

**“Standing in the Holy Place”: Ancient and Modern Reverberations of an Enigmatic New Testament Prophecy**  
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The only direct mention in the New Testament of the idea of “stand[ing] in the holy place” is found in the book of Matthew. Here, as part of Jesus’ prophecy to His disciples about the woes that would befall Jerusalem, He gave one of the most controversial prophecies of the New Testament: “When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation... stand in the holy place... Then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains:”<sup>1</sup> However, in related verses in the Joseph Smith Translation of the Bible and in the Doctrine and Covenants, the sense of this phrase is turned upside down. Rather than describing how the “*abomination of desolation*” will “stand in the holy place,”<sup>2</sup> the JST version enjoins the *apostles* to “stand in the holy place”<sup>3</sup> when the “abomination of desolation” appears so they can be saved. It is easy to see how, on the face of it, some might conclude that Joseph Smith’s translation was an obvious and embarrassing mistake, based on his ignorance of the Greek text of the New Testament. Today, however, my purpose is to advance an alternative claim: namely, that in the scriptural word picture of the righteous standing in holy places, Joseph Smith has recovered the essence of a potent metaphor from the heart of ancient Judaism and early Christianity.

***Adam and Eve’s Standing in Eden.*** Jewish accounts of Adam’s creation specifically highlight his first experience after being filled with the breath of life:<sup>4</sup> namely, the moment when God “stood him on his legs.”<sup>5</sup> According to Zornberg,<sup>6</sup> it is in the ability to stand in the presence of God that one specifically demonstrates the attainment of full “majesty and strength.”

Medieval artistic convention makes it clear that Christ was imagined as raising the dead to eternal life by the same gesture that was used to create Adam and stand him on his feet.<sup>7</sup> Likewise, we note the Old Testament literary formula that nearly always follows descriptions of miraculous revivals of the dead with the observation that they “stood up upon their feet.”<sup>8</sup> It is by being raised by the hand to the upright position that we are made ready to hear the word of the Lord. It is no mere coincidence that before heavenly messengers can perform their errands to Ezekiel,<sup>9</sup> Daniel,<sup>10</sup> Paul,<sup>11</sup> and Alma the Younger,<sup>12</sup> they must first command these seers to stand on their feet.<sup>13</sup> As biblical scholar Robert Hayward has said: “You stand in the temple,<sup>14</sup> you stand before the Lord,<sup>15</sup> you pray standing up<sup>16</sup>—you can’t approach God on all fours like an animal. If you can stand, you can serve God in His temple.”<sup>17</sup> If you are stained with sin, you cannot stand in His presence.<sup>18</sup>

Jewish writings tell of how Adam lost the divine ability to stand through his taking of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge. For example, in an account that plays on the nuances of Hebrew terms for standing, we read: “Before the sin, Adam could “hear God speaking and *stand on his legs*... he could *withstand* it.”<sup>19</sup> ... In another midrash, God says, “Woe Adam! Could you not *stand in your commandment* for even one hour?”

After the Fall, Adam and Eve sorrowed over the loss of the fruit trees of Eden as the source of mankind’s food (whether meant literally or figuratively)—leaving them nothing besides “the herb of the field” to eat. Rabbinical and early Christian writings saw Adam and Eve’s loss of their paradisiacal food as part of a humiliating penance, to a degree in the likeness of Nebuchadnezzar’s abasement to a beastlike state.<sup>20</sup> Although to be banished from the Garden of Eden “is to lose a particular standing ground,”<sup>21</sup> it was always God’s intention to restore Adam and Eve and their posterity to their former glory.<sup>22</sup> Succinctly expressing the hopelessness of Adam’s predicament in the absence of God’s “remedy,”<sup>23</sup> midrash states: “If it were not for Your mercy, Adam would have had *no standing (amidah)*.”<sup>24</sup>

***Israel’s Failure to Stand at Sinai.*** Israel proved themselves unready to accept the fulness of God’s law at Sinai.<sup>25</sup> They preferred that Moses go alone to ascend the holy mountain, while they stayed at its foot.<sup>26</sup> Painting a vivid word picture of how the Israelites were unable to stand in the divine presence, Rashi explains that when they heard the sound of the voice of God emanate from Sinai “they moved backwards and stood at a distance: they were repelled to the rear a distance of twelve miles—that is the whole length of the camp. Then the angels came and helped them forward again.” Zornberg reasons: “If this happened at each of the Ten Commandments, the people are imagined as traveling 240 miles in order to stand in place!”<sup>27</sup> Though this imagery is, of course, figurative, it is highly instructive.

