THE ISRAELITE TABERNACLE AND THE EGYPTIAN TEMPLES: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

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Abstract: It is commonplace to compare the Israelite tabernacle with the Mesopotamian temples. However, if there is any credit to the biblical account that the Israelites lived in Egypt and migrated from there to Canaan, a comparison accounting for the similarities and dissimilarities between the Israelite tabernacle and the Egyptian temples would be not only interesting but crucial. This study can help to answer the questions, among others, about the degree of dependence and/or the relationship between the Israelite tabernacle and the Egyptian temples. After comparing the similarities and dissimilarities between them, the present research found that although there are many striking similarities between them, the differences regarding vital, foundational and conceptual aspects are diverse at their core. This investigation concluded that the Israelite tabernacle was not uncommon though unique.

Keywords: Israelite Tabernacle, Mesopotamian, Canaan, Egyptian Temples.

O TABERNÁCULO ISRAELITA E OS TEMPLOS EGÍPCIOS: UMA ANÁLISE COMPARATIVA

Resumo: É comum comparar o tabernáculo israelita com os templos mesopotâmicos. No entanto, se houver algum crédito para o relato bíblico de que os israelitas viveram no Egito e migraram de lá para Canaã, uma comparação explicando as semelhanças e diferenças entre o tabernáculo israelita e os templos egípcios não seria apenas interessante, mas crucial. Esse estudo pode ajudar a responder as questões, entre outras, a respeito do grau de dependência

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e/ou a relação entre o tabernáculo israelita e os templos egípcios. Depois de comparar as semelhanças e diferenças entre eles, a presente pesquisa descobriu que embora existam muitas semelhanças marcantes, as diferenças em relação aos seus aspectos vitais, fundamentais e conceituais são diversas em essência. Esta investigação concluiu que o tabernáculo israelita não era incomum, embora fosse único.

Palavras-chave: Tabernáculo Israelita, Mesopotâmico, Canaã, Templos Egípcios.

1. Introduction

Egyptian temples have been known worldwide for millenniums for their beauty, magnificence, size, structure, religious practices, and so on. They have impressed many people who go visit. The Israelites came out of Egypt in the period of great Egyptian splendor, even if we take either an early or late date for the exodus.[2] Consequently, it is possible to see some Egyptian influence in Israelite food[3] and religious practices,[4] among other things. If Moses wrote the Pentateuch and more specifically the Tabernacle account in Exodus 26–31 and synoptic passages,[5] or if the instructions to Israelite Tabernacle constructions were given around one year later to the exodus, when these influences were more vivid, it is arguable that Egyptian culture could have influenced the Israelites' life.

2. Egyptian Temples

There are two main kinds of Egyptian temples: mortuary temples and cultic temples. The mortuary temples are not our focus since this paper intends to make a comparative analysis with the Israelite tabernacle. And the mortuary ritual role of the Israelite Tabernacle is not known. The cultic temples can be divided into two categories: temples erected to gods and temples built for the worship of a pharaoh, who was believed to be a god. The basic difference is that in the first one the pharaoh was the mediator between this and the next world. In the second the pharaoh communicates with himself (GUNDLACH, 2001).

[2] If we take the 18th dynasty as the era for the exodus, we have one of the best-known dynasties of ancient Egypt (e.g. Tutankhamun, Thutmosis, Hatshepsut). Ahmose I is known as the pharaoh who finished the campaign to expel the Hyksos. This event marks the end of the Second Intermediate Period and the start of the New Kingdom (TROY, 2001, p. 526–527; DODSON; HILTON, 2004, p. 122). If we take Ramses II as the exodus pharaoh, we have a pharaoh who is often regarded as Egypt's greatest, most celebrated and most powerful pharaoh. He is known as Ramses the Great (PUTNAM, 1990).

[3] Numbers 11:4–5 says that the Israelites wanted to eat meat, and desired the fish so freely available in Egypt, "the cucumbers and the melons and the leeks and the onions and the garlic" (cf. Exod 16:3–12).

[4] Possibly the golden calf worship in Exodus 32 would be an Egyptian religious feast to the goddess Hathor. In Egypt, Hathor was a cow goddess of music, dance, alcohol, foreign lands, love, sexuality and fertility. She was one of the most important and popular deities throughout the history of Ancient Egypt. She is depicted in many forms but commonly she is depicted as a cow (OAKES; GAHLIN, 2001, p. 82–85; OAKES, 2006, p. 157–159).

