the answers: If there were to be no more sacrifices, what was to be the status of the rest of the rules and regulations of the Law of Moses? What changes would need to be made in the Temple services?

During the previous thirty-plus years, on the other side of the world, the Saviour's life had been an actualization of the cosmic myth. At his birth angels and men had acknowledged him to be the Son of God, the creator of heaven and earth. He had been baptized, washed in the living waters of the Jordan River; anointed with light by the Holy Ghost; {25} and acknowledged as the "Beloved Son" by his Eternal Father. He had gone into the wilderness and confronted his nemesis, Satan, whom he had defeated by the rectitude of his own integrity. He had gone to the Mount of Transfiguration where he had endowed Peter, James, and John with power sufficient to bear off the Kingdom; then he had returned to teach the people the principles of obedience, personal sacrifice, care and support for those in the Kingdom, and charity. He had come as king in his triumphal entry to Jerusalem, then he showed them, in his own life and death, the meaning of obedience, sacrifice, kindness, and love.

In describing part of the action of the New Year's festival, Widengren wrote,

We have seen that the king acts in the ritual as the representative of the god, who is dead, but rises again, is conquered by his enemies, but is at last victorious over them, and returns in triumph to his temple, creating cosmos, fertilizing earth, celebrating his marriage, sitting enthroned in his holy Tabernacle upon the mountain of the gods. {26}

The Saviour entered the underworld conquered death and hell; then, he returned to his Father, only to come again to his friends, teach them all they must know and lay the Kingdom squarely upon their shoulders. {27}

In America the pattern was just as real, and Mormon apparently wrote his story to testify that it was real, emphasizing the symbolic significance of the cosmic myth.

The stages to the Saviour's enthronement which Mormon describes correspond remarkably with the ancient ritual stages of the enthronement of an ancient god, which Widengren recounts as follows: {28}

1. Widengren: Entering the heavenly palace.  
Mormon: Christ comes to the temple.



2. Widengren: Reception by the god.

Mormon: He is introduced by his Father, and met by people who are worthy to meet him.

3. Widengren: Naming with glorious names.

Mormon: He speaks the names of his Father and the Holy Ghost, and his own name, telling of their relationship with each other and the testimony of that relationship.

4. Widengren: Handing over the sovereignty of the world.

Mormon: He appoints Nephi and the Twelve.

5. Widengren: Promise of the firmness of rule.

Mormon: In the Beatitudes he invites people to their own enthronement, but the conditions are firmly set fourth.

6. Widengren: Exhortation to proceed like the daylight.

Mormon: At the conclusion of the Beatitudes, the Saviour commands, "Let your light so shine before this people." Then he explains the new Law in the remainder of his sermon at the Temple.

Let us now rejoin Mormon's account as the people who had assembled at the temple.

6 And behold, the third time they did understand the voice which they heard; and it said unto them:

v. 7 Behold my Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, in whom I have glorified my name--hear ye him. (3 Nephi 11:6-7)

As I mentioned last week, "son" is the royal new name given in the second Psalm, and it is also the name-title the Father uses other times when he introduces the Saviour. {29}

If, as I believe, the Israelite New Year festival coronation rites and their liturgy had been preserved in Nephite usage, then the introduction, "this is my Beloved Son," would have been understood by the people to be an announcement that Christ is God, but it also would have been understood as the ceremonial announcement that he is the High Priest and King of kings. Mowinckel believed that Jehovah was symbolically enthroned in his temple during the same ceremony as the coronation of the earthly king. (That would consist with the fact that Nephi was made earthly head of Christ's kingdom, during the same ceremonies in which Jesus was enthroned.) [The numbers in the following quote are references to the ceremonies connected with the psalms, and are intended to be read this way: "(96. 13; 98. 9)" means "Psalm 96:13, and Psalm 98:9"]

