

lev 3:15 NRSV). The Laodiceans provide neither aling nor refreshment because they are spiritually lukewarm," lacking any inner desire to work for Christ. This lukewarmness is identified with spiritual complacency in Revelation 3:17-19.

Rage. The warm blush of *anger underlies the biblical image of "hot wrath," an indication of extreme inner activity that can erupt in violence. Images of boiling rage are often applied anthropomorphically to God, expressing his wrath over, and impending *judgment of, sin and idolatry. Moses vividly recalls that when the Israelites worshiped the golden *calf, "I was afraid of the anger and hot displeasure with which the LORD was wrathful against you" (Deut 9:19 NASB), an inner heat that almost boiled over to their destruction (Ex 32:10). The same word (*hēmā*) is used by the psalmist when he begs God, "Do not rebuke me in your anger, or discipline me in your wrath" (Ps 6:1; 38:1 NRSV). Such heat imagery is consonant with passages describing God's wrath as the "kindling" of a consuming "fire" (Jug 2:14; 10:7).

See also ANGER; DRY, DROUGHT; FIRE; MELT, MELTING; SNOW; WATER; WEATHER; WIND.

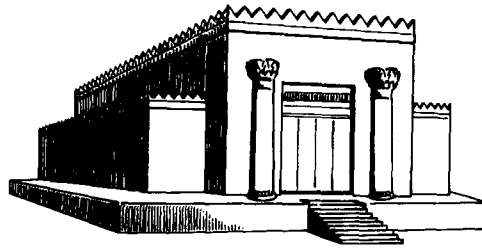
TEMPLE

Not surprisingly, given the temple's central role in Jewish society, the biblical imagery surrounding it is particularly rich and suggestive. The temple presents a fascinating range of symbols and, in light of the biblical prohibition against graven images, a surprising emphasis on the visible nature of revelation communicated by the dwelling of *Israel's invisible *God (e.g., Ps 48:4-8, 12-14). No doubt the songs, fragrances, *prayers and rituals surrounding a visit to the temple, the biggest structure of its kind in the ancient Near East, left an indelible impression on the senses and served as a fountainhead of religious imagery. After all, the temple was not only the worship center of Hebrew culture but also the art gallery, concert plaza and poetry library.

God's Dwelling Place. The temple in its most basic sense symbolizes the dwelling place of God. This is underscored by numerous references to the temple as the "house of God" or the "house of the LORD." Its other titles include "the sanctuary" or at times simply *Zion—as the psalmist emphasizes, "For the LORD has chosen Zion; he has desired it for his habitation" (Ps 132:13 NRSV; cf. Ps 9:11; 74:2; 66:2; Joel 3:17). In lieu of the carved deity symbolizing the presence of the *gods in pagan temples, the architecture and increasingly precious metals encountered as one neared the holy of holies emphasized God's presence. Indeed, at its dedication the manifestation of his presence proved overwhelming: "A cloud filled the house of the LORD, so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud; for the glory of the LORD filled the house of the LORD" (1 Kings 8:10-11 NRSV; cf. 2 Chron 3:14; 7:1-2; Ezek 43:5; 44:4). The two massive pillars of the forecourt are also symbolic of God's

entrance into his abode (1 Kings 7:15-22; cf. Ezek 43:4).

However, the image of God's dwelling in a habitation constructed by human *hands may appear problematic, or at best paradoxical. On the one hand, the temple provided a place for worship and a tangible reminder of God's presence, *blessing and *protection; on the other hand, its presence might lead to the perspective that God may be circumscribed. Criticism of the latter perspective is evident in Isaiah



A reconstruction of Solomon's temple with the pillars Jachin and Boaz at the entrance.

66:1: "Thus says the LORD: Heaven is my throne and the earth is my footstool; what is the house that you would build for me, and what is my resting place?" (NRSV; cf. Deut 4:7; Ps 145:18; Acts 7:48; 17:24). Even at the temple's dedication, *Solomon acknowledges that God is not "contained" in it. "But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Even heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain you, much less this house that I have built!" (1 Kings 8:27 NRSV). Other passages unite both dimensions without any apparent tension: "The LORD is in his holy temple; the LORD's throne is in heaven" (Ps 11:4).