[5] A discussion about mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch can be found in almost every Pentateuch commentary or introduction (see, e.g., BLENKINSOPP, 1992, p. 1–30). But nowadays the attention has changed from textual strata to textual strategies in the Pentateuch, from source criticism to compositional criticism as John H. Sailhamer (1995, p. 272–289) has pointed out.

2.1. Religious Practices

These temples were not places of worship in the modern sense because private individuals could not enter and participate in the rituals therein. Only the priests were allowed into the temple (although private individuals could participate in the great festivals) to carry out the rites and the pharaoh was considered the high priest of all Egyptian temples (OAKES; GAHLIN, 2002).

Egyptian worship was centered around the statue of the deity which was placed in the shrine of the innermost part of the sanctuary. Generally, there was a holy triad in this place, as can be seen in the temples of Luxor (Amun, Mut and Khonsu) and Abu Simbel (Re-Horakhty, Amun-Re, Ptah), among others (OAKES; GAHLIN, 2002). Only the pharaoh in his function as high priest, or someone designated by him as such, could "penetrate these inner chambers" (OAKES; GAHLIN, 2002, p. 148). The fundamental and central function of the pharaoh as high priest was the communication between himself and the gods, to reach the point of transition between the earthly realm and the next world of the gods. There, the pharaoh, or his proxy, linked the temple with the sphere of the divine (GUNDLACH, 2001). And through a sacrifice[6] "the deity entered the image and then communication could proceed." (GUNDLACH, 2001, p. 364). It is interesting to note that this communication could happen also through a dead person (GUNDLACH, 2001, p. 364). Communication with the gods was possible for private persons only under the condition of using the formula of the sacrifice for the dead, "May the king be gracious and give the gods…" (GUNDLACH, 2001, p. 373). Therefore, the pharaoh had a mediatory role in Egyptian religious practices.

Since everything revolved around communication with the gods, the care of the cultic image was a crucial action. This action was accomplished in two kinds of services: (1) daily ritual (performed daily or several times a day), and (2) festival cult (performed at certain times and had special functions). Daily rituals included the opening of the deity's shrine, the enlivening of the image so that the deity can "reside" in it, cleaning and dressing the cultic image, textually fixed dialogue with deity, and finally the closing of the shrine (GUNDLACH, 2001). The pharaoh performed all this to ensure that *maat*, the perfect world order, could be maintained.[7] On the other hand, the festival cult took place in times like either the coronation of a king or in order to make cultic contact with other temples through processions – like the Opet festival between the Karnak and Luxor temples of Amun (GUNDLACH, 2001, p. 371–372).[8]

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[6] This sacrifice or offering could be clothing, food, jewelry, perfume etc. (OAKES; GAHLIN, 2002, p. 165).

[7] Lorna Oakes and Lucia Gahlin (2002, p. 164–165) describe this ritual in a very comprehensive way, as it is depicted in plates of the temple of Seti I at Abydos: "Each morning, before the king took part in the cult, he was purified by two priests acting the parts of the gods Horus and Thoth. Dressed in a very simple manner to show his humility before the god, the king approached the sanctuary bearing a censer… As it was dark in the sanctuary, the king would light a lamp. He sprinkled incense on the censer to perfume the air. Reaching the shrine he broke the seal end removed the bolt, called 'finger of Seth.' Echoing the myth of Osiris, the king told the god he had brought him the 'Eye of Horus' to restore him to life. He then opened the doors of the shrine, which are described as the 'Doors of Heaven,' and gazed on the face of the god. He bowed twice before the god, rose again and sang hymns of praise. The king then anointed the god and burnt incense before him. Entering the shrine the king embraced the statue and restored him to life. … The king then offered a tiny figure of Maat and took the god's statue from its niche and set it up on a mound of sand. Next, he presented four baskets containing linen, precious ointments and incense. After this, he walked four times round the statue and purified it with water and incense. He then dressed the statue, decked it in jewellery. … Finally, the statue was put back in its shrine and the doors were bolted and sealed. The king then withdrew, sweeping away his footprints with a broom."

[8] Edouard Naville describes a festival cult at the great temple of Bubastis (1892, p. 3–9). Betsy Bryan (1997, p. 59–67) refers to four different kinds of rituals.

2.2. Architecture

The architecture of Egyptian temples was based on two main ideas. (1) The gods had creative power, but at the same time they were seen in human terms. (2) The temple represented the Mound of Creation.