Yahweh's enthronement day is that day when he 'comes' (96. 13; 98. 9) and 'Makes himself known' (98.2), reveals himself and his 'salvation' and his will (93.5; 99. 7), when he repeats the theophany of Mount Sinai (97.3ff.; 99.7f), and renews the election (47.5)

of Israel, and the covenant with his people (95.6ff.; 99. 6ff.). The mighty 'deed of salvation' upon which his kingdom is founded is the Creation, which is alluded to in a rather mythic guise (93.3f.). {30}

Mormon continues,

And it came to pass, as they understood they cast their eyes up again towards heaven; and behold, they saw a Man descending out of heaven; and he was clothed in a white robe;

It is possible Mormon calls attention to the robe because the people recognized it as the royal attire. In ancient Israel, the royal robe of the king of Israel was apparently the same as the temple robe of the High Priest with its miter hat as a crown. {31}

The people were probably too awe struck to sing as they watched him descend, but one can wonder how many might have been reminded of the 93rd Psalm. {32} When the psalm says "Yahweh has conquered his adversaries and enthroned himself on high, it implies that all the universe is in perfect harmony...." {33}

Mormon records,

and he came down and stood in the midst of them; and the eyes of the whole multitude were turned upon him, and they durst not open their mouths, even one to another, and wist not what it meant, for they thought it was an angel that had appeared unto them. (3 Ne. 11:8)

He stretched forth his hand and, as before, he introduced himself as both the Son of God and also as the King, saying,

Behold, I am Jesus Christ, whom the prophets testified shall come into the world.

And behold, I am the light and the life of the world; and I have drunk out of that bitter cup which the Father hath given me, and have glorified the Father in taking upon me the sins of the world, in the which I have suffered the will of the Father in all things from the beginning. (3 Nephi 11:10-11.)

The people responded in the way one ought to respond, when receiving audience from a King

And it came to pass that when Jesus had spoken these words the whole multitude fell to the earth; for they remembered that it had been prophesied among them that Christ should show himself unto them after his ascension into heaven. (3 Nephi 11:12)

The way it is told about an earlier Lamanite king who came to know God, is probably a more complete description. He "did bow down before the Lord, upon his knees; yea, even he did prostrate himself upon the earth." (Alma 22:17)

To me, the scene that followed can most easily be visualized as it would have occurred at the

conclusion of the New Year festival. The great doors of the temple are swung open, the curtains in front of the Holy of Holies are pulled back, and the king, with the Ark of the Covenant are brought into the sacred chamber. {34} On that occasion, as we have observed, Solomon seems to have actually sat upon the sacred throne and placed their feet on the footstool – the lid of Ark of the Covenant. Then, while seated on the throne of God, the king taught his people the Law. In my imagination, I see the same thing happening in Third Nephi: The Saviour's not remaining in the courtyard, milling about with the people, but going into the Holy of Holies and sitting upon his own throne. It was his throne, after all, and "the throne in the sanctuary is considered as the image of the divine throne." {35} His feet would rest upon a footstool which contained sacred objects which represented both kingship and priesthood authority. {36} There the people would come, one by one, to see and feel the wounds which testify of his reality and of the reality of his atonement. Then, as they lined up and waited their turn to come before the Saviour, the people might have sing, "God sitteth upon the throne of his holiness," (Psalm 47:1-9.) just as they apparently did during the coronation rites of the Feast of Tabernacles. {37}

This scene evokes, for me, the image of Isaiah's words,

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth! (Isaiah 52:7)

And it came to pass that the Lord spake unto them saying:

Arise and come forth unto me, that ye may thrust your hands into my side, and also that ye may feel the prints of the nails in my hands and in my feet, that ye may know that I am the God of Israel, and the God of the whole earth, and have been slain for the sins of the world.

And it came to pass that the multitude went forth, and thrust their hands into his side, and did feel the prints of the nails in his hands and in his feet; and this they did do, going forth one by one until they had all gone forth, and did see with their eyes and did feel with their hands, and did know of a surety and did bear record, that it was he, of whom it was written by the prophets, that should come.

