The Throne-Theophany and Prophetic Commission in 1 Nephi: A Form-Critical Analysis

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The first chapter of the Book of Mormon, in the words of Hugh Nibley, "has the authenticity of a truly ancient pseudepigraphic writing stamped all over it. It is a well-nigh perfect example of the genre."[1] Indeed, the first chapter of 1 Nephi conforms precisely to a literary pattern that form-critical studies have demonstrated to be the very essence of the prophetic commission in ancient Israel which "gives the individual's credentials as a prophet, messenger and ambassador of the heavenly council."[2] The pattern that emerges in the pseudepigrapha is that of a righteous individual who, concerned for the wickedness of his people, prays and weeps on their behalf until physically overcome by the spirit of revelation and who, carried away in a vision, sees God enthroned amidst the heavenly council. He also receives a heavenly book which explains the secrets of the universe and the impending disaster of his people. The vision is completed with a call or commission extended from the heavenly council to warn his people of their impending destruction if they will not repent; however, he is also forewarned that his people will reject him. Ultimately, such an apocalyptic pattern derives from the visionary experiences of the prophets Micaiah (1 Kgs. 22:19–22), Isaiah (Isa. 6), and Ezekiel (Ezek. 1:1–3:21), who had visions of God on his throne preceding their prophetic calls.

After defining the literary pattern of the prophetic commission and its historical development, this article will examine the throne-theophany in 1 Nephi and compare the prophetic commission pattern found therein with numerous Old Testament and pseudepigraphic sources. The account found in 1 Nephi will then be compared with nineteenth-century visions of God. Finally, this article will consider the probable origins of the pattern and indicate the significance of the form in the Book of Mormon.

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ORIGIN AND HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

There are essentially three distinct types of ascension motifs. The first type is the ecstatic ascension through the heavens such as that experienced by the Apostle Paul (2 Cor. 12:2–4); the second type is the ritual ascension which involved kings at the New Year rites; the third is the initial calling of the prophet preceded by a theophany, such as a vision of God on his throne.[3] While this article will be concerned primarily with the latter type, at times the other two types of ascension motifs overlap the prophetic call. For instance, Isaiah's call may represent both Isaiah's personal experience of a vision of God and a ritual enactment of the coronation of Yahweh.[4] There are also two distinct types of prophetic commission patterns. The narrative type of call, such as that of Moses, Gideon, or Jeremiah, involves a "dialogue" with Yahweh in which the prophet voices his reluctance to be called as a prophet but is finally reassured by divine injunction. The other type is classically represented by the calls of Isaiah and Ezekiel, where the seer experiences a theophany before his commission as a prophet.[5] Again, this article will be concerned primarily with the latter form.

In his study of the office and calling of the prophet, Klaus Baltzer remarks, "If we can expect to find information about the essence and function of the prophetic office anywhere, it is in the stories of the prophets' call and commission."[6] Such theophany-commission experiences are structured according to a literary pattern, which scholars have termed a *Gattung* (literary form) or a literary form within a *Traditionsgeschichte* (historical development of a literary or oral tradition), to emphasize their formal nature, and manifest what Baltzer calls a "programmatic character."[7] Such theophanic experiences were placed anciently "at the beginning of the traditions of the works and words of the prophet" as a means of providing "vindication and legitimization of the prophet in his office."[8] Gerhard Von Rad states that the prophetic call

> in fact gave rise to a new literary category, the account of the call. . . . The event of which the prophet tells burdened him with a commission, with knowledge and responsibility which place him in a complete isolation before God. It forced him to justify his exceptional status in the eyes of the majority. This makes clear that the writing down of a call was something secondary to the call itself and that it served a different end from the latter. The call commissioned the prophet: the act of writing down an account of it was aimed at those sections of the public in whose eyes he had to justify himself. No doubt these accounts are of great importance because of the insight they give us into the experience which made a man a prophet. . . . At the same time, however, exegesis has always to remember that these narratives are probably not simply transcripts of what was experienced at the time. They are as well accounts designed to serve certain definite ends and they no doubt to a certain extent stylized the call.[9]

The literary pattern of the prophetic call found in Ezekiel—"the apocalyptic vision of God (in human form) seated on his throne preceding the call of prophet"—has been traced by Walther Zimmerli along a line of developing tradition in the Old Testament from Isaiah 6 back to 1 Kings 22:19ff.[10] Thus, Isaiah expressed his throne-vision in a literary pattern first elucidated in the oldest Old Testament model, which dates to the ninth century B.C., found in the vision of Micaiah:

1 Kings 22:19–22	Isaiah 6:1–2, 8
I saw the Lord sitting on his throne, and all the host of heaven standing by him. . . . And the Lord said, Who shall persuade Ahab? . . . And there came forth a spirit, and stood before the Lord, and said, . . . I will go forth [all biblical quotes are from the King James Version unless otherwise noted].	I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and . . . above it stood the seraphims. . . . Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me.

The similarity between the two accounts justifies scholars in speaking of a literary pattern or form of the throne-vision followed by a prophetic call. Just as Isaiah expresses his vision in the literary form of the prophetic vision and commission of Micaiah, so Ezekiel elaborates "the same theophanic pattern of prophetic call in the sixth century . . . with a wealth of apocalyptic detail which one can only describe as baroque," says Matthew Black, "and with an anthropomorphic type of theophany which has been responsible for an entire mystical tradition of Judaism."[11] Von Rad adds, "Among the reception of visions more elaborately described in the Old Testament, those of Micaiah ben Imlah (I Kgs. 22:19ff.), Isaiah (Isa. 6), and Ezekiel (Ezek. 1–3) fall into the same class, for they follow what was obviously a given basic concept, that of solemn commissioning by Yahweh as he sat enthroned in the midst of his heavenly entourage. Each of the three, however, adapts the 'schema' in its own particular way."[12] Jeremiah also couches his prophetic call in a formal pattern or call narrative in the early sixth century, but it is expressed in the "dialogue and reassurance" form established in the call of Moses (Jer. 1:1–9; compare Ex. 3:4–12). The formal elements of the prophetic call form in Hebrew literature include:

1. *Historical Introduction:* There is a brief introductory remark providing circumstantial details such as time, place, and historical setting.
2. *Divine Confrontation:* Either deity or an angel appears in glory to the individual.
3. *Reaction:* The individual reacts to the presence of the deity or his angel by way of an action expressive of fear, unworthiness, or having been overpowered.

4. *Throne-Theophany:* In the commissions of Isaiah and Ezekiel, the individual sees the council of God and God seated upon his throne. This element distinguishes the throne-theophany commission from the primarily auditory commissions.
5. *Commission:* The individual recipient is commanded to perform a given task and assume the role of prophet to the people.
6. *Protest:* The prophet responds to the commission by claiming that he is unable or unworthy to accomplish the task. This element is usually absent when the *reaction* element is present, as in the call of Ezekiel.
7. *Reassurance:* The deity reassures the prophet that he will be protected and able to carry out the *commission.* The deity may also reassure the prophet by giving him a sign indicative of divine power and protection.
8. *Conclusion:* The commission form usually concludes in a formal way, most often with a statement that the prophet has begun to carry out his commission.[13]

The theophany and commission form was eventually absorbed into the genre "apocalypse," which may be defined as a "genre of revelatory literature with a narrative framework, in which a revelation is mediated by an otherworldly being to a human recipient, disclosing a transcendent reality which is both temporal, insofar as it envisages eschatological salvation, and spatial, insofar as it involves another supernatural world."[14] It must be emphasized that a literary genre is more inclusive than a literary form because, in this case, it could include not only the prophet's initial vision followed by a commission but also any vision thereafter which conforms to the genre. The genre apocalypse developed in classic Hebrew works such as Isaiah 49–66 but flourished especially during the intertestamental period in such works as the Merkaba (the divine throne–chariot motif) found among the Dead Sea Scrolls and in pseudepigraphic works such as 1 Enoch, 2 Enoch, the Testament of Levi, 4 Ezra, 3 Baruch, the Ascension of Isaiah, and the Apocalypse of Abraham, among others. The theophany-prophetic commission pattern is readily discernible in pseudepigraphic literature, such as the Ethiopic Enoch, when compared with Ezekiel's throne–chariot vision:

Ezekiel 1:26–28	1 Enoch 14:18–24
Above the vault over their heads there appeared . . . a throne, . . . and upon the throne, a form in human likeness (*Kemar adam*). . . . When I saw this I . . . heard a voice speaking to me: Man, he said, stand up, and let me talk with you. (New English Bible)	And I observed and saw . . . a lofty throne—its appearance was like crystal . . . and from beneath the throne were issuing streams of flaming fire. . . . And the Great Glory was sitting upon it. . . . And the Lord called me . . . and said to me, "Come near to me, Enoch, and to my holy Word."[15]

In the genre apocalypse, the prophetic commission pattern is fleshed out with other elements that became essential to the ascension experience: the visionary petitions Deity on behalf of his people; is overcome by the spirit of revelation; is caught up into heaven; is shown a vision of the throne–chariot; is given a commission to warn others of the impending judgment; and finally is given a tour of the world's history and the heavens. For example, in 1 Enoch (the sections quoted here are the earliest in the Enoch literature, dated to the late third century B.C. by Scholem).[16] Enoch petitions the Lord for his people (14:7) and is lifted up into the heavens by the winds (14:8); he is then overcome with trembling and falls on his face (14:14); he then sees a lofty throne whereon God is seated (14:18–22) and receives a commission to preach to the Watchers (14:24–16:3) before he receives revelation in the form of vision and audition concerning the heavens, Sheol, and history of the earth (chaps. 17–36).

Similarly, in the Testament of Levi (about 180 B.C.), Levi, grieving over the wickedness of the sons of men, prays to God on their behalf (2:4), is overcome with the Spirit and falls to sleep (2:5), and then ascends into the heavens with the *angelus interpres* (2:7). As he ascends through the heavens, their contents are revealed to him by the angel (2:8–3:10). In the highest heaven, Levi beholds God on his throne of glory (5:1) and is then given the priesthood and commissioned to teach his sons of the vision (5:2; compare 8:2–9; 14:7–8; 16:1; chaps. 17–18) and the contents of the heavenly tablets (5:4).

Likewise, in the Slavonic Enoch (after 70 A.D.), Enoch sleeps on his bed while he weeps (1:3) and is then visited by two majestic angels who take him into heaven on the wings of the Spirit (1:4–8; 3:1) where Enoch is endowed and sees all the contents of the heavens and the history of the earth (3:2–19:6). Enoch then beholds the throne of God and glory of his presence (chaps. 20–22). Enoch is commissioned to write the history of the earth and secrets of the heavens on the heavenly books (22:11). Finally, Enoch is commissioned to instruct his sons (36:1).