As the gods were powerful beings seen in human terms, they needed a house in which to live, food, and family. Consequently, Egyptian temples were seen as houses where gods truly abode, quite literally. The pylon (monumental gateway) formed the entrance and with the open courts represented the place where visitors could be entertained. The hypostyle hall and the sanctuary were comparable with more private areas in the home, like bedrooms – only the pharaoh, as high priest, and other important functionaries could penetrate there. Finally, the god shrine or innermost place, which was inside the sanctuary, was the most private and sacred place. Only the pharaoh as high priest or a high priest designated by him could enter there (OAKES; GAHLIN, 2002; GUNDLACH, 2001).

Therefore, there were three main architectural structures: (1) the innermost (or sacred center), (2) inner periphery, and (3) outer periphery. (1) The innermost was not cubical but rectangular (GARDINER, CALVERLEY; BROOME, 1997). In it, there was a chamber in which the statue or statues of the main god(s) were housed as well as sometimes a boat or a ship-shaped litter. There was a huge door blocking the entrance. (2) The inner periphery contained rooms for storing cultic objects as well as chambers and halls for ritual slaughter and "sacristies" for the purification of the king or the priest acting in his place. These sacred places were often separated from the rest of the temple by a wall called *temenos*. Around this wall there were administrative buildings (e.g. storage rooms, priests' residence). The center and inner peripheries were separated from (3) their surroundings (outer periphery) by a wall; and according to the dualistic Egyptian thought, the outer periphery was a place where chaos begun. But the sacredness of the innermost place could diffuse if another outer wall enclosed the area. All those three walls were made to protect the active magical powers from entering or leaving the sacred place, because these powers would be dangerous and had to be kept completely under control (GUNDLACH, 2001).

Moreover, the temple represented the Mound of Creation. The mound was marked by a gradual rise in ground level between the entrance and the innermost shrine (NAVILLE, 1894), while the columns of the hypostyle hall represented the first plant life to appear on the mound. The passage from the temple entrance to the chamber of the cultic image often sloped upward as either a ramp or a flight of stairs, so that the human could approach the enthroned deity from below. Every temple also had a sacred lake which was surrounded by an undulating mud-brick wall – intended to represent the primordial ocean from which the mound arose (OAKES; GAHLIN, 2002; GUNDLACH, 2001). These religious practices and architectonic features were performed to enable the pharaoh to communicate with the gods, thus maintaining the balance of life and the after-life.[9] Now, it is necessary to see what the Israelite Tabernacle religious practice and architecture can inform.

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[9] In regards to the harmony between the earthly and heavenly worlds, and fundamental order of the universe, or *maat*, and its development from the focus on gods to the focus on the king see Leblanc's work (1997, p. 52–53). In order to learn more about Egyptian temples see Sibylle Meyer's (2003) recent book.

3. Israelite Tabernacle

In God's promise to Abraham (Gen 12:1–3; 15:1–21), three main blessings were included: great nation, land, and a covenantal relationship (CARSON, 1994). From that moment on, the path for the fulfillment of the promise was being prepared. In this respect, the books of Leviticus and Exodus play an important role. For the purpose of this research, emphasis will be made only on (1) the religious ritual system of the sacrifices in Leviticus, and (2) the plan of the Tabernacle in Exod 25–31 (repeated to some extent in 35–40).

3.1. Religious Practices

The fundamental message of the book of Leviticus is to explain "how the people of God may maintain their relationship with the holy God" (HARTLEY, 1983, p. 168). Because of the holiness of God, the sinful person cannot even come close to Him. However, a God of love longs to live among His people. In order to solve this problem, God saves Israel from Egyptian bondage, formalizes the relationship between Himself and Israel through an eternal covenant, institutes a house (Tabernacle) for Himself, and establishes a sacrificial system in order to enable the people to come close to Him (HARTLEY, 1983). As Rooker says, "God's presence may reside among the Israelites through the instrumentation of sacrifices" (2000, p. 80). This sacrificial system, or Israelite rituals, can be seen in two spheres: daily service (*Tāmîd*) and annual festivals (Lev 23).