And when they had all gone forth and had witnessed for themselves, they did cry out with one accord, saying:

Hosanna! Blessed be the name of the Most High God! And they did fall down at the feet of Jesus, and did worship him. (3 Nephi 11:13-17) {38}

It is significant that, when all who were present at the Bountiful temple had seen, touched, and knew, the Hosanna shout resounded through the temple.

At a coronation ceremony, the first order of business is to acknowledge the king as king. In Third Nephi, even though Christ came as King, he is not going to stay. So the situation is as it was in the days of the first Israelite kings, God appointed someone to govern in his stead.

And it came to pass that he spake unto Nephi (for Nephi was among the multitude) and he commanded him that he should come forth.

And Nephi arose and went forth, and bowed himself before the Lord and did kiss his feet.

And the Lord commanded him that he should arise. And he arose and stood before him.

And the Lord said unto him: I give unto you power that ye shall baptize this people when I am again ascended into heaven.

And again the Lord called others, and said unto them likewise; and he gave unto them power to baptize. (3 Nephi 11:18-22. see Moroni 2:1-3)

What followed after that, also fits the pattern of the festival perfectly. While in the Temple, and presumably while seated upon his throne, the Saviour delivered a lecture on the law. When he had finished he blessed the people and instructed the Twelve to bring him food, that he could share it with the people. The food represented his own sacrifice. (3 Nephi 18) Similarly, on the 7<sup>th</sup> day of the Feast of Tabernacles, the king sat upon the throne of God and delivered a sermon on the law. Then there were sacrifices and feasting.

The 8<sup>th</sup> and final day of the Feast of Tabernacles was the “great feast.” It was a day that symbolized the establishment of Zion and the beginning of an age of peace. In America, the day following the Saviour’s first appearance, he came again, established Zion, blessed the people and provided for them a great ceremonial feast.

1 And it came to pass that he commanded the multitude that they should cease to pray, and also his disciples. And he commanded them that they should not cease to pray in their hearts.

2 And he commanded them that they should arise and stand up upon their feet. And they arose up and stood upon their feet.

3 And it came to pass that he brake bread again and blessed it, and gave to the disciples to eat.

4 And when they had eaten he commanded them that they should break bread, and give unto the multitude.

5 And when they had given unto the multitude he also gave them wine to drink, and commanded them that they should give unto the multitude.

6 Now, there had been no bread, neither wine, brought by the disciples, neither by the multitude;

7 But he truly gave unto them bread to eat, and also wine to drink.

8 And he said unto them: He that eateth this bread eateth of my body to his soul; and he that drinketh of this wine drinketh of my blood to his soul; and his soul shall never hunger nor thirst, but shall be filled.

9 Now, when the multitude had all eaten and drunk, behold, they were filled with the Spirit; and they did cry out with one voice, and gave glory to Jesus, whom they both saw and heard. (3 Nephi 20:1-46.)

In my system of beliefs, all that story is summed up by Abinadi's,

And behold, I say unto you, this is not all. For O how beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that is the founder of peace, yea, even the Lord, who has redeemed his people; yea, him who has granted salvation unto his people; (Mosiah 15:18.)

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#### Endnotes

{1}Mormon is never so impolite as to suggest we might not already know what the festival was, or how vital it was to the Israelite community and religious life. So he never mentions the festival directly. Rather, Mormon presents us with an actualization of the events which the New Year's festival only symbolically depicted, and, I believe, he expected us to understand the importance of what he is doing.

Examples of the literary and scriptural retelling of the story behind the drama of the ancient temple ceremonies can be found everywhere. A splendid ancient example of that is the Hymn of the Pearl in the Acts of Thomas. Among the gospels, the best example is the gospel of John. The author of Job does the same thing. Isaiah 40 to the end follows the same pattern. They all begin at the Council in Heaven, then follow their subject through the difficulties and accomplishments of this world, and conclude with a final triumph of godliness.