We see this same movement away from God and toward the regions of death at the incident of the Golden Calf.<sup>28</sup> Before their sin, the Israelites looked without fear upon the divine flames of God’s presence at the top of the mountain, but as soon as they had sinned, they could not bear to see even the face of Moses, God’s intermediary.<sup>29</sup> By way of contrast to the Israelites, Moses, like Jesus at the Transfiguration,<sup>30</sup> was covered by a glorious cloud<sup>31</sup> as he communed face-to-face with the Lord, having been made like God Himself.<sup>32</sup> Moses then stood to Israel as God stood to him and, having received the power of an eternal life, he became known in the Samaritan literature as “the Standing One.”<sup>33</sup>

***“The Measure of the Stature of the Fulness of Christ.”*** Only those who are of a perfect spiritual stature are qualified to stand in the presence of God. In describing the essential qualities the youthful Jesus acquired as he grew to manhood, Luke states that He “increased in wisdom and stature.”<sup>34</sup> In their strivings to become like their Lord, Paul instructed his readers to attain such “a knowledge of the Son of God” that would enable them also to become “perfect... unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.”<sup>35</sup> This supreme objective, of course, could not be accomplished without divine help, for “[w]hich of you by taking thought,” Jesus rhetorically asked in the Sermon the Mount, “can add one cubit unto his stature?”<sup>36</sup>

The idea of the disciples adding cubit to cubit until they measured up to the perfection of Christ in stature would have been recognized by early Christians as an analogy to the process of temple building.<sup>37</sup> The temple, like the disciple, was required to conform to the exact measures revealed by God.<sup>38</sup> Recall, for example, how the dimensions of each aspect of the Israelite Tabernacle were described in minute detail to Moses,<sup>39</sup> and how Ezekiel<sup>40</sup> witnessed the careful measurement of his visionary temple. A similar motif of measurement of the temple precincts occurs in the book of Revelation,<sup>41</sup> in a passage to which we will later return.

In the Investiture Panel at Mari from Old Babylon,<sup>42</sup> one is also struck by the significant role played by measurement in the planning and construction of temples and palaces. As emblems that symbolically conjoin the acts of measurement in laying the foundations of sacred buildings and the processes of cosmic creation, one sees the Mesopotamian rod and ring. These two instruments of the rod and ring functioned essentially as a “yardstick” and a “tape measure,”<sup>43</sup> and can be profitably compared to the “measuring reed” and “line of flax” of Ezekiel,<sup>44</sup> as well as to the analogous cosmic surveying instruments of the square and the compass.<sup>45</sup> Consistent with the general biblical symbolism, the Mesopotamian measuring devices also served as visual metaphors for the personal righteousness of those who were made kings.<sup>46</sup> These kings, like the early Christians addressed by Jesus and Paul, were expected to “measure up” to their high and holy callings.

We return to Jesus’ question: “[w]hich of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?”<sup>47</sup> “No one,” writes BYU scholar Jack Welch, “would be presumptuous enough to add a single cubit to any part of the temple.”<sup>48</sup> Neither, I would add, would individuals aspiring to conform to “the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ”<sup>49</sup> presume to improve upon the dimensions of His perfection.

***The Fall of the Temple Guards at Jesus’ Arrest.*** Nowhere is the contrast between the perfect stature of the Christ and that of His slouching enemies so clearly shown than in John’s account of Jesus’ arrest. While Matthew, Mark, and Luke’s accounts highlight the perfidy of Judas as the one who

identified his Master to the temple guards, the gospel of John emphasizes Christ's mastery of the situation by omitting the kiss of Judas from its narrative, suggesting that "Judas' task of identifying Jesus had been taken out of his hands."<sup>50</sup> Instead, at that moment, Jesus is shown in full control of the arresting party by His startling *self*-identification:<sup>51</sup> "Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye? They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am *he*... As soon then as he had said unto them, I am *he*, they went backward, and fell to the ground."

The King James translation of the Greek phrase *ego eimi* as "I am *he*" obscures an essential detail. In reality, Jesus has not said, "I am *he*," but rather "I AM," using a divine name that directly identifies Him as being Jehovah.<sup>52</sup> Thus, asserts Raymond E. Brown, it is clear that the fall of the temple guards is no mere slapstick scene that might be "explained away or trivialized. To know or use the divine name, as Jesus does [in replying with 'I AM'], is an exercise of awesome power."<sup>53</sup>

This event is nothing more nor less than a replay of the scene of the children of Israel at Sinai discussed earlier.<sup>54</sup> In effect, in the gospel of John, we are reading an eyewitness report of a solemn revelation to the band of arresting Jewish temple guards<sup>55</sup> that they were standing, as it were, in a "Holy of Holies" made sacred by the presence of the embodied Jehovah, and that they, with full comprehension of the irony of their pernicious intent, were about to do harm to the very Master of the Lord's House, whose precincts they had been sworn to protect. As with the Israelites at Sinai who were unworthy and thus unable to stand in the holy place, "those of the dark world fell back, repelled by the presence of the Light of the world."<sup>56</sup>

To delve further into the symbolism of the scene, note that the Jews were generally prohibited from pronouncing the divine name, Jehovah.<sup>57</sup> As an exception, that Name was solemnly pronounced by the High Priest standing in the most holy place of the temple once a year, on the Day of Atonement. Upon the hearing of that Name, according to the *Mishnah*, all the people were to fall on their faces.<sup>58</sup> Was it any coincidence, then, that Jesus Christ, the supernal High Priest after the order of Melchizedek,<sup>59</sup> boldly proclaimed His identity as the great "I AM" at the very place and on the very night He atoned for the sins of the world? Ironically, the temple guards who failed to fall on their faces at the sound of the divine Name were instead thrown on their backs in awestruck impotence.