In the *Tāmîd* section of the Mishnah there is a description of the seven steps of this daily ritual: (1) opening the gate (*Tāmîd* 3.7), (2) sacrificing the lamb (*Tāmîd* 3.7), (3) trimming the wick (*Tāmîd* 3.9), (4) pouring out the blood on the altar (*Tāmîd* 4.1), (5) putting incense in the golden altar (*Tāmîd* 5.1), (6) congregational singing (*Tāmîd* 7.3), and (7) blowing the trumpet (*Tāmîd* 7.3).[10] It was a very important and, at the same time, simple and modest ritual. The *Tāmîd* ritual prescribed two kinds of offerings twice a day: a lamb with a meal offering and a libation – a lamb (the most inexpensive meat) and a portion of wheat, wine, and (olive) oil (the three most abundant crops) (MILGROM, 2008).

It is significant to perceive, also, that the lamb's sacrifice was offered as an ʿōlāh (burnt offering) (LEVINE, 2008). According to Leviticus "he [the worshiper] shall lay his hand on the head of the burnt offering [*hll*], that it may be accepted for him to make atonement [*rpk*] on his behalf" (Lev 1:4, NASB). Therefore, *Tāmîd* ritual implied substitution and atonement for the people. In fact, the majority of the offerings demanded the substitution idea, laying one's hand on the head of the offering (Lev 1:4; 3:2, 8; 4:4, 24, 29, 33).[11] Moreover, all offerings were brought "at the doorway of the tent of meeting" (Exod 29:4, 11, 32, 42; 38:8; 40:12; Lev 1:3; 4:4, 7, 18; 8:3–4, 35; 12:6; 14:11, 23; 15:14, 29; 16:7; 17:4–6, 9; 19:21; Num 6:10, 13, 18; 10:3; 16:19, 50; 27:2; Josh 19:51; 1 Sam 2:22) indicating that the worshiper participated in the ritual, but he/she did not enter the Tabernacle – the offering was the substitute, and only the priests could perform the rituals – as Moses wrote, "Aaron and his sons, performing the duties of the sanctuary for the obligation of the sons of Israel; but the layman coming near was to be put to death" (Num 3:38b, NASB; cf. Num 3:10)."

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[10] For a complete explanation about Tāmîd in the Jewish tradition, see Jacob Neusner's (1988) book.

[11] Rooker (2000, p. 87) says that "the act of laying on hands may be understood differently in different contexts, but in regard to a sacrifice the practice indicated that the animal was to be a substitute for the offerer. The act symbolized the transfer of sins from the worshiper to the animal." With this same idea, see Hartom and Cassuto (1977, p. 8); Calvin (1979, p. 324).

According to Hartley, the meaning of sacrifices in Leviticus can be summarized in three main ideas: (1) a presentation of a gift to Yahweh; (2) the primary means by which a person, or the community as a whole, overcame the wrong produced by a sin, a means of expiation; and (3) a means of communion between Yahweh and members of the community (HARTLEY, 2002). Leviticus 17:11, however, seems to present one more idea. It says: "For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you on the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood by reason of the life that makes atonement" (NASB) (`rPe(k;y> vp,N<ïB; aWhß ~D"ïh;-yKi(~k,_ytevop.n:-l[; rPeÞk;l. x:Beêz>Mih;-l[; '~k,l' wyTiÛt;n> ynIùa]w: èawhi ~D"åB; érf'B'h; vp,n<å yKiä).

Generally, the substitutive function of the blood is the most common interpretative emphasis of the whole text. But for the purpose of this paper, the second clause x:Beêz>Mih;-l[; '~k,l' wyTiÛt;n> ynIùa]w (I have given it to you on the altar) is helpful. According to Jacob Milgrom (1971, p. 150), the only difficulty of this clause is the verb wyTiÛt;n> (verb qal perfect 1st person common singular suffix 3rd person masculine singular from !tn).[12] The three broad areas of meaning of this verb are "give", "put" or "set," and "make" or "constitute," but its basic and most frequent sense is "give" (FISCHER, 1980, p. 608–609; BROWN *et al*., 2000, p. 678–681). In 1971, Milgrom says that "wherever the subject of !tn is God, it means 'bestow, appoint, assign'" (1971, p.150) and in 1983 he says that !tn with God as subject in the priestly legislation means "bestow, give, assign" (1983, p. 273). Most of the English translations render !tn as "give" (KJV, NASB, NIV, NJB, NLT, etc.). Portuguese (ARA, ACF, ARC), French (FBJ, LSG, NEG), Spanish (RVA, RVA95), and Greek (LXX) translate !tn as "give," as well. Therefore, it would be good to have the idea of !tn in mind as "give" and "assign." Possibly these two ideas are intended here, as David says, "but who am I and who are my people that we should be able to offer as generously as this? For all things come from You, and from Your hand we have given You" (1 Chr 29:14, NASB; cf. Ps 50). That is, the blood of the sacrifice was *assigned* and was *given* by the Lord as a gift, and from this gift, Israel gave back to Him. Hartley (2002, p. 274) says, "The handling of blood from a ritually sacrificed animal is the primary means of expiation given [*assigned*] by God to his people. By making this connection, Yahweh has graciously *given* His people a visible way to find forgiveness for their sins."