In the Apocalypse of Abraham (a Hebrew work dating after 70 A.D.), Abraham encounters the mighty angel Iaoel, who appears in brilliant glory. When Abraham hears Iaoel's voice, he falls to the ground as one dead. Iaoel strengthens Abraham and lifts him to his feet (10:1–5). As Abraham offers a sacrifice and ritual prayers, Iaoel appears, casts Satan out, and Abraham and Iaoel ascend into the heavens on the wings of the sacrificial dove (13:1–14). As they ascend, Iaoel explains the vision of Abraham (15:2–17:4). In the highest heaven Abraham sees the throne–chariot and the glory of God (18:1–14), the secrets of the universe (19:1–20:7), the heavenly council and chosen spirits before their birth (21:1–22:5), the history of the world beginning with Adam and Eve in the garden (23:1–14), a vision of judgment and

salvation (24:1–31:8) and the mission of Christ (29:3–9). Abraham is then commissioned to preach the contents of his vision to his posterity (32:1–6).

Finally, in the Ascension of Isaiah (about 150 A.D.), Isaiah is overcome by the Holy Spirit as he lies upon a couch and becomes as one dead (6:10); he is then "taken up" in a vision of the heavens (6:14) by "a glorious angel" (7:2–3). Isaiah beholds a throne with angels on the right and on the left (7:14–15; compare 11:32–33). He is then lifted through the seven heavens by the angel who interprets their contents to him (7:17–8:28). Isaiah's angel-guide gives him a book wherein is written "the deeds of the children of Israel" (9:22). In the highest heaven, Isaiah beholds Christ, who descends through the seven heavens to the earth where he is born of the virgin Mary, put to death, descends to the realm of Sheol, and sends out his Twelve Apostles before ascending again through the heavens to be seated on the right hand of God while the Holy Spirit is seated on the left (9:7–11:33). Isaiah is then commanded to return to his garment of flesh (11:35) where he tells all present of his vision (11:36–37).

The genre apocalypse influenced early Christianity, where it is fragmentarily found in the call of Paul (Acts 9:3ff.; 22:6ff.; 26:12ff.; compare Matt. 24–25, 28) and in the Apocalypse. The genre also found its way into other early Christian works in, among others, the Odes of Solomon[17] (Ode 36) and the Ascension of Isaiah. The genre, as distinct from the prophetic commission pattern, may also be detected in numerous classical, rabbinic, Gnostic, and Jewish sources (see app. 2).

THE ASCENSION OF LEHI

The experience of Lehi reported in 1 Nephi 1 compares very favorably with the genre apocalypse in general (see app. 1), and with the literary pattern and the developing history of the call form found in pseudepigraphic and Old Testament works in particular, as the following chart demonstrates.

	Isaiah 6	Jeremiah	Ezekiel	Lehi
1. Historical Introduction:	6:1a	1:1–3	1:1–3	1:4
2. Divine Confrontation:	6:1b–4	1:4	1:4–26a	1:6
3. Reaction:	6:5		1:28b	1:7
4. Throne-Theophany:	6:2–4		1:20–26a	1:8
5. Commission:	6:1b, 13b	1:5–7	2:3–5	2:1
6. Protest:	6:11a	1:6		
7. Reassurance:	6:6–7	1:8–9	2:1–2	1:10–12
8. Conclusion:	6:11b–13b	1:10	3:11–14	1:20, 2:1

Lehi, concerned about the wickedness and impending disaster of Israel, "prayed to the Lord . . . in behalf of his people" (1:5), and "as he prayed" a "pillar of fire" came and dwelt "on a rock before him," causing him to "quake exceedingly" (1:6). Completely overcome by the Spirit, Lehi cast himself on his bed (1:7) until he was "carried away in a vision" (1:8). Lehi was then lifted into heaven where he thought he saw "God sitting upon his throne, surrounded with numberless concourses of angels" (1:8).

Lehi then saw one descending from the heavenly council who "gave him a book, and bade him that he should read" (1:9–11). The book contained the deeds of the children of Israel (1:13) and told "of the coming of a Messiah, and also the redemption of the world" (1:19). Lehi's "soul did rejoice, and his whole heart was filled" as he praised God while reflecting on his vision of the throne and songs of the angelic hosts (1:14–5). Lehi was then evidently commissioned to warn his people, but they rejected him and sought his life (1:19–20). Nevertheless, God had promised protection and deliverance from those who sought his life (1:20).

The account of Lehi's throne-theophany and prophetic commission is very closely related to Ezekiel's account in the *Formgeschichte* or historical development of the literary pattern, but because Lehi's account also exhibits elements of the pattern unique to pseudepigraphic works it must be considered as part of the line of development inherited from the Hebrew theophany–commission pattern quite independent of Ezekiel's inaugural vision. Both 1 Nephi and Ezekiel manifest a number of similar formal elements. Among these are: (1) a historical introduction (1 Ne. 1:4; Ezek. 1:1–3); (2) a divine confrontation (1 Ne. 1:6; Ezek. 1:4); (3) a throne-theophany (1 Ne. 1:8; Ezek. 1:26–28); (4) a heavenly book (1 Ne. 1:11–12; Ezek. 2:8–10); (5) a *Qedussa* or angelic songs of praise (1 Ne. 1:14; Ezek. 3:12); (6) a commission of the prophet (1 Ne. 1:18, 2:1; Ezek. 2:2–3); (7) a rejection by his people (1 Ne. 1:19–20; Ezek. 3:8–9); and (8) reassurance and a promise of deliverance (1 Ne. 1:20; Ezek. 3:8–9).

Those elements which are unique to the pseudepigrapha and 1 Nephi include: (1) an intercessory prayer (1 Ne. 1:5); (2) revelation received on the prophet's bed or couch (1 Ne. 1:7); (3) an ascension into heaven (1 Ne. 1:8); (4) a vision of one descending from the heavenly council followed by twelve others (1 Ne. 1:11–13); and (5) a prophecy of the coming Messiah and redemption of the world (1 Ne. 1:19). Perhaps a microanalysis of each element in the pattern will clarify the significance of each in the overall narrative structure.

Historical Introduction

1 Nephi 1:4, 6	Ezekiel 1:1–3
For it came to pass in the commencement of the first year of the reign of Zedekiah, king of Judah, (my father, Lehi, having dwelt at Jerusalem in all his days); and in that same year there came many prophets, prophesying unto the people that they must repent, or the great city Jerusalem must be destroyed. . . . And it came to pass as he prayed unto the Lord, there came a pillar of fire and dwelt upon a rock before him.	Now it came to pass in the thirtieth year, in the fourth month . . . that the heavens were opened, and I saw visions of God. In the fifth day of the month, which was the fifth year of king Jehoiachin's captivity, The word of the Lord came expressly unto Ezekiel the priest, the son of Buzi, in the land of the Chaldeans by the river Chebar; and the hand of the Lord was there upon him.

The historical introduction fills the double function of establishing the time and place setting and giving certain biographical information about the prophet.[18] Such historical notes were added at the beginning of the words of numerous Old Testament prophets.[19] Ezekiel's historical prologue gives the date in the first person, a reference to the locality, and the beginning of an autobiographical note in verse 1. Verse 2 gives a simple date reference and the reign of the king. Verse 3 mentions the receiving of the divine word, gives the name and vocation of the prophet, his father's name, and the name and place of his work.[20] Nephi's redaction of Lehi's account gives a simple time reference and mentions the reign of the king, the activities of Lehi (Nephi's father), the places of those activities, and the receiving of the divine word in the third person.

Isaiah's call begins: "In the year that King Uzziah died I saw also the Lord" (6:1). What N. Habel said of Isaiah's historical prologue is equally true of Lehi's: "Despite the overwhelming glory of the sacred locale [the temple], the historical moment is just as important to the prophet's proclamation. The year was a year of transition, crisis and import; it was the year of the king's death."[21] The historical prologue underscores the significance of the experience's historical orientation. According to Zimmerli, "[In] the dating there is expressed unmistakably the conviction that the word of Yahweh, which was given the prophet and communicated by him, was not a timeless truth, but represented a message of God for a particular occasion."[22] For example, according to the Slavonic Enoch, Enoch's ascension purportedly took place at the first of the year: "In the first month, on the assigned day of the first month, . . . two [angels] appeared to me" (2 Enoch 1:2–4 [see note d of v. 2]). Ezra prefaced his theodicy with, "In the thirtieth year after the destruction of our city [Jerusalem], . . . I began to speak anxious words to the Most High. . . . Then the angel that had been sent to me . . . answered" (4 Ezra 3:1ff.).

The Intercessory Prayer

1 Nephi 1:4–5	4 Ezra 3:1–3
For it came to pass in the commencement of the first year of the reign of Zedekiah, king of Judah . . . there came many prophets, prophesying unto the people that they must repent, or the great city Jerusalem must be destroyed. Wherefore it came to pass that my father, Lehi, as he went forth prayed unto the Lord, yea, even with all his heart, in behalf of his people.	In the thirtieth year after the destruction of our city, I . . . was in Babylon. I was troubled as I lay on my bed, and my thoughts welled up in my heart, because I saw the desolation of Zion and the wealth of those who lived in Babylon. My spirit was greatly agitated, and I began to speak anxious words to the Most High.

The intercessory prayer motif is absent from all of the biblical accounts of the call form (though intercessory prayers are found elsewhere in the Old Testament outside the context of the prophetic call). The prayer is also a well-established motif in the pseudepigraphic accounts.[23] In these accounts, the prophet's prayer is always motivated by concern for his people. While Lehi is distraught over the wickedness and impending disaster about to befall Jerusalem, the pseudepigraphic authors look back to the fall of Jerusalem and mourn Israel's failure to heed the Lord's warnings. God responds to the prayer by sending an otherworldly mediator and by showing the visionary the history of the world and eventual eschatological redemption of Israel, granting solace in the face of disaster. Compare the Greek Baruch and the Testament of Levi with Lehi's prayer:

3 Baruch 1:1–3	Test. of Levi 2:3–4, 6	1 Nephi 1:4–6
Woe, now I Baruch (was) weeping in my mind and considering the people and how King Nebuchadnezzar was permitted by God to plunder his city, saying: "Lord, why have you set fire to your vineyard and laid it waste?" . . . And behold, while I was weeping and saying such things, I saw an angel of the Lord.	As I was tending the flocks . . . a spirit of understanding from the Lord came upon me, and I observed all human beings making their way in life deceitfully. Sin was erecting walls and injustice was ensconced in towers. I kept grieving over the race of the sons of men, and I prayed to the Lord that I might be delivered. . . . And . . . the heavens were opened, and an angel of the Lord spoke to me: 'Levi, Levi, enter!'	There came many prophets, prophesying unto the people that they must repent, or the great city Jerusalem must be destroyed. Wherefore it came to pass that my father, Lehi, as he went forth prayed unto the Lord, yea, even with all his heart in behalf of his people. And it came to pass as he prayed unto the Lord, there came a pillar of fire and dwelt upon a rock before him; and he saw and heard much.