***Standing in Holy Places in the Last Days.*** Though there are many references in modern scripture to the general idea of standing in righteousness, each of the three instances of specific instructions for the faithful to stand in holy places appear in apocalyptic descriptions of the latter-day gathering and the destruction that will precede the Savior's Second Coming.<sup>60</sup>

First, in Doctrine and Covenants 45, an overt expansion on the instructions and prophecies given to the apostles on the Mount of Olives, we are told:<sup>61</sup> "And there shall be men standing in that generation [i.e., in the last days], that shall not pass until they shall see an overflowing scourge; for a desolating sickness shall cover the land. But my disciples shall stand in holy places and shall not be moved; but among the wicked, men shall lift up their voices and curse God and die.... And it shall be said among the wicked: Let us not go up to battle against Zion, for the inhabitants of Zion are terrible; wherefore we cannot stand.... For when the Lord shall appear he shall be terrible unto them, that fear may seize upon them, and they shall stand afar off and tremble." Note that modern scripture is perfectly consistent with the subtle imagery of the biblical examples cited earlier. A contrast is drawn between the disciples, who "stand in holy places" and are "not moved," and the wicked, who "stand afar off and tremble."<sup>62</sup> Another Doctrine and Covenants reference tells us that the earth itself will also tremble, and "men shall fall upon the ground and shall not be able to stand."<sup>63</sup>

The second Doctrine and Covenants reference to standing in holy places is found in section 87, as part of the revelation and prophecy on the wars and disasters that will eventually "make a full end of all nations."<sup>64</sup> Here, the Saints are told:<sup>65</sup> "Wherefore, stand ye in holy places, and be not moved, until the day of the Lord come; for behold, it cometh quickly, saith the Lord. Amen."

The final specific mention of this phrase is in section 101, in a revelation responding to the Saints being driven from their homes in Jackson County, Missouri. The following verses assure the Saints that, despite their forcible ejection from the place where they had begun to build the city of New Jerusalem, it will not be moved, but rather will continue as the central gathering place from which Zion will eventually extend herself to fill the earth:<sup>66</sup> "Zion shall not be moved out of her place, notwithstanding her children are scattered... And behold, there is none other place appointed... for the work of the gathering of my saints— Until... there is found no more room for them; and then I have other places which I will appoint unto them, and they shall be called stakes, for the curtains or the strength of Zion. Behold it is my will, that all they who call on my name... should gather together, and stand in holy places; And prepare for the revelation... when... all flesh shall see me together."

The Saints in Joseph Smith's time would have understood the term "holy places" in section 101 as the current and future stakes to which they were being gathered both spiritually and physically. Each one of these stakes was originally intended to feature its own temple as a focal point for the community. Borrowing vivid word pictures from the book of Isaiah,<sup>67</sup> the Doctrine and Covenants describes the kingdom of God as a tent whose expanse increases continually outward from its "center place"<sup>68</sup> through the establishment of "stakes, for the curtains or strength of Zion."<sup>69</sup>

At the time section 101 was received, the "center place" of the tent would have been understood as Jackson County, Missouri, the intended location of the New Jerusalem, and the ever expanding curtains of the tent would have represented the growing number of outlying stakes<sup>70</sup> that were eventually destined to span the whole earth—and, ultimately, to unite in perfect reflection with their counterparts in heaven, as depicted visually in this stunning landscape by Linda McCarthy. The revelations make it clear that it is "in Zion, and in her stakes, and in Jerusalem" that are to be found "those places which [God has] appointed for refuge."<sup>71</sup> God's whole purpose is to draw the people of the world to such places of safety, the express purpose of the Church being "for the gathering of his saints to *stand* upon Mount Zion."<sup>72</sup>

***A Second Abomination of Desolation in the Last Days.*** Having considered what it means to "stand in holy places" in the last days with respect to the New Jerusalem, we return to Jesus' prophecies about *old* Jerusalem. In addition to the first "abomination of desolation" that was to occur within the lifetime of the apostles, the Joseph Smith Translation of Matthew 24 predicts a *second* "abomination of desolation":<sup>73</sup> "And *again, in the last days*, the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, will be fulfilled." To understand the events associated with this verse, we must revisit to the theme of measurement—in this case the measurement of the temple described in chapter 11 of the book of Revelation.

Chapter 11 opens with the angel's instruction to John to "measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein."<sup>74</sup> By way of contrast, John is told *not* to measure the areas lying outside the temple complex proper—in other words, the outer courtyard. In the context of the rest of the chapter, the meaning of the angel's instructions is clear: only those who are standing *within* the scope of John's measure—in other words, within the temple—will receive God's protection.<sup>75</sup> Of course, we are not speaking here of the measurement of a literal physical structure, but rather of measuring or judging of the people who have been called to form the living temple of God,<sup>76</sup> each individual in his or her differing degree of righteousness.<sup>77</sup> Spiritually speaking, the worshippers standing in the holy place are those who have kept their covenants.<sup>78</sup> These are they who, according to Revelation 14:1, will stand with the Lamb "on... mount Zion." By way of contrast, all individuals standing in the outer courtyard, being

unmeasured and unprotected, will be, in the words of the book of Revelation, “given unto the Gentiles” to be “tread under foot”<sup>79</sup> with the rest of the wicked in Jerusalem.