As we have observed, one of the first in depth discussions of the enthronement psalms as used in the ancient Israelite New Year's festival is chapter five, "Psalms at the Enthronement Festival of Yahweh," in Sigmund Mowinckel, translated by A.P. Thomas, *The Psalms in Israel's Worship*, 2 Vols. (Abingdon, Nashville, 1962), vol. 1, p. 106-192.

Emerton describes some of the early scholarly work this way:

"If Mowinckel's theory be accepted--and it must suffice here to express the opinion that it is essentially right, however much it may need to be modified in details--then it can hardly be denied that Dan vii reflects the imagery of the festival. The beasts rising from the sea, the salvation of Israel, and the act of receiving kingship all suggest the complex of ideas of the enthronement festival. Dan. vii is an eschatological form of the situation at that festival." Then,

after analyzing the Daniel passage carefully, he concludes, "Thus, the coming of the Son of Man, his enthronement, the judgment of the evil, and the deliverance of the just all fit the background of the enthronement festival." J. A. Emerton, "The Origin of the Son of Man Imagery," in *The Journal of Theological Studies, New Series* (vol. 9, pt. 2, October 1958), 231, 236.

{2} For an interesting discussion of the dating of the Saviour's coming to America see, S. Kent Brown and John A. Tvedtnes, with an introduction by John W. Welch, "When Did Jesus Appear to the Nephites in Bountiful?" Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, Provo, Utah, 1989. For a discussion of the Nephite calendar see, John L. Sorenson, "Seasonality of Warfare in the Book of Mormon and in Mesoamerica," in Stephen D. Ricks and William J. Hamblin, eds., *Warfare in the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City, Deseret Book Company and F.A.R.M.S., 1990) 448-453.

{3} "Jesus" is the Greek form of Joshua, which in Hebrew means "Jehovah saves," or "Saviour." Mowinckel explained, "'Messiah' (Greek, Messias) represents the Aramaic Mesiha, Hebrew ham-masiah, 'the Anointed One'.... 'Jesus Messiah', or in Greek 'Jesus Christ', were His name and His title in the speech of the community, until the term 'Christ' also came to be regarded as a personal name." (Sigmund Mowinckel, *He that Cometh* [New York: Abingdon Press, 1954], p. 3.) See also: Aubrey R. Johnson, *Sacral Kingship in Ancient Israel*, Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 1967, p. 1.

Isaiah 61:1 speaks of the anointing of Christ in the pre-existence, and Peter testified that at the time of Jesus' baptism, "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power." Acts 10:34-48.

{4} Not all scholars believe the psalms were actually a part of the pre-exilic Temple rites. For the argument (though in my opinion not a very convincing one) that the Psalms were not a part of the ancient liturgy see Norman H. Snaith, *Studies in the Psalter* (Epworth Press, London, 1934).

{5} See also Psalm 34. The Hebrew words for the English "broken" and "contrite" are very similar in meaning. For example the Anchor Bible reads, "The finest sacrifices are a contrite spirit: a heart contrite and crushed." Mitchell Dahood, translator, *The Anchor Bible, Psalms II, 51-100*, Doubleday & Company, Inc., Garden City, New York, 1979, p. 2.

However the Hebrew words from which they are translated are quite different. Broken means shattered - like what would happen to a clay pot if it fell off a shelf and was not able to retain its structure. (The "heart" in the ancient world was both the seat of both intellect and the emotions. So to sacrifice a "broken" heart, would mean to make sacred a self whose intellectual and emotional self was not firm and unchangeable.) The Hebrew word translated "contrite" means to pulverize - the thing that would to the pot if one beat it with a hammer - it can't happen to the pot by its just falling off a shelf, it takes a pounding by someone else to turn it to powder. ("Spirit" is spirit, that also must be sacrificed - set apart, made holy.) A broken heart was essentially what happened to the Saviour on the cross, a contrite spirit may be a description of his experience in the Garden. What he asks of us, is to do - within the limits of our abilities - the same thing he did.