The Divine Confrontation

1 Nephi 1:6–7	Ezekiel 1:4
There came a pillar of fire and dwelt upon a rock before him; and he saw and heard much; and because of the things which he saw and heard he did quake and tremble exceedingly. And it came to pass that he returned to his own house at Jerusalem; and cast himself upon his bed, being overcome with the Spirit and the things which he had seen.	And as I looked, behold, a storm wind came from the north, a great cloud of flashing fire [with brightness around it] and out of its midst [it shone] as it were the appearance of electrum [from the midst of the fire]. (Zimmerli translation)

The pillar of fire appearing upon the rock in Lehi's account is reminiscent of the description of the *Shekinah* (divine glory) of Yahweh going before Israel in the exodus and his words to Moses: "Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb" (Ex. 17:6). All of the pseudepigraphic sources note the fiery glory of the mediating angel who has come to initiate the prophet into the heavenly realm.[24] It should also be noted that Lehi saw the pillar of fire "as he went forth," but was carried away in a vision only after he had returned to his house in Jerusalem and lay upon his bed. Though the initial experience is temporally distinct from the experience of the ascension, they are presented as a literary unity. Hence, the concern with presenting Lehi's experience in a unified literary pattern is evident.

Reaction

1 Nephi 1:6–7	Ezekiel 1:28
[And] because of the things which he saw and heard he did quake and tremble exceedingly. . . . And he cast himself upon his bed, being overcome with the Spirit.	And when I saw it, I fell upon my face, and I heard a voice of one that spake.

The effect of the divine encounter on the prophet is one of fright, sleepiness, and loss of consciousness of the earthly realm simultaneously.[25] For instance, Isaiah was overcome by the glory of his heavenly vision: "Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone" (Isa. 6:5). As a result of his encounter with the fiery throne–chariot, Ezekiel fell upon his face (Ezek. 1:28), much as Enoch in the Ethiopic Enoch, who beheld lightning and fiery cherubim speaking with fiery tongues: "And as I shook and trembled, I fell upon my face and saw a vision" (1 Enoch 14:14). A vivid account of the effects of the divine encounter is found in the Apocalypse of Abraham where, as a result of Abraham's vision of the glorious angel Iaoel, Abraham said: "And behold there

was no breath of man. And my spirit was amazed, and my soul fled from me. And I became like a stone, and fell face down upon the earth, for there was no longer strength in me to stand up on the earth'' (Apocalypse of Abraham 10:2). Certainly, the pillar of fire had a similar effect on Lehi, who, overcome by the spirit, ''did quake and tremble exceedingly'' insomuch that he ''cast himself upon his bed'' (1 Ne. 1:6–7).

One motif that is mentioned in pseudepigraphic accounts and in 1 Nephi 1, but absent from biblical calls, is the emphasis on the bed or couch on which the prophet casts himself to see the vision.[26] For instance, in the Ascension of Isaiah, Isaiah is overcome by the spirit of prophecy and ascends into heaven as he lies upon a couch in the palace. Ezra reports that his vision occurred ''as I lay on my bed'' (4 Ezra 3:1), while Enoch reports his vision came as ''I was in my house alone. And I lay on my bed, sleeping'' (2 Enoch 1:2). The bed or couch was necessary because the prophet entered into a trance state wherein physical strength and consciousness were lost while a consciousness of the heavenly realm opened to his gaze. As D. S. Russell points out:

> The vision is said to come before sleep (Dan. 10:9) or during sleep (2 Baruch 54:1) or after sleep (2 Enoch 1:6). . . . The coming of the vision puts him into a trance-like state as when he lies on the ground as one dead, his understanding being confused (2 Esdras 10:30; Dan. 10:9ff.). So overwhelming is his experience that he might even . . . lose consciousness. . . . The very nature of these experiences suggest that they are more than literary convention; their very nature argues strongly that they reflect the actual experiences of the apocalyptic writers themselves.[27]

The Ascension

1 Nephi 1:8	1 Enoch 14:8; 71:1
And being thus overcome with the Spirit, he was carried away in a vision, even that he saw the heavens open.	In the vision the winds were causing me to fly and rushing me high up into heaven. . . . (Thus) it happened after this that my spirit passed out of sight and ascended into the heavens. And I saw the sons of the holy angels.

The ascension of the prophet is absent in the biblical call accounts but may be represented fragmentarily by the Spirit's setting Ezekiel on his feet after he falls to the earth (Ezek. 2:1). The ascent through the heavens is accomplished by the power of the Spirit, symbolized in many pseudepigraphic accounts by the wings of the otherworldly mediator. For example, Enoch was borne on the wings of two angels who carried him through the several heavens (2 Enoch 3:1);[28] Levi

entered the several heavens through the gates that were open (Testament of Levi 5:1); Baruch went up as though borne on wings (3 Baruch 2:2); Abraham ascended on the wings of a sacrificial dove (Apocalypse of Abraham 15:2–4); and Isaiah was taken up by an angel (Ascension of Isaiah 7:3).[29] The phrase used by Lehi, "and the heavens opened," is not found in the Old Testament except for the historical introduction of Ezekiel's call (1 Ne. 1:8; Ezek. 1:1).

The Throne-Theophany

1 Nephi 1:8	Ezekiel 1:1, 26, 28
He saw the heavens open, and he thought he saw God sitting upon his throne, surrounded with numberless concourses of angels in the attitude of singing and praising their God.	The heavens were opened, and I saw the visions of God. . . . And above the firmament that was over [the seraphim's] heads was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone: and upon the . . . throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man. . . . This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord.

The presentation of the prophet before the heavenly council was a momentous experience. Such a scene has an extensive ancient Near Eastern background.[30] The vision of God on his throne was more than literary convention, however, for there is every indication that the Hebrew prophets who related their experience of this council felt it was as much a reality as the existence of Yahweh himself.[31] According to D. S. Russell, "In passages like 1 Kings 22:19ff., Job 1:6ff., and Isaiah 6:6ff. God is described as presiding over a council whose members are there to carry out his will. . . . This council is attended, however, not only by Gods and angels but also by men, for it is the privilege of the truly inspired prophet to stand in its midst and hear the word of Yahweh."[32] The vision of God's throne in his heavenly temple had a great influence on pseudepigraphic literature.[33] For example, in the Testament of Levi, Levi reports, "At this moment the angel opened for me the gates of heaven and I saw the Holy Most High sitting on the throne" (Testament of Levi 5:1–2). The Apocalypse of Abraham, undoubtedly influenced by Ezekiel, conjoins the images of the throne and the chariot: "I saw . . . a chariot with fiery wheels. Each wheel was full of eyes round about. And above the wheels was the throne which I had seen" (Apocalypse of Abraham 18:12–13). Enoch beheld a scene very similar to that of Lehi and Alma; he saw "cherubim and seraphim standing all around his throne . . . singing with gentle voice in front of the face of the Lord (2 Enoch 21:1).

The Descensus

1 Nephi 1:9–10	Ascension of Isaiah 10:7; 11:22
And it came to pass that he saw One descending out of the midst of heaven, and he beheld that his luster was above that of the sun at noon-day. And he also saw twelve others following him, and their brightness did exceed that of the stars in the firmament.	And I heard the voice of the Most High, the Father of my Lord, as he said to my Lord Christ, . . . "Go out and descend through all the heavens. You shall descend through the firmament and through that world . . . And the angel who led me said to me: "Understand, Isaiah." And I saw when he sent out the twelve disciples.

The Hebrew symbols employed make clear that the *descensus* is a continuation of the vision of the heavenly council. Yahweh is typically envisioned in the Old Testament as enthroned amidst the worshiping host of heaven—the sun, moon, and stars. As Frank Cross demonstrated, "the heavenly bodies, given 'personality' in protological fashion, were conceived as part of the worshiping host of beings about the throne of Yahweh." He pointed out that *kokebe boker* 'the morning stars' in Job 38:7 may be considered in parallel with *bene elohim* 'the sons of God' (compare Isa. 14:12; Ps. 148:2–3), and the terms *saba'* or *sebot* apply equally to heavenly bodies and the angelic host.[34] Thus, the sun and stars which Lehi beheld in vision proceeded from the heavenly council and probably foreshadowed Christ and the Twelve Apostles as in the Ascension of Isaiah, or possibly the chosen one and the twelve tribes of Israel as in Joseph's dream (Gen. 37:9). Such a symbolic vision of the coming Messiah can be found in the Testament of Judah: "And after this there shall arise for you a Star from Jacob in peace: And a man shall arise from my posterity like the Sun of righteousness" (Testament of Judah 24:1).[35] Although the *descensus* motif is not essential to the *Gattung* of the call narrative, nevertheless, the motif, as it appears in 1 Nephi 1, is a logical extension of the throne-theophany and evidence of the Hebrew influence on Lehi's account.

The Heavenly Book

1 Nephi 1:11–13	Ezekiel 2:9–10
And the first came and stood before my father, and gave unto him a book, and bade him that he should read. And . . . as he read, he was filled with the Spirit of the Lord. And he read, saying: Wo, wo, unto Jerusalem, for I have seen thine abominations! Yea, and many things did my father read concerning Jerusalem.	And when I looked, behold, an hand was sent unto me; and, lo, a roll of a book was therein; And he spread it before me; and it was written within and without: and there was written therein lamentations, and mourning, and woe.

The book given to the prophet by the messenger from the heavenly council is another motif of the call *Gattung* that derives from ancient Near Eastern origins, a motif that enjoyed widespread popularity.[36] Georg Widengren, who wrote probably the most extensive study to date of the heavenly book, states, "Few religious ideas in the Ancient Near East have played a more important role than the notion of heavenly tablets, or the heavenly book. . . . One of the most significant features in history . . . [is] the oft recurring thought that the heavenly book is handed over at the ascension in an interview with a heavenly being, or the gods or heavenly beings."[37] The idea of the heavenly book was pivotal in Israel where Moses received the Law on heavenly tablets from God on Sinai. It may have become associated with the commission narrative because of the role of fixing the fates on the divine tables at the Babylonian Akitu festival; but for whatever reason, the motif became very prominent in the apocalyptic and pseudepigraphic literature.[38] For example, in the Ethiopic Enoch, Enoch "looked at the tablet(s) of heaven, read all the writing (on them), and came to understand everything. I read that book and all the deeds of humanity and all the children of the flesh upon the earth for all the generations of the world" (1 Enoch 81:2). In the Ascension of Isaiah, Isaiah says, "One of the angels . . . showed me (some) books, but not like the books of this world; and he opened them, and the books had writing in them. . . . And they were given to me, and I read them, and behold the deeds of the children of Israel were written there" (9:21–22). The motif in 1 Nephi matches the ancient Hebrew call pattern exactly—a book delivered from the heavenly council which tells of the deeds of the children of Israel and their impending doom.