Ultimately, we read in section 101, “every corruptible thing . . . that dwells upon all the face of the earth . . . shall be consumed.”<sup>80</sup> By “every corruptible thing” the verse means every being that is of a *telestial* nature. Only those who can withstand dwelling in at least a *terrestrial* glory will remain on the earth during the millennial reign of Christ. In that day, only those who remain unmoved in the holy place will be able to “stand still, with the utmost assurance to see the salvation of God.”<sup>81</sup>

In summary, where are the “holy places” in which we are to stand? In light of everything discussed today, the frequently-heard suggestion that such “holy places” include temples, stakes, chapels, and homes seems wholly appropriate.<sup>82</sup> However, it should be remembered that what makes these places holy—and secure—are the covenants kept by those standing within. According to midrash, Sodom itself could have been a place of safety had there been a circle of as few as ten righteous individuals in the city to “pray on behalf of all of them.”<sup>83</sup>

**Personal Observations.** Many years ago, when I learned how to ski, I was taught that the first thing I needed to know was how to fall. In skiing, as in life, falling is an unavoidable if unpleasant prologue to eventual mastery of the slopes. Zornberg insightfully summarizes this lesson from Jewish tradition: “The *Talmud* makes an extraordinary observation about the paradoxes of “standing”: “No man stands on [i.e., can rightly understand] the words of *Torah*, unless he has stumbled over them.”<sup>84</sup> To discover firm standing ground, it is necessary to explore, to stumble, even to fall . . .”<sup>85</sup>

In our repeated falls, we should be reassured in the knowledge that, like the Israelites at Sinai, we can receive help from “angels” appointed to assist our journey from the foothills of the sacred mountain and back into God’s presence at the summit.<sup>86</sup> Such a scene is depicted above, where the fallen Abraham gratefully testified that the Angel Yahoel “took [him] by [his] right hand and stood [him] on [his] feet.”<sup>87</sup> Through the ordinances of the priesthood, each of us may be given the knowledge and power to rise from our falls and stand in safety in the holy place.

The continual challenges endemic in the life of a disciple should teach us something about the nature of “standing” itself: namely, that what might appear to the naïve as a “static position” will, with experience, eventually be better understood as “a point of equilibrium in the eye of a storm.”<sup>88</sup> Lest anyone think that living a life of continual standing in the presence of God is a “heavy, humdrum, and safe” affair, I close with the words of G. K. Chesterton, who understood that the essence of discipleship is to maintain:

... the equilibrium of a man behind madly rushing horses, seeming to stoop this way and to sway that, yet in every attitude having the grace of statuary and the accuracy of arithmetic . . . It is always simple to fall; there are an infinity of angles at which one falls, only one at which one stands.<sup>89</sup>