{6} Moses 5:5-7. Jubilees: 3:26-27.

{7} Genesis 8:20-21. For a discussion of the significance of Noah's sacrifice to the ceremonies of Solomon's Temple, see: Hayward, C.T.R., *The Jewish Temple*, Routledge, London, 1996, p. 166.

{8} John M. Lundquist, "Temple, Covenant, and Law in the Ancient Near East and in the Old Testament," in A. Gileadi, ed., *Israel's Apostasy and Restoration* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1988), p. 300.

{9} Sigmund Mowinckel, translated by A.P. Thomas, *The Psalms in Israel's Worship*, 2 Vols. (Nashville, Abingdon, 1962), vol. 1: 132.

{10} Lundquist, John M., "The Legitimizing Role of the Temple in the Origin of the State" in Donald W. Parry, ed., *Temples of the Ancient World* (Deseret Book, Salt Lake City, Utah, 1994), p. 180.

Runnalls' assertions that the building or restoration of temples was such an important part of the overall enthronement process that Jesus' claim to the messiahship would not have been complete had he not cleansed the temple, can readily be adapted to fit the situation described in Third Nephi. See, Donna Runnalls, "The King as Temple Builder, A Messianic Typology," in, E. J. Furcha, ed., *Spirit Within Structure, Essays in Honor of George Johnston Allison Park*, Pennsylvania, Pickwick Publications, 1983), 19, 30.

{11} Eli Borowski, "Cherubim: God's Throne?" in *Biblical Archaeology Review* (21/4, July/August, 1995), 36.

{12} 2 Chronicles 7:8-10. Widengren, Geo, "King and Covenant" in *Journal of Semitic Studies*, Vol. II, No. I, 1957, p. 8-9; Aubrey R. Johnson, *Sacral Kingship in Ancient Israel* (Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 1967), p. 54. Sigmund Mowinckel, translated by A.P. Thomas, *The Psalms in Israel's Worship*, 2 Vols.(Nashville, Abingdon, 1962), vol. 1:127.

{13} Norman H. Snaith, *The Jewish New Year Festival* (Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, London, 1947), p. 52 (see also p. 46). 1 Kings 8:2. Jack Finegan, *Light from the Ancient Past* (Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1959), p. 296-297. Aubrey R. Johnson, *Sacral Kingship in Ancient Israel* (Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 1967), p. 54-58.

Snaith's statement might be a bit strong. One supposes that Solomon might have done what Nabonidus, king of Babylon (Belshazzar's father), did about 60 years after Lehi left Jerusalem. He built a new temple and forbade the celebration of the New Year's festival until the building was completed. See: E. A. Wallis Budge, *Babylonian Life and History* (Religious Tract Society, London, 1925), p. 53.) Be that as it may, the New Year's festival was the occasion for dedicating Solomon's temple, and probably would have been the occasion of the dedication of a Nephite temple as well. [Don't think any the less of Budge because of the name of the organization that published his work. It was a scholarly organization, and he was one of the greatest English biblical scholars of his time.]

{14} John M. Lundquist, "The Legitimizing Role of the Temple in the Origin of the State," in Donald W. Parry, ed., *Temples of the Ancient World* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and F.A.R.M.S., 1994), 181. See pages 179-235.

{15} John M. Lundquist, "Temple, Covenant, and Law in the Ancient Near East and in the Old Testament," in A. Gileadi, ed., *Israel's Apostasy and Restoration* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1988), p. 293-305.

{16} The idea of silence not only has the connotation of awe and reverence, but it also has an ancient priesthood meaning. "...the proper attitude of the highest heavenly beings in the face of the Divine Presence is a silent worship of God in their uttering the prescribed formula of blessing." C.T.R. Hayward, *The Jewish Temple* (Routledge, London, 1996), p. 33-36.