The answer to this paradox lies in the fact that the temple is an *earthly archetype of the *heavenly reality, just as *Moses constructed the *tabernacle after the heavenly pattern revealed to him on *Sinai (Ex 25:9, 40). This contrast between the heavenly and the earthly is also underscored in several passages of Hebrews: "They offer worship in a sanctuary that is a sketch and shadow of the heavenly one" (Heb 8:5 NRSV; cf. Heb 9:1, 24). Specific aspects of God's heavenly abode are duplicated in the temple. For example, God's dwelling in a veil of smoke and *darkness is replicated in the holy of holies (2 Sam 22:12; Ps 18:11; 97:2; Rev 15:8).

Symbol of Divine Victory. The temple was more than God's earthly dwelling place. It was also a potent symbol of God's victory over his *enemies. We may see this in 2 Samuel 7, the story of *David's abortive desire to *build the temple. David felt guilty that he lived in a permanent *home while God still lived in a *tent (2 Sam 7:2). He expressed his desire to build a permanent structure to the prophet

Nathan, who initially approved the idea. Later, however, God appeared to Nathan, telling him that David was not to build the temple.

The message of 2 Samuel 7 centers on a play on the Hebrew word *bayit*, which is rendered in various ways in most English versions (though not the NRSV, which translates "house" consistently). David is securely settled in his *bayit* (house; cf. 2 Sam 7:1) but wants to build God a *bayit* (temple; cf. 2 Sam 7:5). God rejects David's plan but tells him *he* will build for David a *bayit* (a dynasty; cf. 2 Sam 7:11). The one who follows David in his dynasty will be the one to build the "house of God." This one of course is Solomon, whose name means "peace." The point is that the temple symbolizes victory over the enemies of God and peaceful settlement in the *land. David was the conquest completer, but he was also "a warrior" (1 Chron 28:3); so the time was not right for the temple. His son Solomon built it.

In this way the temple is a symbol of establishment and victory. As such, it falls into the pattern of ancient Near Eastern mythology (in particular the Baal Epic of ancient Ugarit), which presents a pattern of *warfare followed by the proclamation of the god as *king and the commemoration of victory through the building of a new divine residence.

The Temple and Creation. Yet God's celestial and terrestrial abodes are not always contrasted; often they are depicted as complementary. That is, the temple also represents the entire cosmos; it is a microcosm of all creation. "He built his sanctuary like the high heavens, like the earth, which he has founded forever" (Ps 78:69 NRSV). Since the temple speaks of all creation, Habakkuk declares, "The LORD is in his holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before him!" (Hab 2:20 NRSV). Similarly, Isaiah's vision of God's *glory filling the temple is accompanied by the angelic antiphony "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory" (Is 6:3 NRSV).

Both the temple and the tabernacle embody a theology of creation and God's presence within it. Consequently there are parallels between the *Genesis creation account and the accounts of the building of the tabernacle and the temple. The significance of the *light of creation and the light in the tabernacle (Ex 25:31-40; 37:17-24) is retained in the temple (2 Chron 13:11). Similar to the *seven *days of creation, the temple took seven years to complete, a fact that emphasizes God as its builder rather than Solomon or David. The objects in the temple bear creation symbolism as well. For example, the placid *waters of the bronze reservoir in the court of the *priests represent God's victory over the waters of chaos, as celebrated in Psalm 93, which connects the creation of the world, the raging chaotic waters and the *holiness of God's house. Both God's creation and his acts of creation are often imaginatively portrayed in the temple.