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## Endnotes

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- 1 Matthew 24:15.
- 2 Matthew 24:15.
- 3 Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:12-13.
- 4 A. G. Zornberg, Genesis, p. 22.
- 5 E.g., M.-A. Ouaknin *et al.*, Rabbi Éliézer, 11, p. 78; J. Goldin, Fathers, 1, p. 11.
- 6 A. G. Zornberg, Genesis, p. 23.
- 7 See also J. M. Bradshaw, God's Image, pp. 471-473, 681-686; J. M. Bradshaw, Moses Temple Themes, pp. 38-39.
- 8 Ezekiel 37:10. Cf. 2 Kings 13:21.
- 9 Ezekiel 2:1-2: "And he said unto me, Son of man, stand upon thy feet, and I will speak unto thee. And the spirit entered into me when he spake unto me, and set me upon my feet, that I heard him that spake unto me."
- 10 Daniel 10:11: "O Daniel, ... understand the words that I speak unto thee, and stand upright: for unto thee am I now sent."
- 11 Acts 26:16: "But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness."
- 12 Alma 36:7-8.
- 13 Nickelsburg explains (G. W. E. Nickelsburg, 1 Enoch, 14:24-15:1, p. 270): "The seer must be rehabilitated and accepted into the divine presence before he can receive his commission. Restoration by an angel becomes a typical feature in visions, where, however, it is the angel whose appearance causes the collapse."
- 14 E.g., Deuteronomy 10:8, 18:7; 2 Chronicles 29:11.
- 15 E.g., Luke 1:19.
- 16 See, e.g., Luke 18:13.
- 17 Notes taken by David J. Larsen on an unpublished talk by Robert Hayward (R. Hayward, Aramaic Paradise).
- 18 E.g., 1 Esdras 8:89-90.
- 19 Zornberg's translation. Compare H. Freedman *et al.*, Midrash, Numbers 1, 11:3, 5:419.
- 20 See Daniel 4.
- 21 A. G. Zornberg, Genesis, p. 21.
- 22 "For these are those selected by God for an everlasting covenant and to them shall belong the glory of Adam." (Rule of the Community 4:22-23 in F. G. Martinez, DSS Translated, p. 7; H. W. Nibley, Message 2005, p. 467).
- 23 M. Maher, Pseudo-Jonathan, 3:15, pp. 27-28. Cf. W. Shakespeare, Measure, 2:2:75, p. 560.
- 24 Following Zornberg's literal translation—others read in terms of Adam's capacity to "exist" or "survive" (see, e.g., A. Davis *et al.*, The Metsudah Midrash Tanchuma, Bamidbar 2, Masei, 11, p. 354; J. T. Townsend, Tanhuma, 10 (Mas'e):8, Numbers 35:9ff, Part 1, 3:264; cf. H. Freedman *et al.*, Midrash, Numbers 23:13, 6:877). Zornberg explains: "The simplest reading of 'standing' would be 'survival.' But, implicitly, both Adam and the world are in need of some Archimedean point of stability, in a situation in which disintegration threatens" (A. G. Zornberg, Genesis, p. 25). By way of contrast, consider Cain's protest: "Since I am to be a restless wanderer, I cannot stand in one place—that is what banishment from the soil means—I have no place of rest. 'And I must avoid Your presence'—for I cannot stand before You to pray" (*ibid.*, p. 21).
- 25 D&C 84:23-27; JST Exodus 34:1-2.
- 26 Exodus 20:18.
- 27 A. G. Zornberg, Genesis, pp. 32-33. Zornberg's comment is based on a midrash of Rashi on Exodus 20:15-16 (= KJV Exodus 20:18): "And all the people could see the sounds and the flames, the sound of the shofar and the smoking mountain; the people saw and they moved and they stood from afar. They said to Moses, 'You speak to us and we shall hear; let God not speak to us lest we die'" (Rashi, Exodus Commentary, pp. 240-241). The "sounds" are read as coming from the "mouth of the Almighty." The movement is one of trembling, not to be understood as the same one that led them to be standing "from afar." Rashi says that the people "drew back twelve miles, the length of their camp, and the ministering angels would come and assist them to return, as it says 'The kings of legions move about' (Psalm 68:13)" (*ibid.*, p. 241). "The *Talmud* reads the word 'kings' as 'angels,' and the intransitive verb 'move about' as the transitive verb 'move others' (see *Mechilta; Shabbos* 88a)" (Editor's note in *ibid.*, p. 241).

28 A. G. Zornberg, Genesis, pp. 23-24.

29 "R. Simeon b. Yohai observed: As long as a man refrains from sin he is an object of awe and fear. The moment he sins he is himself subject to awe and fear. Before Adam sinned he used to hear the voice of the divine communication while standing on his feet and without flinching. As soon as he sinned, he heard the voice of the divine communication and hid... (Genesis 3:8). R. Abin said: Before Adam sinned, the Voice sounded to him gentle; after he had sinned it sounded to him harsh. Before Israel had sinned, *The appearance of the glory of the Lord was like devouring fire on the top of the mount* (Exodus 24:17). R. Abba b. Kahana observed: Seven partitions of fire were consuming one another and Israel looked on undaunted and undismayed. As soon as they had sinned, however, they could not even look at the face of the intermediary [i.e., Moses] (Exodus 34:30)" (H. Freedman *et al.*, Midrash, Numbers (Naso), 11:3, p. 419).

30 Mark 9:2-13.

31 Exodus 24:18, 33:7-11.

32 C. H. T. Fletcher-Louis, Reflections, pp. 299-301. I am indebted to David Larsen for pointing me to this article.

33 *Ibid.*, p. 303. Fletcher-Louis cites the following from Philo:

"Here I *stand* there before you, on the rock in Horeb" (Exodus 17:6), which means, "this I, the manifest, Who am here, am there also, am everywhere, for I have filled all things. I *stand* ever the same immutable, before you or anything that exists came into being, established on the topmost and most ancient source of power, whence showers forth the birth of all that is..." And Moses too gives his testimony to the unchangeableness of the deity when he says "they saw the place where the God of Israel stood" (Exodus 24:10), for by the *standing* or establishment he indicates his immutability. But indeed so vast in its excess is the stability of the Deity that He imparts to chosen natures a share of His steadfastness to be their richest possession. For instance, He says of His covenant filled with His bounties, the highest law and principle, that is, which rules existent things, that this god-like image shall be firmly planted with the righteous soul as its pedestal... And it is the earnest desire of all the God-beloved to fly from the stormy waters of engrossing business with its perpetual turmoil of surge and billow, and anchor in the calm safe shelter of virtue's roadsteads. See what is said of wise Abraham, how he was "*standing* in front of God" (Genesis 18:22), for when should we expect a man to *stand* and no longer sway as on the balance save when it is opposite God, seeing and being seen?... To Moses, too, this divine command was given: "Stand here with me" (Deuteronomy 5:31), and this brings out both the points suggested above, namely the unwavering quality of the man of worth, and the absolute stability of Him that IS. (modified by Fletcher-Louis from Philo, Dreams, 2:32, 221-2:33, 227, pp. 543, 545).