Besides *Tāmîd*, Leviticus sets the time for weekly and annual festivals (sacred assemblies): Sabbath, Passover, Unleavened Bread, First Fruits, Feast of Weeks, Trumpets, the Day of Atonement, and the Feast of Booths (Lev 23).[13] Each feast was regarded as a Sabbath of solemn rest (Lev 16:31; 23:3, 12, 15–16, 32; 24:8; 25:2, 4) (MILGROM, 1951). On each of these occasions every male Israelite was commanded "to appear before the Lord," (Deut 27:7) but the attendance of women was voluntary (1 Sam 1:7; 2:19), and with the promise that God would protect their homes (Exod 34:23–24). "These festivals, besides their religious purpose, had an important bearing on the maintenance among the people of the feeling of a national unity" (EASTON, 1996). The festivals were arranged in order to interfere as little as possible with the agricultural calendar of the people (ROOKER, 2000).

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[12] The parsing follows Groves-Wheeler Westminster Morphology and Lemma Database according to the work of J. Alan Groves Center for Advanced Biblical Research (formerly known as the Westminster Hebrew Institute), Michael S. Bushell, Michael D. Tan, and Glenn L. Weaver, Bibleworks Ver. 8.0.013z.1 (Norfolk, VA BibleWorks, LLC).

[13] For Jacob Milgrom (2008, p. 1949–1951), there are five annual feasts depicted here, not seven. He says that "Each holiday begins with an introduction, which betrays the viewpoint of their author that Paschal Offering and Unleavened Bread and Barley and Wheat had each become fused into a single holiday."

3.2. Architecture

The word for Tabernacle is !K'v.mi, which occurs 139 times in 129 verses. This word is rooted in the verb !kv, which means "to dwell," and underscores the idea not of loftiness but of nearness and closeness (HAMILTON, 1980, p. 925, 926). !K'v.m is used for the portable sanctuary (vD'q.mi) built by the Israelites in the wilderness (Exod 25:9) (HAMILTON, 1980, p. 925). The relationship between the Israelite Sanctuary (vD'q.mi) and Tabernacle (!K'v.m) can be seen in the words of God in Exodus 25:8–9, "Let them construct a sanctuary [vD'q.mi] for Me, that I may dwell among them. According to all that I am going to show you, as the pattern of the tabernacle [!K'v.m] and the pattern of all its furniture, just so you shall construct it (NASB)." In Exodus 25:8 (~k'(AtB. yTiÞn>k;v'w'w> vD"+q.mi yliÞ Wf['îw>) "Let them construct a sanctuary for Me, that I may dwell among them"), the purpose of building the Sanctuary, plainly, was !kv, to dwell near and close to His people, and the place was !K'v.mi (a dwelling place). This dwelling place was also called lh,ao, which is rooted in the verb lha, "to pitch a tent" (LEWIS, 1980, p. 15). lh,ao is used in three main manners, (1) tent of nomad, (2) dwelling, habitation, or home, and (3) the sacred tent used in the worship of God (BROWN *et al.*, 2000). Therefore, the Israelite Tabernacle architecture was planned to be a house, a tent similar to the people, tents in which God Himself could come and live among His people.

Not only did the Tabernacle have this purpose, but its furniture was intended to portray the same idea. This is shown either explicitly, as with the ark and mercy seat (Exod 25:16, 22; Lev 16:15–16), the veil and the two-compartment structure (Lev 16:2; cf. Heb 9:8ff.), the altar of incense (Ps 141:2; cf. Luke 1:10–13; Rev 5:8; 8:3–4), the basin (Exod 30:20–21), altar of burnt offering (Lev 1:3–9; 17:11); or implicitly—this purpose is self-evident from their declared function—as with the table and the lampstand (WOOD, 1996).