{17} Raymond E. Brown, *The Semitic Background of the Term "Mystery" in the New Testament* (Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1968), p. 3, f.n. 8.

{18} 3 Ne. 10:10.

This is also consistent with the events of the Temple ceremonies. "...it is at daybreak that He brings succour to His people," Johnson observes when he comments about Psalm 29 and 48. Aubrey R. Johnson, *Sacral Kingship in Ancient Israel* (Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 1967), p. 93.

{19} Engnell, Ivan, *Studies in Divine Kingship in the Ancient Near East* (Oxford, 1967), p. 34.

{20} John M. Lundquist, "Temple, Covenant, and Law in the Ancient Near East and in the Old Testament," in A. Gileadi, ed., *Israel's Apostasy and Restoration* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1988), pages 299 & 302.

{21} D&C 93:1-5; see also: 3 Nephi 12:8; D&C 97:16; Hebrews 12:14)

{22} 3 Nephi 12:8; D&C 97:16; Hebrews 12:14; D&C 84:19-22 & Psalms 17:15; D&C 67:11; D&C 88:66-68.

{23} Book of Enoch, 62:7-8 in R. H. Charles, *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament in English*, 2 vols. (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1976), Vol. 2, 228.

{24} For the argument that Christ probably came during one of the Israelite New Year festival celebrations see: John W. Welch, *The Sermon at the Temple and the Sermon on the Mount* (Deseret Book Company, Salt Lake City, Utah, 1990), p. 29.

{25} Acts 10:34-48. See, Geo Widengren, "King and Covenant" in *Journal of Semitic Studies*, Vol. II, No. I, 1957, p. 31.

{26} Geo Widengren, "Early Hebrew Myths and their Interpretation," in S. H. Hooke, ed., *Myth, Ritual, and Kingship* (Oxford, 1958), p. 199.



{27} John 20-21.

An example of scholars who have observed that the pattern of his life fits perfectly pattern of the cosmic myth is S. G. F. Brandon, "The Myth and Ritual Position Critically Considered," in S. H. Hooke, ed., *Myth, Ritual, and Kingship* (Oxford, 1958), p.279 ff.

For a discussion of the Saviour's activities and teachings during his Forty-day ministry see, Hugh Nibley, "Evangelium Quadraginta Dierum: The Forty-day Mission of Christ--The Forgotten Heritage, in *Mormonism and Early Christianity* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and F.A.R.M.S.), p. 10-44; S. Kent Brown and C. Wilfred Griggs, "The 40-Day Ministry, What happened after the resurrection? Apocryphal documents give accounts--some reliable, some not," *Ensign*, August, 1975, p. 6-12.

{28} This list is found in Geo Widengren, *The Ascension of the Apostle and the Heavenly Book* (Uppsala Universitets Arsskrift, 1950), p. 18.

{29} See: Matthew 17:5; Mark 1:11, 9:7; Luke 3:22, 9:35, 20:13; 1 Corinthians 4:17; 2 Timothy 1:2; 2 Peter 1:17; 2 Nephi 31:11; Section 93:15; Moses 4:2; J Smith-History 1:17.

{30} Sigmund Mowinckel, translated by A.P. Thomas, *The Psalms in Israel's Worship*, 2 Vols. (Abingdon, Nashville, 1962), vol. 1: 118. He defines "election," as he uses it here, as "of the deliverance from Egypt, of the miracle at the Reed Lake and of the Covenant of Kadesh-Sinai and the victory over the natives after the settlement, in short the election." (vol. 1: 140)

{31} Frederick H. Borsch, *The Son of Man in Myth and History*, p. 185, 194.

Ivan Engnell, *Studies in Divine Kingship in the Ancient Near East* (Oxford, 1967), p. 62-63.