Fletcher-Louis comments on parallels between Philo, 4Q377 from Qumran, and the Pentateuch:

Like Philo, 4Q377 is working with Deuteronomy 5:5, the giving of the Torah, and perhaps Exodus 17:6. Both texts think standing is a posture indicative of a transcendent identity in which the righteous can participate and of which Moses is the pre-eminent example. With the stability of standing is contrasted the corruptibility of motion, turmoil and storms, which is perhaps reflected in the tension between Israel's "standing" (lines 4 and 10) and her "trembling" (line 9) before the Glory of God in the Qumran text. Whether this and other similar passages in Philo (cf. esp. Sacr. 8-10; Post. 27-29) are genetically related to 4Q377 is not certain, but remains a possibility. (C. H. T. Fletcher-Louis, Reflections, p. 304)

34 Luke 2:52, emphasis mine.

35 Ephesians 4:13.

36 Matthew 6:27. The Book of Mormon follows the KJV in reading the key term as "stature" (3 Nephi 13:27), however some Bible translations take the contextually-sensitive Greek term *helikia* in terms of adding to the length of one's life rather than to one's height.

37 Cf. Ephesians 4:16.

38 On the role of revelation in providing the specifications for temple building, see J. M. Bradshaw, *God's Image*, pp. 561-563.

39 Exodus chapters 25-31.

40 Ezekiel chapters 40-48.

41 Revelation 11:1-2. See also Zechariah chapter 2.

42 J. M. Bradshaw *et al.*, Investiture Panel.

43 Thorkild Jacobsen, cited in K. E. Slanski, Rod and Ring, p. 45.

44 Ezekiel 40:3. See D. I. Block, Ezekiel 25-48, pp. 512, 515. Thanks to Matthew B. Brown for this reference.

45 H. W. Nibley, Circle. See also, e.g., J. M. Bradshaw, *God's Image*, passim.

46 K. E. Slanski, Rod and Ring, p. 51. Black agrees with Slanski's interpretation, stating that the "rod and ring" are "thought to depict a pair of measuring instruments, a rule and a tape, taken as symbolic of divine justice" (J. A. Black *et al.*, Gods, p. 156).

47 Matthew 6:27.

48 J. W. Welch, Light, p. 160.

49 Ephesians 4:13.

50 H. N. Ridderbos, John, p. 576.

51 John 18:4-6.

52 As Beale and Carson explain:

Jesus' self-identification in 18:5, "I AM," probably has connotations of deity... This is strongly suggested by the soldiers' falling to the ground in 18:6, a common reaction to divine revelation (see Ezekiel 1:28, 44:4; Daniel 2:46, 8:18, 10:9; Acts 9:4, 22:7, 26:14; Revelation 1:17, 19:10, 22:8). This falling of the soldiers is reminiscent of certain passages in Psalms (see Psalms 27:2, 35:4; cf. 56:9; see also Elijah's experience in 2 Kings 1:9-14). Jewish literature recounts the similar story of the attempted arrest of Simeon (Genesis Rabbah 91:6). The reaction also highlights Jesus' messianic authority in keeping with texts such as Isaiah 11:4 (cf. 2 Esdras 13:3-4). (G. K. Beale *et al.*, NT Use of the OT, John 18-19, p. 499)

53 R. E. Brown, Death, 1:261. The entire passage from Raymond Brown is instructive:

OT antecedents for this reaction have been proposed, e.g., Psalm 56:10(9): "My enemies will be turned back... in the day when I shall call upon you"; Psalm 27:2: "When evildoers come at me... my foes and my enemies themselves stumble and fall..."; Psalm 35:4: "Let those be turned back... and confounded who plot evil against me." Falling down (*piptein*) as a reaction to divine revelation is attested in Daniel 2:46, 8:18; Revelation 1:17; and that is how John would have the reader understand the reaction to Jesus' pronouncement. *Piptein chamai* is combined with the verb "to worship" in Job 1:20. No matter what one thinks of the historicity of this scene, it should not be explained away or trivialized. To know or use the divine name, as Jesus does, is an exercise of awesome power. In Acts 3:6 Peter heals a lame man "in the name of Jesus of Nazareth," i.e., by the power of the name that Jesus has been given by God; and "there is no other name under heaven among human beings by which we must be saved." Eusebius (*Praeparatio Evangelica* 9:27:24-26 in J. H. Charlesworth, Pseudepigrapha, 2:901; GCS 43.522) attributes to Artapanus, who lived before the 1st century BC, the legend that when Moses uttered before Pharaoh the secret name of God, Pharaoh fell speechless to the ground (R. D. Bury, ExpTim 24 (1912-13), 233). That legend may or may not have been known when John wrote, but it illustrates an outlook that makes John's account of the arrest intelligible.

