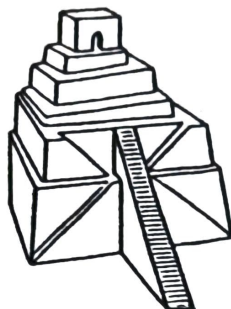


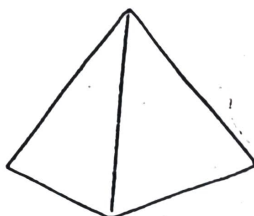
TEMPLES

Through the Ages

*Who are the temple builders?
Why did they construct large edifices?*

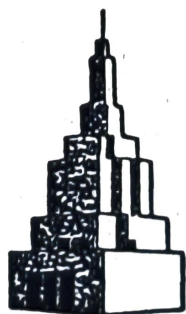


The ancient Babylonian temple



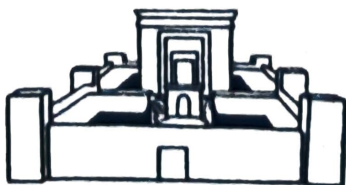
The ancient Egyptian temple

The modern Mormon (L.D.S.) Temple



The Biblical tradition:

**Old Covenant -
The Jewish temple**



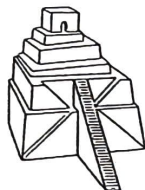
**New Covenant -
Christian "temples"**



BABYLONIAN TEMPLES

The Pagan Ziggurat

Stepped towers
surmounting to a small shrine



Philosophy of the system:

Each city built a temple as the *dwelling place* for their chosen god, a highly esteemed dead king or leader represented in the temple by an image.

Participation in temple prayers and sacrifices gave the people a feeling of safety and security because they were taught that their king/god continued to protect against evil and could even ensure eternal blessings.

How perpetuated:

A select priesthood clothed in the authority of God was endowed with *spiritual power* to perform *secret rituals*, even to the bestowal of the blessing of life upon the image. This gave them the ability to communicate with the gods "in immediate presence" and to possess the key to all knowledge.

Responsibilities of Priesthood:

As sole depositors of the keys of knowledge, priests determined the worthiness of those who requested to know more of the secrets.

The people were placed in subjection to the priesthood through the taking of oaths. Silence was secured by fear of penalties. The people also surrendered themselves implicitly to the priests in confessionals, the priests serving as judge in examining the conscience.

Blessings promised:

Submit to priesthood and receive *knowledge* and *rituals* which assure eternal life.

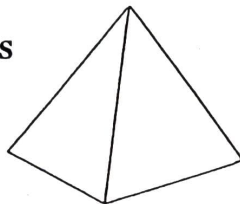
Receive *protection* in this life from evil powers by the wearing of amulets, the recital of incantations and the performance of ritual.

Effect on the followers:

Because people trusted a belief system for carnal and/or spiritual safety, they were led away from faith in God as their deliverer. The belief system re-directed the mind away from awe of God and fear of His judgments into a carnal security.

EGYPTIAN TEMPLES

The Pagan Pyramid



Philosophy of the system:

Egyptians believed their philosophy represented the cosmic order of the universe as laid down by the gods at the time of creation. Temple functions *maintained this godly order and secured the eternal destiny of the people* by ensuring the continuation of *rituals and ceremonies*. The rituals provided the necessary knowledge deemed necessary for one to proceed safely back into the presence of God after death.

How perpetuated:

The pharaoh, as the living symbol of an incarnate god, had the responsibility of maintaining the temples. A selected priesthood who were washed, anointed, and clothed with authority to perform the spiritual duties of their office were entrusted with the *secrets* needed for life-after-death.

Responsibilities of Priesthood:

Priests of the mortuary temple prepared the king's corpse that he, through ritual purification (magic), would *become a god*. The king's reign was thus perpetuated and his statue was supplied with the things necessary to sustain mortal life. To this end, priests maintained the temple estate, providing workers and material goods. Just as the people felt safe as subjects of the king, so they trusted his spiritual power as a god to guide and protect, even aiding them in the after-life.

Blessings promised:

Faithful subjects were given the assurance of a smooth transition between life and death through such aids as the magical potency of funerary texts painted on walls of the tomb - *knowledge* needed in order for his soul to pass the several stations in an *ascent* to heaven.