Stephen D. Ricks, "The Garment of Adam in Jewish, Muslim, and Christian Tradition" in Donald W. Parry, ed., *Temples of the Ancient World* (Deseret Book, Salt Lake City, Utah, 1994), p. 716, 720.

Geo Widengren, "King and Covenant" in *Journal of Semitic Studies*, Vol. II, No. I, 1957, p. 21.

Ricks, Stephen D., "The Garment of Adam in Jewish, Muslim, and Christian Tradition" in Donald W. Parry, ed., *Temples of the Ancient World* (Deseret Book, Salt Lake City, Utah, 1994), p. 705-739.

{32} For a discussion of the 93<sup>rd</sup> Psalm see, David M. Howard, Jr., *The Structure of Psalms 93-100* (Winona Lake, Indiana, Eisenbrauns, 1997), 34-41.

{33} Widengren, Geo, "Early Hebrew Myths and their Interpretation," in S. H. Hooke, ed., *Myth, Ritual, and Kingship* (Oxford, 1958), p. 197. Widengren gives his translation of the 93<sup>rd</sup> Psalm on pages 196-197.

{34} When Christ died on the cross, the veil of the temple tore from top to bottom. The idea that

this rending of the temple veil was an appropriate conclusion to Saviour's "triumphal entry" into Jerusalem a few days before his death, has been considered by several scholars. In the New Year festival, at the conclusion of the procession around the city, the king and the Ark of the Covenant (representing the presence of God) entered the Holy of Holies. The veil would have had to be pulled back (probably dividing from the center) for them to enter. For discussions suggesting that the tearing of the veil at the Saviour's death, was symbolic of the parting of the veil at the coronation ceremony of the festival, see, Harry L. Chronis, "The Torn Veil: Cultus and Christology in Mark 15:37-39," in *Journal of Biblical Literature* (101, no. 1, March 1982), 97-114. There Chronis asserts that Mark's telling about the veil was Mark's affirmation of Jesus's kingship.

The idea that the torn curtain was symbolic of the triumph of the Saviour, "confirming that he is one with the gods." is supported in Thomas Schmidt, "Jesus' Triumphal March to Crucifixion, The Sacred Way as Roman Procession," in *Bible Review* (13/1, 1997), 37.

The idea that the tearing of the veil "indicates a consistent concern with the continued but transformed role of the temple" is found in Joel B. Green, "The Death of Jesus and the Rending of the Temple Veil (Luke 23:44-49): A Window into Luke's Understanding of Jesus and the Temple," in Eugene H. Lovering, Jr., ed., *Society of Biblical Literature 1991 Seminar Papers* (Atlanta, Georgia, Scholars Press, 1991), 543-557.

The opinion, but without conclusive evidence, that it was the outer veil which was torn is expressed in David Ulansey, "The Heavenly Veil Torn: Mark's Cosmic Inclusio," in *Journal of Biblical Literature* (110/1, Spring 1991, 123-125n .

{35} Arert Jan Wensinck, *The Ideas of the Western Semites concerning the Navel of the Earth* (Amsterdam: Johannes Muller, 1916), p. 55.

{36} For a discussion of the Ark of the Covenant as a footstool see, Nahum M. Sarna, *Exploring Exodus* (New York, Schocken Books, 1986), p. 210-211.

{37} They might also appropriately have sung Psalms 24, 7, 95, 99, and 111. A discussion of these coronation psalms can be found in, Aubrey R. Johnson, *Sacral Kingship in Ancient Israel* (Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 1967), p. 68-70.

{38} See also: Hugh Nibley, *The Prophetic Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and F.A.R.M.S, 1989), ch. 19, "Christ among the Ruins," p. 407-434. Johnson points out that the words translated in verse "save now," which he translates, "grant salvation," "has been made familiar through the Greek of the New Testament as 'Hosanna!'" Aubrey R. Johnson, *Sacral Kingship in Ancient Israel*, Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 1967, p. 126-127.