The Qedussa

1 Nephi 1:14	1 Enoch 39:6, 10, 12
When my father had read and seen many great and marvelous things, he did exclaim many things unto the Lord; such as: Great and marvelous are thy works, O Lord God Almighty! Thy throne is high in the heavens, and thy power, and goodness, and mercy are over all the inhabitants of the earth; and, because thou art merciful, thou wilt not suffer those who come unto thee that they shall perish!	And in those days my eyes saw the Elect One of righteousness. . . . And I gazed . . . and I blessed and praised, saying, "Blessed is he, and may he be blessed, from the beginning and forever more." . . . Those who do not slumber but stand before your glory . . . shall bless, praise, and extol (you), saying, 'Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord of the Spirits; the spirits fill the earth.' "

The *Qedussa,*[39] or angelic songs of the heavenly council praising Yahweh as thrice holy, is prominent in the calls of Isaiah (Isa. 6:3) and

Ezekiel (Ezek. 3:12), for they join the council as the emissaries of Yahweh.[40] Lehi also joins the heavenly council in songs of praise. Ezekiel states that "the spirit took me up, and I heard behind me a voice of a great rushing, saying, Blessed be the glory of the Lord from his place" (Ezek. 3:12). The seer joining in songs of praise with the heavenly hosts while raised on high is also found in the Apocalypse of Abraham 17:3–21 where the heavenly mediator teaches the angelic songs to Abraham: "Eternal One, Mighty One, Holy El. . . . Sabaoth, most glorious El, El, El, El, Iaoel. . . . You make the light shine before the morning light upon your creation." In 2 Enoch 21:1 (recension J), Enoch joins the angels who deliver the threefold sanctus: "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord Sabaoth, Heaven and earth are full of his glory." The poet of the odes of Solomon 36 also joins the heavenly choir: "The Spirit of the Lord . . . raised me up to heaven; And caused me to stand on my feet in the Lord's high place, before his perfection and his glory, Where I continued praising (him) by the composition of his odes. . . . I was most praised among the praised." The *Qedussa* is developed in 1 Enoch 39:10–13, a later part of the Book of Enoch known as the "Similitudes" (dating probably from the first century A.D.) in a manner similar to Lehi's praise of the Lord.[41]

The Commission

1 Nephi 1:18–19	Ezekiel 2:3; 3:1, 4
After the Lord had shown so many marvelous things unto my father, Lehi, . . . behold he went forth among the people, and began to prophesy and to declare unto them concerning the things which he had both seen and heard . . . and also the things which he read in the book.	And he said unto me, Son of man, I send thee to the children of Israel, . . . Son of man, . . . eat this roll, and go speak unto the house of Israel . . . with my words.

The commission element of Lehi's call has been obscured by Nephi's editorial activities. Nevertheless, the motif is still evident from Lehi's actions following the vision, such as preaching to his people of the contents of the vision and of the book, and from the subsequent revelation given to him commending him for having fulfilled the commission given before that time: "Blessed art thou Lehi, because of the things which thou hast done; and because thou hast been faithful and declared unto this people the things which I commanded thee" (1 Ne. 2:1).

The commission was given only to the prophet who had stood in the heavenly council and heard the words of Yahweh, which the prophet was commanded to deliver to his people as contained in the heavenly

book.[42] Indeed, the very designation *nabi* (the Hebrew word for "prophet") meant literally "one who is called" and, according to E. Theodore Mullen, Jr., "implies the background of the [heavenly] council, for the prophet was called to proclaim the will of the deity which issued from the assembly."[43] For example, when summoned by the heavenly council, Isaiah responds, "Here am I; send me" (Isa. 6:8). Then he is commissioned: "Go, and tell this people, Hear" (Isa. 6:9–10). Similarly, Ezekiel's commission is to "go, get thee unto the house of Israel" and speak the words put into his mouth by Yahweh as represented by the book Ezekiel had ingested (Ezek. 3:1–4). A similar motif is found in 4 Ezra, where Ezra reports, "Then I went as he commanded me, and I gathered all the people together, and said, 'Hear these words, O Israel.' . . . And on the next day, behold, a voice called me, saying, 'Ezra, open your mouth and drink what I give you to drink.' . . . And I took it and drank; and when I had drunk it, my heart poured forth understanding, and wisdom increased in my breast, for my spirit retained its memory; and my mouth was opened, and was no longer closed" (4 Ezra 14:27–28, 38, 40–41). The commission is found in numerous pseudepigraphic narratives.[44]

The Rejection and Reassurance

1 Nephi 1:19–20	Ezekiel 3:7; 2:6
And it came to pass that the Jews did mock him because of the things which he testified of them; for he truly testified of their wickedness and their abominations; . . . And when the Jews heard these things they were angry with him; yea, even as with the prophets of old, whom they had cast out, and stoned, and slain; and they also sought his life, that they might take it away. But behold, I, Nephi, will show unto you that the tender mercies of the Lord are over all those whom he hath chosen, because of their faith, to make them mighty even unto the power of deliverance.	But the house of Israel will not hearken unto thee; for they will not hearken unto me: for all the house of Israel are impudent and hard-hearted. . . . And thou, son of man, be not afraid of them, neither be afraid of their words, though briers and thorns be with thee.

Notwithstanding the prophet's commission, he will be rejected by his people. This paradox also meets us in Isaiah's call: "Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart" (Isa. 6:9–10). In a sense, the preaching of the prophet

is justification for God's destruction of his people, for they have been given a chance and rejected it. Both Ezekiel and Isaiah are reminded of the difficulty and hopelessness of their position, for the people are hardheaded and stubborn of heart. The rejection by the people prompts a protest from Isaiah: "Lord, how long?" (Isa. 6:11). The protest is absent from Ezekiel's and Lehi's call. As Benjamin J. Hubbard notes, however,

> the two elements appearing with least frequency are the Protest and the Reaction. However, one or the other of them occurs in seventeen different (biblical) pericopes out of twenty-seven. Only five commissioning accounts have both. It appears that there is a general tendency to have the individual *respond* either to the *presence* of the commissioner (Reaction) or to his commission (Protest).[45]

Since Lehi's account contains a reaction to the presence of the pillar of fire, his account would not be expected to also present a protest to the commission itself. Hence, the absence of a protest in Lehi's account actually conforms to the *Gattung* presented in Hebraic prophetic call forms. Both Ezekiel and Isaiah are fully prepared for the failure of their undertaking despite God's omnipotent help. As Von Rad notes:

> The three visions just considered (in other words, Micaiah [1 Kings 22:19ff.], Isaiah [6] and Ezekiel [1–3]) thus end by indicating a completely negative result—in no sense will the prophet's work lead to deliverance; it will only hasten on the inevitable disaster. The ideas which the three men each held about the nature of their calling must have been very much alike: there must have been some kind of common call experience which put a stamp upon their work from the outset. Their devastatingly negative outlook on the future of their work, and the way in which, without any illusions, they faced up to its complete failure, are again a factor which compels us to look for these prophets outside the cult.[46]

Lehi shares this common call experience, for like Ezekiel, he learns from the heavenly book that whatever his efforts those at Jerusalem will reject his message and be destroyed (1 Ne. 1:13). As Walther Zimmerli notes, however, God's promise of protection in the face of threatened death and bitter opposition to the prophet is essential to his call: "[Ezekiel] 2:6–7 adds an admonition to fearlessness, which Jer. 1:8 (17) shows to be an essential part of a call-narrative. . . . The element of encouragement and strengthening, which is also found in a different form in calls of Moses and Gideon, follows naturally upon the oracle of commissioning."[47] It is Nephi, the redactor of Lehi's call, who reminds us that God "is mighty even unto the power of deliverance" (1 Ne. 1:20) unto all those who receive the commission to declare "unto this people all the things which I commanded thee" (1 Ne. 2:1).

THE NINETEENTH CENTURY AND 1 NEPHI

The implications of the theophany–commission pattern for the origins of the Book of Mormon must be tested against the Prophet Joseph Smith's nineteenth-century environment because the book available to us is a product of his revelatory experiences. To the extent that 1 Nephi is similar to nineteenth-century visions, its antiquity would have to be demonstrated on other grounds. To the extent that 1 Nephi 1 is unlike nineteenth-century accounts, however, it becomes reasonable to view this text as an expression of antiquity.

Joseph Smith was reared in an era of intense apocalyptic fervor and spiritual experience.[48] One of the results of this intense fervor was the publication of literally hundreds of conversion experiences and visions of God by Puritan pietists and Quaker disciples.[49] Hence, one might expect numerous accounts in nineteenth-century literature resembling the theophany–commission pattern in 1 Nephi. In point of fact, however, the sole account in the literature of nineteenth-century America conforming in any significant detail to the ancient literary pattern uncovered by a thorough, though perhaps not an exhaustive, search of such visions is the account in 1 Nephi 1.

Neal Lambert and Richard H. Cracroft demonstrated that early nineteenth-century conversion experiences involving a vision of God were expressed, almost without exception, in a "common pattern" involving "literary, structural and stylistic elements."[50] Among the most influential of these accounts (not considered by Lambert and Cracroft) were the spiritual diary of Indian missionary David Brainerd, the journals of Anglican evangelist George Whitefield, and the accounts of Henry Alline, a Methodist.[51]

These conversion accounts conform to the stages of conversion standardized in the Calvinist theology by learned Puritan theologians: (1) a recognition of one's inherently sinful and depraved nature; (2) a prayer, often in a solitary forest or field, seeking forgiveness of personal sins; (3) a spiritual experience often described as an actual or metaphorical vision of Christ; (4) a forgiveness of sins resulting from Christ's atonement; and (5) an experience of intense love and/or transformation of nature. The accounts of Elder Jacob Knapp (1808) and Elder Benjamin Putnam (1821) are typical of early nineteenth-century visions of God expressed in the ubiquitous pattern:

Elder Knapp

It appeared certain that . . . I should be eternally miserable; justice seemed to demand it, and I could see no possible way of escape. . . . While I was confessing my sins, bemoaning my wretched and undone situation, . . . I instantly had a view of the Lord Jesus Christ with his arms extended in an inviting posture. . . . The great cause of my grief seemed to be gone, and I could think nothing that could sadden my heart. . . . Every object that I beheld seemed to speak forth the praises of Jehovah, indeed there seemed to be an universal change.