Effect on the followers:

The people were in abject submission to the system little realizing that it could not save. (God's provision whereby man is accepted comes *only* through believing in the atonement He provides. 1 John 4: 10; See explanation p. 2)

MORMON (L.D.S.) TEMPLES

The Idaho Falls Temple



Philosophy of the system:

How eternity is secured: "...build a house to my name, for the Most High to dwell therein. ...that he may come to and restore again that which was lost unto you, ...even the fulness of priesthood. ...that I may reveal mine ordinances therein unto my people." D & C 124: 27, 28, 40 "...compliance with the laws and ordinances of the Gospel is an absolute and irrevocable requirement for admission into the Kingdom of God." James E. Talmage, *The House of the Lord*, p. 64

How perpetuated:

Temple patrons are promised that *secret ordinances* which are administered by the Melchizedek Priesthood will *ensure them of a place in the highest heaven*: "...they shall be above all, because all things are subject to them. Then shall they be gods because they have *all power*." D & C 132: 20

Responsibilities of Priesthood:

"This greater priesthood *administereth* the gospel and *holdeth the key of the mysteries* of the kingdom, even the *key of the knowledge* of God." D & C 84: 19, 20

The priesthood determines who is worthy to participate in temple ceremonies by worthiness interviews. Then they place temple patrons under oath to obey and never to reveal the knowledge gained in temple rites and ceremonies.

A "fulness of blessings" promised:

Temple rites provide *knowledge* necessary to return to God's presence and receive an eternal inheritance. (See "Brief explanation..." , p. 2)

The temple rite of clothing in the garment of the holy priesthood provides *protection* in this life against evil powers.

Effect on the followers:

People trust the power in the priesthood laws and ordinances instead of the real power received when we come to God through the word, trusting what He has done through the shed blood of Jesus Christ.

JEWISH (Old Testament) TEMPLES

Holy of Holies
surrounded by inner
& outer courts



Philosophy of the System:

All old testament covenants and ritual pointed to the way God planned to provide forgiveness for sin. Each ritual was a similitude pointing toward the ultimate and infinite sacrifice in the person of the savior Jesus Christ on the cross. For instance, when Adam and Eve sinned and God told them to cover themselves in skins so that they could speak with Him, the life of the animal was sacrificed to provide the covering.

How perpetuated:

God gave us His law in the 10 Commandments, He gave instructions concerning the tabernacle, the temporary temple housing the tablets of law. The people respected this place because God made His presence known there at the Mercy Seat where the high priest interceded on behalf of the people.

Responsibilities of priesthood:

The Levites were placed in charge of the tabernacle and instructed to perform rituals of ordination - washings, anointings, clothed in garments of holy priesthood which served as reminders that, without God's cleansing, they were unworthy to be in His presence. They were also instructed to offer sacrifices, because "blood maketh an atonement for the soul." Lev 17: 11; Ex 30: 10 This was a shadow of the final sacrifice - the blood of Jesus. Heb 8 - 10

Blessings promised:

The blessing has a condition: "And he said, Behold, I make a covenant: before all thy people I will do marvels, such as have not been done in all the earth... *Observe thou that which I command thee this day*." Ex 34: 10, 11 Messiah will come through the lineage of David. Isa 7: 14

Effect on the followers:

Men responded with awe of God's power and a healthy fear (akin to reverence) of His judgments. They were not content - but yearned for a better hope which God promised would come in the Messiah.

CHRISTIAN

There are no temple edifices
in the New Testament tradition

Philosophy of the system:

Believers recognize there is nothing they can do about their condition: "For the wages of sin is death..." So they accept God's answer: "... but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Ro 6: 23; John 3: 16

An individual is no longer separated from God when they believe that God in the flesh "... put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." Heb 9: 15, 27; Gal 3: 13 They invite the blood of the new covenant to cover their own sins. Heb 10: 18

How perpetuated:

Upon believing, we become "... children of God by faith in Christ Jesus", "heirs according to the promise" Gal 3: 29, 26

God's children are born of His Spirit: "strengthened by his Spirit in the inner man": "... ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you..." 1 Cor 3: 16

Responsibilities of the priesthood:

The office of priesthood is "abolished" or dead as are rites and ordinances because there is no more sacrifice. Heb 7: 18, 19; 8: 13 Jesus is the "mediator of a better covenant, which is established upon better principles." Heb 8: 6; 7: 15

"Ye also... are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices..." 1 Peter 2: 5

Blessings promised:

We are redeemed from sin with the precious blood of Christ. Eph 2: 13; Heb 9: 20, 22; 10: 12-29; 1 Peter 1: 18-19

"All the promises of God are in him." 2 Cor 1: 20; 1 John 5: 11 We receive an eternal inheritance: "the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation:" Read Eph 1: 11-14

Effect on the followers:

"Full assurance of faith" Heb 10: 22, for He "saves to the uttermost (those) that come to him" Heb 7: 25

Peace: "Ye are complete in him..." Col 2: 10

Freedom to respond in love and express joy for his marvelous works to the children of men.