As a symbol of pristine creation the temple evokes the *Garden of Eden, or paradise. Ezekiel depicts the

primordial *rivers (Gen 2:10-14) emerging from below the threshold of the temple (Ezek 47:1). He also suggests that the perfection of Eden is cultivated in the temple by its proximity to the *tree of life. "Their leaves will not wither nor their fruit fail, but they will bear fresh fruit every month, because the water for them flows from the sanctuary" (Ezek 47:12 NRSV). The psalmist longs for the delights of such a paradise: "Happy are those whom you choose and bring near to live in your courts. We shall be satisfied with the goodness of your house, your holy temple" (Ps 65:4 NRSV; cf. Ps 36).

Place of Communication. The temple, moreover, represents a place of communication with and about God. Its priests had access to the mind of God (Deut 33:8) and instructed the people in the *law. This instruction in Torah which emanates from the temple is projected onto the age to come when the nations shall stream to *Zion (Mic 4:2), the place of *prayer for all nations (Is 56:7; Jer 7:11; Mk 11:17). It was a place to pronounce *vows and fulfill pledges. Even during the time of *exile, when the temple was in ruins, the people of Israel would direct their prayers toward the temple, knowing that God would hear (1 Kings 8:28-29; Ps 138:2; Dan 6:11; Jon 2:7). In Luke's infancy narrative the temple is the place where the pious receive *revelation concerning God's coming *salvation and where Jesus, even as a child, expounds God's Word. In Acts the early church does not abandon the temple but preaches in its precincts.

Cosmic Center. Not only did daily economic, political and religious life orbit the *Jerusalem temple, but it symbolized the center of the cosmos, the meeting place between heaven and earth, the center to which distant communities would send delegations to offer *worship. Ezekiel describes it as located in the "center of the nations" and as "the navel of the earth" (Ezek 5:5; 38:12 NRSV mg.). Hence actions that take place in its precincts take on special significance, such as Jesus' prophetic act of cleansing the temple (Mk 11:15; Lk 19:45; Jn 2:15) and the rending of the temple *veil brought about by Jesus' *death (Mt 27:51; Mk 15:38; Lk 23:45; cf. Heb 6:19; 9:3; 10:20).

The Temple and Holiness. Because the temple represented the dwelling place of God on earth, it was a symbol of *holiness. The deeper one penetrated the temple precincts, the greater the sanctity one encountered. Unlike a synagogue or church, the inside of the temple itself was not a place of public worship. The spread *wings of the cherubim on the *ark of the *covenant in the holy of holies suggest a picture of divine sanctity and protection (1 Kings 8:6-7; cf. Gen 3:24; Is 6:2-3).

Since the temple represents all creation, the *purity rules surrounding it had implications for categorizing everything, including people, in terms of clean and unclean. For example, the first gradation of holiness prevented *Gentiles from approaching the inner precincts. Ezekiel is exhorted to "mark well

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those who are to be excluded
(Ezek 44:5 NRSV). In Herod's
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The Temple and Community. The concepts of boundaries, holiness
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The Temple and Justice and Mercy. The temple is pictured as the embodiment
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worship if not accompanied by
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those who may be admitted to the temple and all those who are to be excluded from the sanctuary" (Ezek 44:5 NRSV). In Herod's temple there was a wall or marker that warned Gentiles not to proceed further under penalty of death. Paul is falsely accused of defiling the temple by bringing Gentiles past this barrier (Acts 21:28). This image is taken up in Ephesians 2:14, which maintains that Christ's death "has broken down the dividing wall" (NRSV) between Jew and Gentile.

The Temple and Community. Since sacred concepts of boundaries, holiness and God's presence undergird the identity of the people of God, the temple often symbolizes God's people. For Isaiah the restoration of the temple mount and of the people are synonymous (Is 51:16); Ezekiel's vision of the *restoration of the temple is a vision of *hope for Israel (Ezek 40:1—43:12). Numerous biblical authors employ the temple as a symbol of the rise and fall of God's people according to their moral, ethical and spiritual condition (Ps 79:1; 114:2; Jer 24; Ezek 9:6; 43:10; Dan 8:13; 11:31; Rev 11:1). Similarly, the *disciples' discussion of the temple in the Gospels sets the stage for Jesus' prophetic discourse concerning the nation of Israel (Mt 24:1; Mk 13:1; Lk 21:5). John in particular emphasizes the function of the community, Jesus' body, as the temple that bears God's presence (e.g., Jn 2:19-21; 4:21-24).