Elder Putnam

I felt myself sinking down into despair. I saw clearly the righteousness of God in sending me to the lowest hell. At this moment the earth seemed to open beneath me, and hell appeared to be yawning at my reception. . . . I rose up quickly, turned my eyes toward heaven and I thought I saw Jesus descending with his arms extended for my reception. My soul leaped within me. . . . All nature smiled and everything, animate and inanimate praised God with a voice (though unheard before) too loud and too plain to misunderstand. My soul was wholly absorbed in loving.

It appears that Joseph Smith used the nineteenth-century conversion theology to describe his own experiences, just as the classical Hebrew prophets used literary patterns significant to their culture to express their experiences. Joseph's 1832 account of the First Vision conforms to this pattern precisely, emphasizing a vision of Christ the Lord and referring to the atonement and forgiveness of his sins:

> From the age of twelve years to fifteen . . . my mind became exceedingly distressed for I became convicted of my sins. . . . I felt to mourn for my own Sins and for the Sins of the world . . . therefore I cried unto the Lord for mercy . . . and while in the attitude of calling upon the Lord in the 16th year of age a pillar of light above the brightness of the Sun at noon-day came down from above and rested upon me and I was filld with the Spirit of God and the Lord opened the heavens upon me and I saw the Lord and he spake unto me saying Joseph my son thy Sins are forgiven thee . . . my soul was filled with love . . . for many days.[52]

While Joseph Smith's own vision is expressed in terms conforming to the nineteenth-century vision model, Lehi's vision is not. *None* of the nineteenth-century conversion accounts are prefaced by a literary prologue, refer to a prior divine confrontation, include a vision of the *descensus,* a prophetic commission, *Qedussa,* or a narrative conclusion as found in Lehi's account. Some elements are superficially similar. For example, the prayers in the nineteenth-century accounts are concerned with individual sins; the prayers in 1 Nephi and the pseudepigrapha are concerned with the destruction of Israel in the sixth century B.C. The visions of God in nineteenth-century literature do not mention the council in heaven, nor do they employ any uniquely Hebrew symbolism in relation to the council. Two nineteenth-century

accounts mention an ascension to the throne of God of some element in the vision, but not an ascension of the prophet himself.[53] The accounts of Jacob Young (1857) and Orange Scott (1829) mention a book in heaven, but this book is the Book of Life, in which the names of the elect are inscribed, rather than a book telling of the world's history. In sum, none of the nineteenth-century accounts conform to the throne-theophany and commission pattern found in the ancient works and 1 Nephi 1.

Five nineteenth-century accounts contain the formulaic language found in 1 Nephi: "I thought I saw" or "Methought I saw" (compare Alma 36:22).[54] This language may express the tentative language common to Hebraic descriptions of divine glory or may be a nineteenth-century mode of expression.[55] It should be noted that the doctrines expressed in Lehi's account seem to be more archaic than those elsewhere in the Book of Mormon. Lehi refers to the coming Deliverer as "the Messiah" rather than the more specific Christian terms of "Son of God" or "Christ."[56] Lehi refers to the redemption of the world rather than to the more specific "resurrection" and refers to the throne of God, rather than the throne of God and the Lamb.

It may appear that any person who had read Ezekiel could faithfully reproduce the theophany-commission pattern as it appears in 1 Nephi. However, a number of significant differences exist between the two accounts which suggest that the similarity of 1 Nephi to Ezekiel consists of dependence on a call *Gattung* common to both rather than the mere duplicating of Ezekiel by a later author. First, Lehi's account in 1 Nephi is singularly lacking in the Babylonian symbolism so prominent in Ezekiel's account, while at the same time manifesting a peculiarly Hebrew symbolism in relation to the heavenly council that is lacking in Ezekiel's account. Second, the chariot motif that dominates Ezekiel's theophany is completely absent from Lehi's account. Third, Lehi's call pattern includes elements such as the intercessory prayer, ascension, and bed motifs which do not appear in Ezekiel but are likely a development from Old Testament call forms, judged by their presence in the pseudepigrapha. Thus, the similarity between Lehi's and Ezekiel's commission may be best explained in terms of their common experience of a theophany which is expressed in terms of a common literary pattern with minimal actual dependence of the author of Lehi's account on Ezekiel.

Hence, anyone who would argue that Lehi's account originated with Joseph Smith in 1830 must be prepared to explain the following details: First, the call form does not appear in nineteenth-century literature. Second, the author of 1 Nephi 1 was apparently aware of the significance of the call narrative anciently, as evidenced by its placement at the beginning of the book. Third, the author of

1 Nephi 1 evidently had literary or oral access to an ancient call pattern or *Gattung,* evidenced by the combination and comparison of essential motifs, formulaic language, and the completeness of the throne-theophany and commission pattern. Fourth, while the theophany and commission pattern may be detected in part in the Bible if a scholarly synthesis is superimposed upon its texts, it is by no means obvious. Further, it appears that the call form as it is presented in the Book of Mormon evidences at least some awareness of the apocalyptic expansion of that form as is evidenced by its presence in the later pseudepigrapha. If the scholars of Joseph Smith's own day were ignorant of the call form, what are the chances that he could have detected the essential pattern, isolated and deleted all Babylonian influences, and included in his version elements that were present only in the yet unknown pseudepigrapha?

CONCLUSION

First Nephi fits better into its claimed historical matrix of preexilic Israel than into a nineteenth-century setting. The form-critical method provides a critical control to explain why there are close parallels between Old Testament call accounts, the pseudepigrapha, and 1 Nephi 1, and the significance of such parallels. The similarities between the call form as represented in Ezekiel and in 1 Nephi 1 may indicate a similar time period of composition. Those elements common to the pseudepigrapha and 1 Nephi 1 may indicate an awareness of a growing literary tradition that flourished in later Judaism but which was originally dependent upon the Hebraic prophetic tradition. The Hebraic prophetic call form has been appropriated and expanded in apocalyptic visions found in pseudepigraphic works.

Any study of the antiquity of the Book of Mormon is severely hampered because its ancient source is unavailable. Hence, forms that are language-dependent are not detectable in 1 Nephi 1, with the possible exceptions of the phrases "the heavens opened" (1 Ne. 1:8; Ezek. 1:1) and "in the year of the king" (1 Ne. 1:4; Ezek. 1:2) found in the literary prologue. The possibility that the Book of Mormon derives from an ancient source, however, must be considered in light of some features better explained in terms of ancient Israel than nineteenth-century America.

APPENDIX 1
PARADIGM OF THE GENRE "APOCALYPSE"

Adapted from John C. Collins, "Introduction: Towards the Morphology of a Genre," *Semeia* 14 (1979): 1–20. Collins writes: "Apocalypse may be defined as a genre of revelatory literature with a narrative framework, in which a revelation is mediated by an otherworldly being to a human recipient, disclosing a transcendent reality which is both temporal, insofar as it envisages eschatological salvation, and spatial, insofar as it involves another supernatural world" (9).

Manner of Revelation

1 *Medium* by which revelation is communicated:

1.1 *Visual* revelation may consist of

1.1.1 *Visions,* where the content of the revelation is seen, or

1.1.2 *Epiphanies,* where the appearance of the heavenly mediator is described, or

1.1.3 *Theophanies,* where the appearance of God on his throne or chariot is described.

1.2 *Auditory* revelation usually clarifies the visual. Epiphanies are always followed by auditory revelation, in the form of

1.2.1 *Discourse,* uninterrupted speech by the mediator, or

1.2.2 *Dialogue,* where there is conversation between the mediator and recipient and/or questions by the human recipient of the heavenly mediator.

1.3 *Otherworldly Journey,* when the visionary travels through the heavens, hell, or remote regions beyond the normally accessible world. Revelation in the course of a journey is usually predominantly visual.

1.4 *Heavenly Book(s),* when the revelation is contained at least in part in a written document, usually a heavenly book.

2.1 An *Otherworldly Mediator* communicates the revelation. Often the mediation consists of interpreting a vision but it can also take the form of direct speech or simply of guiding the recipient and directing his attention to the revelation. The mediator is most often an angel, or in some Christian texts, Christ.

2.2 *Divine Encounter,* the initial encounter of the recipient with a divine being of fiery glory prior to a theophany.

3 *The Human Recipient:*

3.1 *Pseudonymity:* The recipient is usually identified as a venerable figure from the past. A few Christian apocalypses are not pseudonymous. Parts of the biblical texts remain in question.

3.2 *Intercessory Prayer,* the prayer of the recipient on behalf of others which results in divine disclosure and revelation.

3.3 *Disposition of the Recipient* notes the circumstances and emotional state in which the revelation is received.

3.4 The *Reaction of the Recipient* usually describes the overpowering awe and/or perplexity of the recipient confronted with the revelation.

4 *Ascension,* the lifting aloft of the human recipient into a heavenly realm, usually lifted up by the winds or on wings of birds.

APPENDIX 1—*Continued*

Content: Temporal Axis

5 *Protology:* Matters which deal with the beginning of history and prehistory.

5.1 *Cosmogony,* creation and origin of the world.

5.2 *Primordial Events,* events which have paradigmatic significance for the remainder of history (for example, the sin of Adam).

6 *History:*

6.1 *Recollection of Past,* explicit recognition of past events, or

6.2 *Historical Prologue,* usually a literary introduction indicating the year and place of the revelation, or

6.3 *Ex Eventu Prophecy* where past history is disguised as future and so associated with the eschatological prophecies—prophecy.

7 *Eschatological Crisis. This may take the form of*

7.1 *Persecution* of the recipient for preaching of his revelation, and/or

7.2 *Other Eschatological Upheavals* which disturb the order of nature or history.

8 *Eschatological Judgment* and/or *Destruction.* This comes upon

8.1 The *Wicked,* brought about by divine intervention.

8.2 The *World,* that is, the natural elements.

8.3 *Otherworldly Beings,* for example, the forces of Satan or Belial, or fallen angels, or the Watchers.

9 *Eschatological Salvation,* may involve

9.1 *Cosmic Transformation,* where the entire world is redeemed or renewed, or

9.2 *Resurrection,* in bodily form, or

9.3 *Other Forms of Afterlife,* for example, exaltation to heaven with angels or delivery to an intermediate state of rest.

Content: Spatial Axis

10 *Otherworldly Elements:*

10.1 *Otherworldly Regions* are described especially in the otherworldly journeys, but also in lists of revealed things or in contexts of theophanies in the heavenly temple.

10.2 *Otherworldly Beings,* angelic or demonic.

Concluding Elements

11 *Prophetic Call,* the recipient's initial call to represent Deity.

11.1 *Commission,* the call and response of the recipient to the heavenly council to go forth and publish the divine will.

11.2 *Instructions to Recipient,* tell the recipient to either publish his revelation or conceal it, also to inform him of his field of labor.

12 *Rejection,* the refusal of the people to heed the prophet's message.

13 *Narrative Conclusion.* This may describe the awakening or return to earth of the recipient, the departure of the revealer or the consequent actions of the recipient.