This same Jesus will say to Pilate, "You have no power over me at all except what was given to you from above" (John 19:11). Here he shows how powerless before him are the troops of the Roman cohort and the police attendants from the chief priests—the representatives of the two groups who will soon interrogate him and send him to the cross. Indeed, an even wider extension of Jesus' power may be intended. Why does John suddenly, in the midst of this dramatic interchange, mention the otiose presence of Judas, "now standing there with them was also Judas, the one who was giving him over" (John 18:5)? John 17:12 calls Judas "the son of perdition," a phrase used in 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4 to describe the antichrist who exalts himself to the level of God. Is the idea that the representative of the power of evil must also fall powerless before Jesus? I have already pointed out a close Johannine parallel to the Mark/Matthew saying about the coming near of the one who gives Jesus over, namely, John 14:30: "For the Prince of this world is coming." In John 12:31, in the context of proclaiming the coming of the hour (John 12:23) and of praying about that hour (John 12:27), Jesus exclaims, "Now will the Prince of this world be driven out" (or "cast down," a textual variant; see also 16:11). (R. E. Brown, Death, 1:261-262)

Keener offers additional precedents for the "involuntary prostration" of Jesus' enemies:

Other ancient texts report falling backward in terror—for instance, fearing that one has dishonored God (*Sipra Sh. M.D.* 99:5:12; cf. perhaps 1 Samuel 4:18). (C. S. Keener, John, p. 1082)

Talbert, *John*, 233, adds later traditions in which priests fell on their faces when hearing the divine name (*b. Qidd.* 71a; *Eccl. Rab.* 3:11, S3). (*ibid.*, p. 1082 n. 124) 54 Matthew Brown points out further parallels to Mount Sinai and the temple during the culminating scenes of the Atonement on the Mount of Olives (M. B. Brown, Gate, p. 176): “Shortly before his crucifixion, the Savior took the twelve apostles, and perhaps others, with Him to the Garden of Gethsemane, which is located on the western slope of the Mount of Olives. When they had entered into the garden area, the Lord instructed the majority of His disciples to wait for Him while He took Peter, James, and John further into the Garden. Then, at some unspecified location, Christ told Peter, James, and John to stay where they were while He “went a little further” into Gethsemane by Himself (see Matthew 26:30-39; Mark 14:26-36). It was in this third area of the Garden that the Savior was visited and strengthened by an angel and where He shed His sacrificial blood (see JST Luke 22:43-44). This pattern is intriguing because it seems to match the tripartite division of the people during the Mount Sinai episode (Ground Level—Israelites, Half-Way—Seventy Elders, Top—Moses) and the tripartite division in the temple complex (Courtyard—Israelites, Holy Place—Priests, Holy of Holies—High Priest). It was, of course, in the Holy of Holies on the Day of Atonement that the final rite was performed to purge the sins of the Israelites with sacrificial blood (see Leviticus 16:15).”

55 In viewing this detachment as composed of the temple guards, rather than a Roman cohort, I am accepting the conclusions of Ridderbos: “As in the Septuagint and Josephus, this guard is, like its captain (the ‘chiliarch’ in v. 12), given Roman military names. John calls these temple police ‘*the [speira]*,’ that is, the only qualified armed group, under the circumstances, at the Sanhedrin’s disposal, along with the Sanhedrin’s own court officers” (H. N. Ridderbos, John, p. 575). For a more extensive discussion that reaches the same conclusion, see C. S. Keener, John, pp. 1078-1080.

56 S. K. Brown, Arrest, p. 201. See, e.g., D&C 88:49.

57 W. J. Hamblin, John 17:6, Name, pp. 4-5.

58 “And the priests and people standing in the courtyard [on the Day of Atonement], when they would hear the Expressed Name [of the Lord] come out of the mouth of the high priest, would kneel and bow down and fall upon on their faces” (J. Neusner, Mishnah, Yoma 6:2d, p. 275; cf. *Ibid.*, Yoma 3:8, p. 269, 4:2, pp. 270-271).

59 See Psalm 110:4, Hebrews chapter 7.

60 D. A. Bednar, Stand. See also citations such as the following: “For I will reveal myself from heaven with power and great glory... and the wicked shall not *stand*” (D&C 29:11); Behold, the great day of the Lord is at hand; and who can abide the day of his coming, and who can *stand* when he appeareth?” (D&C 128:24; cf.

Malachi 3:2, 3 Nephi 24:2).

61 D&C 45:31-32, 70, 74.

62 Cf. Genesis 27:33, Alma 11:46.

63 D&C 88:89; cf. Alma 36:7. See also J. M. Bradshaw, God’s Image, pp. 57-58 n. 1:21a, p. 388 n. 5:41b.

64 D&C 87:6.

65 D&C 87:8.

66 D&C 101:17, 20-23.

67 Isaiah 33:20, 54:2.

68 D&C 57:3. For a broader discussion of this topic, see S. L. Olsen, Mormon Ideology, pp. 19-41.

69 D&C 101:21.

70 See D&C 133:9.

71 D&C 124:36; cf. D&C 45:66, 115:6. Explicitly mentioning these two places of safety in a close parallel to the text of Matthew 24:15, D&C 133:12-13 reads: “Let them, therefore, who are among the Gentiles flee unto Zion. And let them who be of Judah flee unto Jerusalem, unto the mountains of the Lord’s house.”