Paul as well understands the redeemed community, the *church, as the dwelling place of God: "Do you not know that you are God's temple?" (1 Cor 3:16). Accordingly, it has implications for separation from the unholy and ungodly (cf. 1 Cor 3:17; 6:19; 2 Cor 6:16; Eph 2:21). 1 Peter speaks of Christ and believers as "living stones" that are "built into a spiritual house" (1 Pet 2:4-5 NRSV). Revelation addresses the faithful as pillars of the temple (Rev 3:12) but also emphasizes that there is no longer any need for a temple because of the unmediated presence of God in the New Jerusalem (Rev 21:22), which, because it is fashioned as a cube (Rev 21:16), suggests the shape of the holy of holies.

The Temple and Justice and Peace. The temple is pictured as the embodiment of God's people's longing for *justice, *peace and *blessing. This was true while the temple was standing and was only intensified by its destruction. The temple is related to the dispensation of law and justice; in it the law was both taught and practiced. The prophets were quick to remind people of the offensiveness of temple worship if not accompanied by justice (Is 1:10-17; Hos 6:6; Amos 5:21). Accordingly, the psalmist makes a connection between the physical and ethical preparation necessary for those who would "ascend the hill of the LORD" or "stand in his holy place" (see Ps 24:3-6; cf. Ps 15): the physical ascent of the temple mount into God's presence must be matched by an ethical ascent.

This fits well with the emphasis on the temple's physical *beauty. The religion of the Bible tolerates no graven images of the deity, but it was not bereft

of artistic achievement. Psalm 84 celebrates the beauty of *Zion, which certainly would have included the temple building itself. It expresses the psalmist's longing to be in the vicinity of this marvelous building.

Moreover, the temple symbolizes peace and *rest. Because the glassy *sea of the temple is associated with God's victory over chaos in creation, the temple is associated with the *sabbath rest that accompanied the completion of the world. The temple is spoken of as his "resting place" (Ps 132:14; cf. Is 66:1), and Solomon is chosen to be its builder because he is a "man of peace" (1 Chron 22:9). The completion of the temple is symbolic of the sabbath God grants Israel from its warring past. Hence it is from its origin a place of rest (cf. Ex 20:25). In Revelation the altar of the temple is pictured as the place where the martyrs rest until the time of the end (Rev 6:9-11).

Image of Christ. Like the tabernacle before it, temple imagery is associated with *Jesus Christ in the NT. After all, the temple represented God's presence on earth, and Jesus is the fullness of that presence in bodily form. A rumor had reached the high priest that Jesus had foreseen the destruction of the temple (Mk 13:1-2) and attributed to him the claim that in *three days he would build another, but "not made with hands" (Mk 14:58; cf. Jn 2:13-22). His opponents knew what he was saying: that he would stand in place of the temple as the presence of God.

Conclusion. Given such a richness of imagery surrounding the house of God, it is little wonder that God's people have always passionately yearned for life inside its courts: "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD my whole life long" (Ps 23:6 NRSV).

See also ADAM; ALTAR; JERUSALEM; LAMP, LAMP-STAND; OFFERING; PRIEST; SACRED SPACE; SACRIFICE; TABERNACLE; WORSHIP; ZION.

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TEMPTATION. See TEMPTER, TEMPTATION.

TEMPTER, TEMPTATION

In a book preoccupied with good and *evil and the need for people to choose between them, it is no surprise that the temptation motif looms large. The root meaning of temptation is that it *tests* a person, with the person's response determining his or her identity. Temptation stories can thus be viewed as a particular category within the archetypal *test motif. The ingredients that converge in a full-fledged temptation story are fixed. The two principal actors are a tempter (whose chief trait is subtlety) and a victim of temptation (who is often gullible or weak-willed). The action consists of three main motifs—a process