APPENDIX 2
Apocalyptic Works 250 B.C.E.–250 C.E.

Jewish

Daniel
I Enoch 1–36
Animal Apocalypse
Apocalypse of Weeks
Similitudes of Enoch
4 Ezra
2 Baruch (Syriac)
3 Baruch (Greek)
Apocalypse of Abraham
Heavenly Luminaries
2 Enoch
Testament of Levi
Testament of Abraham
Apocalypse of Zephaniah

Christian

Jacob's Ladder
Revelation
Apocalypse of Peter
Shepherd of Hermas
Apocalypse of Elchasai
Apocalypse of St. John Theologian
Testament of the Lord
5 Ezra
Testament of Isaac
Testament of Jacob
Questions of Bartholomew
Book of Resurrection of Jesus Christ by Bartholomew the Apostle 8b–14b, 17b–19b
Ascension of Isaiah
Apocalypse of Paul
Apocalypse of Ezra
Apocalypse of the Virgin
Apocalypse of Zosimus
Apocalypse of Holy Mother of God
Concerning the Punishments
Apocalypse of James, Brother of Jesus
Mysteries of St. John the Apostle and the Holy Virgin
Apocalypse of Sedrach
Mark 13

Christian—Continued

Sibylline Oracles
6 Ezra
Apocalypse of Elijah
Apocalypse of Thomas
Testament of Adam
Didache 16

Gnostic

Apocalypse of Adam
The Allogenes CG XI, 3
Melchizedek CG IX, 1
Sophia of Jesus Christ CG III, 4; BG 8502
Apocryphon of John CG II, 1; III, 1; IV, 1; BG 8502
Gospel of Mary BG 8502
Hypostasis of the Archons CG II, 4
First Apocalypse of James CG, V, 3
Apocalypse of Peter CG VII, 3
Letter of Peter to Philip CG VIII, 2
Hypsiphrone CG XI, 4
Pistis Sophia
Paraphrase of Shem CG VII, 1
Zostrianos CG VIII, 1
Apocalypse of Paul CG V, 2
Thomas the Contender CG II, 7
Dialogue of the Savior CG III, 5
I Book of Jeu
II Book of Jeu
The Thunder, Perfect Mind, CG VI, 2
Trimorphic Protennoia CG XIII, 1
Second Treatise of the Great Seth CG VII, 2
Concept of our Great Power, CG VI, 4
Apocryphon of James CG I, 2
Three Steles of Seth CG VII, 5
Acts of Peter and 12 Apostles CG VI, 1

Rabbinic

Hekalot Rabbati
Merkaba Rabba
Sefer Hekalot (3 Enoch)
Apocalypse of Elijah (Hebrew)
Chronicles of Jerahmeel
Revelation of Joshua ben Levi
Ascension of Moses
Visions of Ezekiel
Hekalot Zuttarti
Shiur Qoma
Ma'aseh Merkaba
Tractate Hekalot
Tosepta to the Targum of Ezekiel 1
Sefer Ha-Razim
Assumption of Moses
Revelation of Moses

Classical

The Poimandres
Parmenides
Plato, Republic 614b–621b
Heraclides Ponticus
Cicero, Somnium Scipionis
Seneca, Ad Marciam de Consolatione
Plutarch, De genio Socratis
Plutarch, De sera numinis vindicta
Lucian, Icaromenippus
Homer, Odyssey XI
Virgil, Aeneid VI
Lucian, Nekyomanteia and Kataplous
Euhemerus, Hiera Anagraphe
Plato, Axiochus
Plutarch, De facie in orbe lunae
The Demotic Chronicle
The Lamb to Bocchoris
The Asclepius "Apocalypse"
Asclepius, 1–41
The Kore Kosmou
Orpheus, Hieroi Logoi
Lycophron, Alexandra

For codices labeled *CG* and *BG*, see James M. Robinson, ed., *The Nag Hammadi Library*, (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1981), v–xv.

This appendix was adapted from the index in *Semeia* 14 (1979): 219–21. This issue of *Semeia* includes discussions and bibliographies of these and other apocalyptic works.

APPENDIX 3

Jewish Apocalypses

Asterisks indicate either
(1) that the element is possibly but not certainly present, or
(2) it is implicit, or
(3) it is minor.

Manner of Revelation		Isaiah 6	Ezekiel 1-4	Alma 36	1 Nephi 1-2	Test. Abraham 10-15	3 Baruch	Test. Levi	2 Enoch	Heavenly Luminaries	Apoc. Abraham	2 Baruch	4 Ezra	Jubilees 23	Apoc. of Weeks	Animal Apocalypse	1 Enoch 1-36 (14)	Daniel	% of Total
1.1.1	Visions	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	.94
1.1.2	Epiphanies	x	x		x	x			x		x						x	x	.47
1.1.3	Theophanies	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x						x	x	.65
1.2.1	Discourse								x	x				x	x			x	.29
1.2.2	Dialogue/Questioning	x	x		x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x					x	.65
1.3	Otherworldly Journey					x	x	x	x	x	x								.35
1.4	Heavenly Book(s)		x		x			x	x	x			x	x		x		x	.57
2.1	Otherworldly Mediator	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	100
2.2	Divine Encounter		x	x	x	x			x		x						x	x	.47
3.1	Pseudonymity					x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	.76
3.2	Intercessory Prayer				x		x	x	x*		x	x	x				x	x	.57
3.3	Disposition of Recipient		x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x					x	.65
3.4	Reaction of Recipient	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x				x	x	.76
4.	Ascension				x	x	x	x	x		x					x	x		.47
	Temporal Axis																		
5.1	Cosmogony								x			x	x						.17
5.2	Primordial Events						x		x		x	x	x				x		.35
6.1	Recollection of Past			x							x	x	x						.24
6.2	Historical Prologue	x	x		x		x*	x	x			x	x					x	.57
6.3	Ex eventu Prophecy	x	x	x*	x						x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	.71
7.1	Persecution	x	x	x	x							x	x	x		x	x	x	.59
7.2	Eschatological Upheaval							x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	.59
8.1	Judgement/Destruction of wicked	x	x	x*	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	100
8.2	of world								x	x	x				x				.24
8.3	of heavenly beings							x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x		x	.57
9.1	Cosmic Transformation				x*			x	x	x	x	x	x	x*	x	x*	x	x	.71
9.2.1	Resurrection										x	x	x			x*		x	.29
9.2.2	Other types of afterlife			x	x*	x	x	x	x	x	x			x	x*	x	x		.71
	Spatial Axis																		
10.1	Otherworldly Regions	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			x	x	x	.88
10.2	Otherworldly Beings	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	100
	Concluding Elements																		
11.1	Commission	x	x		x*			x	x		x		x				x	x	.57
11.2	Instruction to Recipient	x	x	x	x			x	x		x	x	x				x	x	.65
12	Rejection	x	x	x	x			x				x	x					x	.47
13	Narrative Conclusion		x		x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x			x		x	.65
	Percentage of Total	.45	.58	.45	.73	.45	.52	.70	.85	.45	.79	.73	.70	.73	.36	.36	.61	.79	

Adapted from John J. Collins, "The Jewish Apocalypses," *Semeia* 14 (1979): 28.

NOTES

[1]Hugh Nibley, "To Open the Last Dispensation," in *Nibley on the Timely and the Timeless,* ed. Truman G. Madsen (Provo: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 1978), 4.

[2]Norman Habel, "The Form and Significance of the Call Narratives," *Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 77 (December 1965): 323: "The goal of the prophetic formulation of the call in this *Gattung* is to announce publicly that Yahweh commissioned the prophet in question as His representative." The German school of form criticism has produced a number of studies defining literary genre and patterns associated with prophetic calls. See especially Walther Zimmerli, "Form-und Traditionsgeschichte der prophetischen Berufungserzahlungen," in *Ezechiel,* 2 vols. (Neukirchen: Neukirchener Verlag, 1955), 1:14–25. I will refer to the now available English translation of this work: *Ezekiel,* trans. Ronald Clements, 2 vols. (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979). All notes are from the first volume of this work. See also Georg Fohrer, "Die Gattung der Berichte über symbolische Handlungen der Propheten," *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 64, no. 1 (1952): 101–20; "Die Hauptprobleme des Büches Ezechiel," *Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 72 (1967): 65–80; Ernst Kutsch, "Gideons Berufung und Altarbau Jdc. 6, 11–24," *Theologische Literaturzeitung* 2 (February 1956): 75–83; Hans Walter Wolff, "Erkenntnis Gottes im Alten Testament—Hauptprobleme alttestamentlicher Prophetie," *Evangelische Theologie* 15 (1955): 446–68; Friedrich Horst, "Die Visionsschilderungen der alttestamentlichen Propheten," *Evangelische Theologie 20 (1960): 193–205;* Wolfgang Richter, *Die sogenannten vorprophetischen Berufungsberichte* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1970); J. Kenneth Kuntz, *The Self Revelation of God* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1967), 45–168. Form criticism is the isolation, analysis, and interpretation of oral or literary forms underlying written texts. Form criticism is based on the assumption that the structure and language of written texts often reflect ritual and literary patterns. Hence, form-critical investigation attempts to discover the original oral, ritual, and literary sources underlying the written narrative by reconstructing the pattern common to the sources. Because literary genre inevitably reflects the socio–cultural and historic origins of the work in question, form criticism is a useful tool in determining the place, time, and purpose of composition of a work. See, generally, John H. Hayes, *Old Testament Form Criticism* (San Antonio, Tex.: Trinity University Press, 1974).

[3]Edward T. Jones, "A Comparative Study of Ascension Motifs in World Religions," in *Deity and Death,* ed. Spencer J. Palmer (Provo: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 1978), 81; see also Francis T. Fallon, *The Enthronement of Sabaoth: Jewish Elements in Gnostic Creation Myths,* in *Nag Hammadi Studies* 10 (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1978), 38–67.

[4]Ivan Engnell, *The Call of Isaiah* (Uppsala: A–B Ludequistska, 1949), 30–33; *The Interpreter's Bible* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1956), 5:204–7, 7:46–47; Aubrey R. Johnson, *Sacral Kingship in Ancient Israel* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1967), 64.

[5]Zimmerli, *Ezekiel* 1:16–21; Habel, "Significance of the Call Narratives," 297–309; Matthew Black, "The Throne-Theophany Prophetic Commission and the Son of Man," in *Jews, Greeks and Christians: Religious Cultures in Late Antiquity,* ed. Robert Hammerton–Kelly and Robert Scroggs (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1976), 57–73. It should be noted that Black's purpose is not to delineate the prophetic call form, but to date the Son of Man doctrine.

[6]Klaus Baltzer, "Considerations Regarding the Office and Calling of the Prophet," *Harvard Theological Review* 61 (October 1968): 568.