72 D&C 84:2, emphasis added; cf. Revelation 14:1.

73 Joseph Smith-Matthew 1:32. Commenting on this verse, Ogden and Skinner comment: “That is, as in the first century after Christ (v. 12), so in the last century before his second coming: Jerusalem will be besieged and suffer much destruction” (D. K. Ogden *et al.*, Gospels, p. 518). Non-LDS scholars have sometimes concurred with the idea that the event is fulfilled twice: once shortly after Jesus’ death and again in the last days (e.g., L. T. Dennis *et al.*, *ESV*, Matthew 24:15n., p. 1873; J. B. Payne, *Imminent Appearing*, p. 152). C. S. Keener, *Gospel of Matthew*, p. 577-578, while seeing “the whole interim between the Temple’s demise [in 70 AD] and [Christ’s] return as an extended tribulation period,” also realizes that the tribulation of 66-70 AD is blended, in Matthew 24, “with the final one, which it prefigures”: “Early Jewish texts also telescope the generations of history with the final generation (O. S. Wintermute, *Jubilees*, 23:11-32, pp. 100-102). As in Mark, the tribulation of 66-70 remains somehow connected with the future parousia, if only as a final prerequisite. Further, the context may suggest that Jesus employs his description eschatologically, as in some Jewish end-time texts; in this case, the disasters of 66-73 could not have exhausted the point of his words.”

74 Revelation 11:1; cf. Ezekiel 40-42, Zechariah 1:16. Jay and Donald Parry, citing Kenneth Strand, note that these three elements of the temple—temple, altar, and worshippers—are the same three entities that are to be purified on the Day of Atonement, as recorded in Leviticus 16 (J. A. Parry *et al.*, *Book of Revelation*, p. 135. See vv. 6, 11, 16-18).

75 “In the Old Testament generally, ‘measuring’ was metaphorical for a decree of protection” (G. K. Beale, *Temple*, p. 314). See 2 Samuel 8:2; Isaiah 28:16-17; Jeremiah 31:38-40; Zechariah 1:16. For ‘measuring’ as judgment, see 2 Samuel 8:2; 2 Kings 21:13; Lamentations 2:8; Amos 7:7-9.

76 See 1 Corinthians 3:16-17; 2 Corinthians 6:16; Ephesians 2:19-22; 1 Peter 2:5. This is also, for example, the view of Metzger (B. M. Metzger, *Breaking*, pp. 68-69).

77 See D&C 88:28-31.

78 Psalm 24:3-4.

79 Revelation 11:2.

80 D&C 101:24.

81 D&C 123:17, emphasis added. Compare Exodus 14:13.

82 E. T. Benson, *Teachings* 1988, p. 106.

83 R. M. Zlotowitz *et al.*, *Bereishis*, 18:32, 1:673. Note that a *minyán*, the Jewish prayer circle, requires a minimum of ten men. Tvedtnes also notes: “The angels of the presence ‘stand’ in God’s presence (e.g., Luke 1:19 and numerous pseudepigrapha). In Judaism, the *amidah* (standing prayer) brings one into God’s presence. In the *Conflict of Adam and Eve with Satan*, the first couple stand inside the cave of treasures to pray. After being cast out of the garden, this was their only way of approaching the presence of God” (J. A. Tvedtnes, March 8 2010; see J. A. Tvedtnes, *Temple Prayer*, p. 80).

84 B. Gittin 43a, as cited in A. G. Zornberg, *Genesis*, p. 385 n. 83.

85 *Ibid.*, p. 33.

86 Rashi, *Exodus Commentary*, p. 241.

87 A. Kulik, *Retroverting Apocalypse of Abraham* 10:1-4, p. 17. The translation of the caption to this image reads: “I heard a voice saying, Here Oilu, sanctify this man and strengthen (him) from his trembling and the angel took me by the right hand and stood me on my feet and said to me, stand up, o friend of God who has loved you.” Kulik’s translation of the corresponding text in the *Apocalypse* reads: “And when I was still face down on the earth, I heard the voice of the Holy One, saying, ‘Go, Yahoel, the namesake of the mediation of my ineffable name, sanctify this man and strengthen him from his trembling!’ And the angel whom he sent to me in the likeness of a man came, and he took me by my right hand and stood me on my feet. And he said to me, ‘Stand up, <Abraham> the friend of God who has loved you, let human trembling not enfold you. For behold I am sent to you to strengthen you and to bless you in the name of God.’” (*ibid.*, 10:3-6, pp. 17-18). Compare Daniel 8:17-18; 10:9-11. For parallels between this ancient text and the book of Moses, see J. M. Bradshaw, *God’s Image*, pp. 694-696.

88 A. G. Zornberg, *Genesis*, p. 32.

89 G. K. Chesterton, *Orthodoxy*, pp. 102-103.