L.D.S. Temples

Brief explanation of rites and ceremonies:

Worthy Melchizedek Priesthood holders participate in the Endowment Ceremony in order to receive secret privileged information which prepares them to enter into the presence of the Father and the Son. B. Young, J of D, Vol 8, p. 203 After death, having these "keys of the Priesthood they shall pass by angels who stand as sentinels, being enabled to give them the key words, the signs, and tokens pertaining to the holy Priesthood, and gain eternal exaltation in spite of earth and hell." D & C 132: 19 The secrets will enable them to "come up and abide in the presence of the Eloheim in the eternal worlds". Discourses of Brigham Young, p. 416

The "keys of the priesthood" are withheld from the public and "unworthy" Mormons because temple patrons are instructed and make oaths never to reveal them.

Conclusion of a Mormon historian:

Although Mormons have been taught that the endowment ceremony derives from Solomon's temple through Freemasonry, Mormon historian D. Michael Quinn explains, "Masonic rituals...are not linked to any *concept of heavenly ascent*." (Like the endowment ceremony and ancient occult ceremonies.) Quinn concludes that although there "may be superficial similarities of symbol and rite between Masonic rituals and the Mormon endowment, ... *the endowment restored* what Masonry acknowledged it only derived from - *the occult mysteries of the ancient world*." Early Mormonism and the Magic World View, pp.190, 184

How followers come to trust the system:

Joseph Smith claimed to receive revelation from God. Trusting his revelations is equated with obedience to God: "And they that receiveth these things receiveth me." D & C 39: 22

There is great fear in letting go: "Behold, will ye reject these words?...and deny the power of God, ...if ye will do these things,...ye must go away into that lake of fire and brimstone, whose flames are unquenchable,which...is endless torment." Book of Mormon, Jacob 6: 8, 9a, 10 In the temple ceremony, Satan warns, "If you do not live up to every promise made in the temple this day, you will be in my power."

Because ones personal integrity is tied to obedience to the system, there is also fear of reprisal from other members for failure to conform to the system.

Christians do *not* build temples because

① There is no secret knowledge to be distributed by a select few. Jesus said, "I spake openly to the world,"..."for there is nothing covered that shall not be revealed; and hid that shall not be known. What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in the light: and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the housetops." John 18: 20a; Matt 10: 26,17; Eph 5: 11-13

God is revealed in Christ: "the preaching of Jesus Christ, (was) according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began. But now is made manifest, and...made known to all nations for the obedience of faith:" Rom 16: 25-27

② Christians do not trust ordinances for reconciliation to God. Jesus abolished the law contained in ordinances, nailing them to his cross. Eph 2: 15; Col 2:14, 20

③ The priesthood is changed, disannulled because of its unprofitableness. Heb 7: 12, 18, 19 God has "taken away" the law of sacrifice because Jesus made the final sacrifice, "once, for all" Heb 10: 9-22; 7: 12; Eph 2: 15; Col 2: 10-14

As our high priest, Jesus stands in the heavens pleading our cause forever. He "hath an unchangeable priesthood" Greek *aparabatos* meaning not passing away, i.e. untransferable (perpetual). Heb 7: 15

④ Christians do not take oaths. Matt 5: 34-35; Ja 5: 12

⑤ Christians would never trust a symbolic representation such as a garment as a covering for physical protection (Isa 30: 1 forbids it) Believers overcome evil "...by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony;" Rev 12: 11 (A true testimony must be right with the word.)

⑥ There is no physical structure (temple) where God dwells or displays his presence. "And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; ... Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you. " 2 Cor 6: 16, 17

If you would like help objectively comparing claims made by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (the Mormons) with the *Holy Bible* please contact:

Truth-In-Love Ministries

P.O. Box 68794
Milwaukie, OR 97268

"But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ." Eph 4: 15