[7]Ibid., 568; see also Habel, "Significance of the Call Narratives," 297.

[8]Baltzer, "Office and Calling of the Prophet," 568.

[9]Gerhard Von Rad, *The Message of the Prophets* (New York: Harper and Row, 1967), 33–34.

[10]Black, "The Son of Man," 58ff.; see also Zimmerli, *Ezekiel* 1:97–110.

[11]Black, "The Son of Man," 59.

[12]Von Rad, *Message of the Prophets,* 43.

[13]Benjamin Jerome Hubbard, *The Matthean Redaction of a Primitive Apostolic Commissioning: An Exegesis of Matthew 28:16–20* (Missoula, Mont.: Society of Biblical Literature and Scholar's Press, 1974), 25–67. The auditory form of prophetic call is also found at Gen. 11:28–30, 12:1–4a, 15:1–6, 17:1–14, 24:1–9, 26:23–25, 28:10–22, 35:9–15, 41:37–45, 46:1–5a; Ex. 3:1–4:16, 6:2–13, 7:1–6; Num. 22:22–35; Deut. 31:14–31; Josh. 1:1–11; Judg. 4:4–10, 6:11–24; 1 Sam. 3:1–4:1a; 1 Kgs. 19:1–19a; Isa. 49:1–6; 1 Chr. 22:1–16; Ezra 1:1–5.

[14]John J. Collins, "Toward the Morphology of a Genre," *Semeia* 14 (1979): 9. Until recently the genre apocalypse was thought to be a rather late development coming well after the Babylonian captivity. In recent years, however, the genre is recognized to have developed from and concurrently with the prophetic tradition. See Paul D. Hanson, "Jewish Apocalyptic against Its Near Eastern Background," *Revue Biblique* 78 (January 1971): 31–58; Frank Moore Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973), 326–46.

[15]*The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha,* ed. James H. Charlesworth, 2 vols. (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1983), 1:42. Translations of pseudepigraphic texts will be from this work unless otherwise indicated.

[16]Gershon G. Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism,* 3d ed. rev. (New York: Schocken Books, 1961), 46, 184; David Suter, *Tradition and Composition in the Parables of Enoch* (Missoula, Mont.: Scholar's Press, 1979), 16; Ephraim Isaac, "1 (Ethiopic Apocalypse of) Enoch (Second Century B.C.—First Century A.D.)," in Charlesworth, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* 1:6–7.

[17]James Rendel Harris, *Odes and Psalms of Solomon* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1909). The poet of the Odes, like the singer of the Thanksgiving Hymns at Qumran, is caught up to God's presence and joins the heavenly choir in praising God.

[18]Zimmerli, *Ezekiel* 1:101.

[19]Hosea 1:1; Joel 1:1; Micah 1:1; Zeph. 1:1; Jer. 1:1–4.

[20]Zimmerli, *Ezekiel* 1:100–101.

[21]Habel, "Significance of the Call Narrative," 310.

[22]Zimmerli, *Ezekiel* 1:113.

[23]In the Apocalypse of Abraham, Abraham's vision is stimulated by a liturgical prayer offered over a sacrifice (chap. 9ff.). In 1 Enoch, Enoch says, "I wrote down your prayers—so it appeared in vision—for your prayers will not be heard throughout all the days of eternity. . . . And your petitions on their behalf will not be heard—neither will those on your own behalf (which you offer) weeping (and) praying" (1 Enoch 14:4, 7). The Greek Apocalypse of Ezra also begins with a prayer to which an angel answers: "It came to pass in the thirtieth year on the twenty-second of the month, I was in my house and I cried out, saying to the Most High, 'Lord, grant (me) glory so that I may see your mysteries.' When night fell the angel Michael, the archangel, came" (1:1–3). Louis F. Hartman and Alexander DiLella see a liturgical background to prayers used in the Book of Daniel and the pseudepigrapha (*The Book of Daniel,* Anchor Bible Series [New York: Doubleday, 1978], 248).

[24]In 2 Enoch the heavenly messengers are described as follows: "Their faces were like the shining sun; their eyes were like burning lamps; from their mouths fire was coming forth; their clothing was various singing; their wings were more glistering than gold; their hands were whiter than snow" (2 Enoch 1:5, recension J). Compare 1 Enoch 14:9–12. The Apocalypse of Abraham describes the mediating angel Iaoel: "The appearance of his body was like sapphire, and the look of his countenance like chrysolite, and hair of his head like snow, and the turban upon his head like the appearance of a rainbow and clothing of his garments like purple." See pt. 2 of chap. 10 of George Herbert Box, *The Apocalypse of Abraham* (London: Society for Promotion of Christian Knowledge, 1919).

[25]In the Ascension of Isaiah, Isaiah seats himself upon a couch in the palace, "and while he was speaking with the Holy Spirit . . . he became silent, and his mind was taken up from him, and he did not see the men who were standing before him" (6:2ff.). In 2 Enoch, Enoch reports, "And I lay on my bed, sleeping. And, while I slept, a great distress entered my heart, and I was weeping with my eyes in a dream. And I could not figure out what this distress might be, nor what might be happening to me" (1:2–3, recension J). In the Testament of Levi, after Levi's prayer, "Then sleep fell upon me, and I beheld an high mountain, and I was on it. And behold, the heavens were opened, and an angel of the Lord spoke to me: 'Levi, Levi, enter!' " (1:5–6). Compare 1 Nephi 11:1: "As I sat pondering in mine heart I was caught away in the Spirit of the Lord, yea, into an exceedingly high mountain, which I never had before seen, and upon which I never had before set my foot. And the Spirit said unto me: Behold, what desirest thou?" (see also Ether 3:6–8). Von Rad notes, however, that this psychological effect of the vision is not unique to the call account because it is also found in secondary visions not involving a prophetic commission (see Von Rad, *Message of the Prophets,* 40).

[26]See Ascension of Isaiah 6:1–3. The bed or couch motif is not found in the context of call accounts in the Old Testament, but such a bed supporting the visionary recipient may be found in Dan. 2:28–29, 4:5–15, 7:1; 1 Sam. 3.

[27]David Syme Russell, *The Method and Message of Jewish Apocalyptic* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1964), 165–66.

[28]"And it came about, when I had spoken to my sons, those men called me. And they took me up onto their wings, and carried me up to the first heaven" (1 Enoch 3:1, recension J).

[29]The raising onto a different dimension of experience was thought to be quite literal by the pseudepigraphic authors. For ancient Jews there was a plurality of heavens. God dwelt in the highest. For many, there were seven heavens, derived from Babylonian cosmology. The belief in seven heavens is found in late 1 Enoch, 2 Enoch, Apocalypse of Abraham, Testament of Levi (Text "B"), and the Talmudic treatise Chagigah 12b. The emphasis on a plurality of heavens is also found in the Old Testament (Deut. 10:14; 1 Kgs. 8:27; Ps. 148:4). The emphasis in early 1 Enoch, the Testament of Levi, and early Christian sources, however, was upon three heavens. See Marius DeJonge, *The Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs* (Assen, Netherlands: N.p., 1953), 46; Andrew T. Lincoln, "Paul the Visionary," *New Testament Studies* 25 (1979): 212–18.

[30]Hanson, "Jewish Apocalyptic," 31–58; Julian Morgenstern, "The Gates of Righteousness," *Hebrew Union College Annual* 6 (1929); Samuel Henry Hooke, *The Origins of Early Semitic Ritual* (London: British Academy, 1938); Frederick James Hollis, "The Sun-Cult and the Temple at Jerusalem," in *Myth and Ritual,* ed. Samuel Henry Hooke (London: Oxford University Press, 1933); Aubrey R. Johnson, "Hebrew Conception of Kingship," in *Myth, Ritual and Kingship* (London: Oxford University Press, 1958), 228ff.; Ferdinand Dexinger, *Sturz der Göttersöhne; oder, Engel vor der Sintflut?* (Vienna: Verlag Herder, 1966), 33–60; E. Theodore Mullen, *The Assembly of the Gods,* Harvard Semitic Monograph (Chico, Calif.: Scholar's Press, 1980).

[31]H. Wheeler Robinson, "The Council of Yahweh," *Journal of Theological Studies* 45 (1944): 151–57; Frank Moore Cross, "The Council of Yahweh in Second Isaiah," *The Heavenly Council in Isaiah XL.13–21* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1971), 49–53; Hugh Nibley, "The Expanding Gospel," in *Nibley on the Timely and the Timeless,* 22–41. The statement that the heavens opened is found only in Ezekiel 1:1 in the Old Testament, but occurs many times in 1 Nephi and elsewhere in the Book of Mormon (see 1 Ne. 1:8; 11:14, 27, 30; 12:6; Hel. 5:48; 3 Ne. 17:24; 28:13). This phraseology exerted a great influence in the pseudepigraphic genre, evidenced in the Syriac Apocalypse of Baruch 22:1; Testament of Levi 2:6, 5:1, 18:6; Testament of Judah 24:2; 3 Maccabees 6:18.

[32]Russell, *Message and Method,* 168.

[33]Mullen, *Assembly of the Gods,* 156–68, 274–78. The vision of God on his throne attended by the heavenly council is found in 1 Enoch no less than five times: 14:18–22; 47:1–3 (Enoch "saw him—the Antecedent of Time, while he was sitting upon the throne of his glory, and the books of the living ones were open before him. And all his power in heaven above and his escorts stood before him"); 60:1–3; 71:5–14; 90:20–37; 102:3. The scene in the Ascension of Isaiah (11:32–33) of Christ on the right hand and the Holy Spirit on the left hand of the Father demonstrates a well developed tri-theism wherein the Son was subordinate to the Father, and the Spirit to the Son. See Robert Henry Charles, *The Ascension of Isaiah* (London: Adam and Black, 1900), p. *l*: "I saw Him sit down on the right hand of that Great Glory whose glory I told you that I could not behold. And also the angel of the Holy Spirit I saw sitting on His left."

[34]Cross, *Canaanite Myth,* 274, n. 1; compare Mullen, *Assembly of the Gods,* 195–97, 217–19.

[35]Compare Hugh Nibley, *Since Cumorah* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1973), 172–73. "And then the Lord will raise up a new priest to whom all the words of the Lord will be revealed. He shall effect the judgment of truth over the earth for many days. And his star shall rise in heaven like a king; kindling the light of knowledge as day is illumined by the sun. And he shall be extolled by the whole inhabited world" (Testament of Levi 18:2–3). "The stars shone in their watches, and were glad. . . . They shone with gladness for him who made them" (Baruch 3:34).