The Tabernacle was God's house and consequently holy. This holiness was evidenced by the tabernacle divisions. The Most Holy place, with cubical dimension (GUNDALL, 2017), was accessible only to the High priest, once a year, after a purification and atonement ritual (Lev 16:2–3; cf. Heb 9:7). The Holy place was accessible to the priests daily (as prescribed by *Tāmîd* ritual; cf. Heb 10:11). The Levites could not even come near the sanctuary to perform their duties until the priests had covered each furniture item in the Most Holy and Holy places (Num 4:5–15). As Num 4:15 says: "When Aaron and his sons have finished covering the holy objects and all the furnishings of the sanctuary, when the camp is to set out, after that the sons of Kohath shall come to carry them, so that they will not touch the holy objects and die. These are the things in the tent of meeting which the sons of Kohath are to carry" (Num 4:15, NASB).

The Most Holy place was separated from the Holy place by a screen or the second veil (tk,roP'; Exod 26:31–34; 35:12; 39:34; Num 3:31; 4:5), which was adorned with cherubims. The second screen (%s'm'), which was not adorned, divided the sanctuary itself from the surrounding court (Exod 26:36–37; 35:15; 36:37–38; 39:38; 40:5, 28; Num 3:25) (MEYERS, 1992). In fact, the whole sanctuary was formed by a set of ten linen curtains, which when draped surrounded a structure of wooden frames, making separation between the sanctuary and the courtyard (MARSHALL *et al.*, 1996). In turn, the courtyard was surrounded by a linen screen, and, together with the third screen (%s'm'), which was placed at the gate of the courtyard, in the East side of the Tabernacle (Exod 27:16; 35:17; 38:18; 39:40; 40:8, 33; Num 3:26; 4:26), made a separation from the rest of the Israelite encampment.[14] Therefore, the Israelite Tabernacle was designated as God's house, in which God Himself could live among His

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[14] Details about the Israelite Tabernacle can be seen in good Bible dictionaries, such as Friedman (1992, p. 295–300); Koester (2000, p. 1269–1270).

people, but at the same time it was a holy place, to which the people could approach only through the expiatory and substitutive sacrifice.

4. Conclusion

Apart from the fact that this comparative work was made between *immovable* Egyptian temples—with inherent peculiarities—and the *movable* Israelite Tabernacle, it is possible to perceive that there are many similarities and some differences.

Among the similarities it is possible to highlight that (1) only authorized personnel could enter in the temples as well as in the Tabernacle; (2) the innermost part of the sanctuary was allowed only for high priests; (3) the innermost was a sacred place in which the whole sacrificial system was centered. (4) The central function of the temples and Tabernacle and their religious practices was to facilitate the communication of the people with the Egyptian gods, or the Israelite God (5) through the mediatory function of the priest and (6) the pertinent sacrifices. (7) These religious practices were performed through two main kinds of services, daily rituals and annual festivals. (8) The concrete presence of the Egyptian gods and Israelite God (9) in a special house was also common to both systems of worship. Likewise, (10) the three parts (outer, inner, and innermost places) with three different stages of sacredness (courtyard, holy, and most holy place) is something that both Egyptian temples and the Israelite Tabernacle have in common.

However, (1) the *function* of the offerings is diverse. In the Egyptian temples, sacrifices were the means to make god propitious to them. Whereas, in the Israelite religious practices, the sacrifices made the people propitious to God – because of the propitiatory and substitute character of the sacrifices. (2) In both religious practices the offerings were a gift to the divinity, but in the Israelite *thought* the offering was assigned and was given by the Lord as a gift, and from this gift, Israel gave back a gift to God (Lev 17:11; 1Ch 29:14; Psalm 50). (3) While the daily Egyptian ritual had the purpose of maintaining the *maat*, the perfect world order or the universal balance, the *Tāmîd* ritual intended substitution and atonement for the people. (4) Despite the fact that there were three main parts with three different stages of sacredness in both structures, the *purpose* of them is completely diverse. In Egyptian temples the three parts with their respective walls were made to keep the active dangerous power under control, whereas in the Tabernacle those structures were made to maintain safe the uncontrolled sinner person from the Holy God, who is in control of the powers. (5) The Egyptian temples resembled the "Mound of Creation," but the Israelite Tabernacle *represented*, besides creation, the place of salvation. Through the sacrifices and mediatory role of the priests, the sinner could now come to this place, close to God, and have a relationship with Him.

In summary: in their form, Egyptian temples and Israelite Tabernacle have many similarities; however, in their essence (function, purpose, thought, and representation) they are really diverse. If the Israelite Tabernacle is considered "an illustration [*parabolê*] for the present time (Heb 9:9, NIV)," God is a professor who teaches from the known to the unknown.

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