



The Tabernacle Pre-Figured: Cosmic Mountain Ideology in Genesis and Exodus

By L.M. Morales

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Summary: In the ancient Near East, where cosmos and cult were of a piece, temples were the architectural embodiment of the cosmic mountain. This monograph explores how the mountain narratives of the Hebrew Bible canonically preceding the establishment of the tabernacle cultus may therefore serve to prefigure that cultus. Examining the creation, deluge, and exodus accounts in light of cosmic mountain ideology, the study develops a cosmogonic pattern of being delivered through the waters to the mountain of God for worship. As a symbol for approaching the divine Presence, this pattern is ultimately cultic, and includes a gate liturgy running as an undercurrent through each narrative. Moses alone, for example, is permitted ascent to the summit of Sinai, a role later mimicked by the high priest's annual entrance into the holy of holies. From Adam's descent of the holy mountain to the high priest's "ascent" of the architectural mountain of God, The Tabernacle Prefigured makes a compelling case that to dwell in the divine Presence via the tabernacle cultus presents a mediated return to the original telos of the cosmos.



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