[36]Georg Widengren, *The Ascension of the Apostle and the Heavenly Book,* 7 (Uppsala: Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis, 1950), 22–39; Russell, *Message and Method,* 108: "The apocalyptic writers indicate that these divine revelations—disclosed in direct visions by angelic mediation or the heavenly tables—were written down by ancient seers and preserved in their sacred books. Like the heavenly tablets themselves, the books revealed not only what had been, but also what would be and related the whole purpose of God for the universe from creation to the end-time. They had been hidden away for many generations and handed down in a long line of secret tradition, faithfully preserved until the 'last days,' these books are now being revealed to the faithful people of God."

[37]Ibid., 7.

[38]In Jubilees 32:21–22, from Bethel, Jacob "saw in a vision of the night, and behold an angel was descending from heaven, and there were seven tablets in his hands. And he gave (them) to Jacob, and he read them, and he knew everything which was written in them, which would happen to him and to his sons during all the ages." Ezra dictated many books concerning the earth's past and future at the behest of an angel (4 Ezra 14). Levi read tables which told what would befall Israel (Testament of Levi 5:4).

[39]"Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory" (Isa. 6:3). "Then the spirit took me up, and I heard behind me a voice of a great rushing, saying, Blessed be the glory of the Lord from his place" (Ezek. 3:12). See Simeon Singer, *The Authorised Daily Prayer Book* (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1929), 39; and Suter, *Tradition and Composition,* 18–19.

[40]Mullen, *Assembly of the Gods,* 209–26.

[41]Chapter 39 of the Similitudes is a commentary on Enoch's throne-vision and commission in 1 Enoch 14–16. The *Qedussa* in 1 Enoch 39 has six elements in common with 1 Ne. 1:14: (1) the pause in 1 Enoch 39:10a ("And I gazed at that place [under his wings], and I blessed and praised") is nearly identical to Nephi's pause ("And it came to pass that when my father had read and seen many great and marvelous things, he did exclaim many things unto the Lord"); (2) the praise of the might and attributes of God in 1 Enoch 39:11 corresponds with the praise of God's power and goodness in 1 Ne. 1:14; (3) Enoch's ecstatic utterances at seeing God's abode in the high heavens in 1 Enoch 39:3–8 are similar to Lehi's exclamation of praise to God immediately subsequent to seeing his throne "high in the heavens"; (4) the seers praise God in both 1 Enoch 39:11 and 1 Ne. 1:14; (5) God's sovereignty over the whole earth is recognized in both 1 Enoch 39:12 ("Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord of the Spirits; the spirits fill the earth," dependent on Isa. 6:3) and 1 Ne. 1:14 ("Great and marvelous are thy works, O Lord God Almighty! . . . And thy power, and goodness, and mercy are over all the inhabitants of the earth"); and (6) the angels of the council in heaven sing continual praises to God in both 1 Enoch 39:13–14 and 1 Ne. 1:8, 14. Suter believes the Similitudes date from the first century B.C. (*Tradition and Composition,* 29).

[42]Habel, "Significance of the Call Narratives," 308–9. According to Zimmerli, "From the words of the canonical prophets it becomes increasingly clear that the fact of being sent out by God forms the basic authorization of the prophet. Neither the mastery of the mantic technique nor the possession of a particular psychic disposition distinguishes a man as a prophet, but only the fact of being sent by Yahweh. Thus, the word [*s-l-h*] appears at the decisive point in the call narratives (Isa. 6:8; Jer. 1:7). . . . It is therefore entirely to the point that the first divine word to Ezekiel should contain the statement of sending" (*Ezekiel* 1:132).

[43]Mullen, *Assembly of the Gods,* 216.

[44]Enoch is commissioned to teach his sons the contents of the heavenly books: "And now, Enoch, I am giving you a waiting period of 30 days to set your house in order and to instruct your sons and all the members of your household about everything from me personally, so that they may obey what is said to them by you. And they will read and understand that there is no other God apart from myself, so that they may carry out all your instructions and study the books in your handwriting accurately and attentively" (2 Enoch 36:1, recension J). Levi is commissioned to teach his sons of the heavenly journey: "Therefore counsel and understanding have been given to you so that you might give understanding to your sons concerning this" (Testament of Levi 4:5). Abraham is commissioned to teach his posterity of the vision: "See, Abraham, what you have seen, hear what you have heard, know what you have known. Go to your inheritance! And behold I am with you forever" (Apocalypse of Abraham 29:21). Isaiah and Habakkuk also receive a commission to write

their visions so that others might read of their experiences (Isa. 8:1; Hab. 2:2). However, in some of the apocalypses the book is to be sealed up and not opened until the end of time (Assumption of Moses 10:11).

[45]Hubbard, *Matthean Redaction,* 63–64.

[46]Von Rad, *Message of the Prophets,* 44.

[47]Zimmerli, *Ezekiel* 1:106.

[48]Marvin S. Hill, "Shaping the Mormon Mind in New England and New York," *Brigham Young University Studies* 9 (Spring 1969): 351–73; Timothy L. Smith, "The Book of Mormon in a Biblical Culture," *Journal of Mormon History* 7 (1980): 3–22.

[49]See, generally, George A. Starr, *Defoe and Spiritual Autobiography* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1965); Edmund S. Morgan, *Visible Saints: The History of a Puritan Idea* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1963); Daniel B. Shea, *Spiritual Autobiography in Early America* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1968).

[50]Neal E. Lambert and Richard H. Cracroft, "Emergence of a Fundamental: The Expanding Role of Joseph Smith's First Vision in Mormon Religious Thought," *Journal of Mormon History* 7 (1980): 31–42. See also Lawrence Foster's account of John Lyon's vision of God in 1802 ("First Visions," *Sunstone* [September–October 1983], 39–43); Lawrence Foster, *Religion and Sexuality: The Shakers, the Mormons and the Oneida Community* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981), 62–71.

[51]*Edward's and Dwight's Life of Brainerd* (New Haven: Yale, 1822), 45–57; Robert Philip, *The Life and Times of George Whitefield* (London: N.p., 1837); Henry Alline, *The Life and Journal of the Rev. Mr. Henry Alline* (Boston: Gilbert and Dean, 1806). See especially J. M. Bumsted, *Henry Alline, 1748–84,* in *Canadian Biographical Studies* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971), 31–41. The following early American visions of God conform to the spiritual conversion account: *Sketch of the Life of Elder Benjamin Putnam* (Woodstock, N.Y.: David Watson, 1821), 18–20; *Autobiography of Elder Jacob Knapp* (New York: Sheldon and Co., 1803), 14–15; *The Life of Elder Abel Thornton* (Providence: J. B. Yerrinton, 1828), 20–21; *A Discourse on the Life and Character of Rev. Alfred Bennett* (Homer, N.Y.: Rufus A. Reed, 1851), 9–10; *Memoirs of the Life and Travels of B. Hibbard* (New York: Privately printed, 1825), 22–25; *The Dealings of God, Man and the Devil in the Life, Experience and Travels of Lorenzo Dow* (Norwich, Conn.: Wm. Faulkner, 1833), 15–16; *Memoirs of the Life and Religious Experience of Roy Potter* (Providence: H. H. Brown, 1829), 120–23; *Memoirs of Rev. Jesse Lee* (New York: N. Bangs and T. Mason, 1823), 607; *The Life, Conversion, Travels, Preaching and Sufferings of Elias Smith,* 2 vols. (Dartmouth, N.H.: Privately printed, 1816), 58–60; *Memoirs of Rev. Charles G. Finney* (New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1832), 18–20; *The Narrative of Eleazer Sherman* (Providence: H. H. Brown Co., 1830), 18–20; *Life and Observations of Rev. E. F. Newell* (Worcester, Mass.: C. W. Ainsworth, 1847), 10–12; Rev. Frederic Denison, ed., *The Evangelist: or, Life and Labors of Rev. Jabez S. Swan* (Waterford, Conn.: William L. Peckham, 1873), 50–51; *Autobiography of Elder Henry Kendall* (Portland, Maine: Privately printed, 1853), 14–16; Lucious Matlock, *The Life of Rev. Orange Scott* (New York: C. Prindle and L. C. Matlock, 1847), 9–10; *Tears of Contrition: Sketches of the Life of John W. Maffitt* (New London, Conn.: Samuel Green, 1821), 49–51; Daniel O. Morton, ed., *Memoir of Rev. Levi Parsons* (Poultney, Vt.: Smith and Shute, 1824), 18–19; *Memoirs of Elder Elijah Shaw* (Boston: L. J. Shaw, 1852), 21–22; John Buzzell, *The Life of Elder Benjamin Randal* (Limerick, Maine: Hobbs and Woodman, 1827), 18–21; *Autobiography of a Pioneer: Rev. Jacob Young* (Cincinnati: Hunt and Eaton, 1857), 46–47; "Nathan Cole's Spiritual Travels," cited in Daniel Shea, *Spiritual Autobiography,* 208–21; *Sketches of the Late Rev. Samuel Hopkins* (Hartford, Conn.: Hudson and Goodwin, 1805), 35; George Peck, *Early Methodism within the Bounds of the Old Genesee Conference from 1788–1828* (New York: Green and Porter, 1860), 185–86; *A Sketch on the Life of Stephen H. Bradley* (Madison, Conn.: N.p., 1830), 7–8.

[52]James B. Allen, "The Early Accounts of Joseph Smith's First Vision," *BYU Studies* 9 (Spring 1969), 279–80. Compare Joseph's account especially with that of Stephen Bradley.

[53]*Life of Elias Smith,* 59: "My mind seemed to rise in that light to the throne of God and the Lamb." Peck, *Early Methodism,* 185: "While I was there knelt before the Lord, with the eye of my mind directed heavenward, a straight gate opened to my view, which it seemed I had entered; and directly before me a beautiful narrow way opened, ascending to the throne of God."

[54]Stephen Bradley, George Whitefield, Lorenzo Dow, Jacob Knapp, and Benjamin Putnam.

[55]The restraint in the description of Deity in Ezekiel's account is evidenced by a succession of phrases denoting approximate similarity, rendered in the King James Version as "the likeness as the appearance of a man" (Ezek. 1:26), and "the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord" (Ezek. 1:28). The tentative nature of Ezekiel's account was translated into the very language used by Lehi in the work of an Alexandrian dramatist of the second century B.C. known as Ezekiel the Tragedian: "Methought upon Mount Sinai's brow I saw a mighty throne that reached high to heavens high vault, whereon there sat a man of noblest mien wearing a royal crown; whose left hand held a mighty sceptre; and his right hand to me made sign; and I stood forth before the throne" (Eusebius, "Preparatio Evangilica 43:1," *Eusebii Pamphili, Evangelicae Preparationis,* trans. E. H. Gifford, 4 vols. pt. 1 (Oxford: N.p., 1903), 3:470.

[56]S. Kent Brown, "Lehi's Personal Record: Quest for a Missing Source," *BYU Studies* 24 (Winter 1984): 19–42.