

Squares

*"Be square with your neighbors, plumb with Heaven and level with yourself,"
Jeffrey R Holland, October 2012*

*"Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."
Matthew 5:48*



*The perfect square, when "amplified into a cube, was the symbol of truth, because from whatever point of view it may be contemplated it is always the same"
Maurice H. Farbridge, Studies in Biblical and Semitic Symbolism*

Concentric Squares

"And the altar shall be twelve cubits long, twelve broad, square in the four squares thereof." Ezekiel 43:16

The Tabernacle served as a portable temple for the children of Israel. It was always erected at the center of the camp. Centered within its walls was The Holy of Holies with the Ark of the covenant at the center.

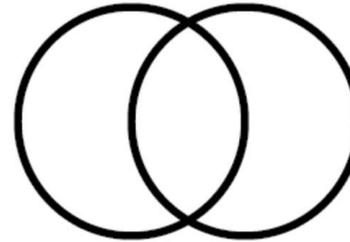
*"Temples are unique among all buildings. ... They are places of covenants and promises. At their altars we kneel before God our Creator and are given promise of his everlasting blessings"
Gordon B. Hinckley*

- What are you doing now so that you will be worthy to kneel at the altar to be sealed?

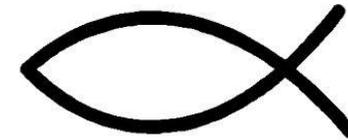


Notice the fence which surrounds the temple grounds. Look at the top of the fence and the shape that is on top of the fence.

- Think about the shape. What does it bring to mind?



That arch shape is created when two circles intersect. A circle does not have a beginning or end and can remind us of eternity. Our life here on earth can be thought of as the intersection of our pre-mortal and post-mortal lives.



Turn that symbol sideways and you should notice a symbol you see frequently. This symbol has been used for centuries to represent Christ.

"Joseph Gibby, a Los Angeles artist and technical illustrator, received the assignment to paint for the baptistery a mural depicting the Savior's baptism. As this work neared completion, the artist experienced a problem, so went to visit with President David O McKay. 'I cannot paint the Savior's face to my satisfaction. I need to know his complexion and coloring.' Without hesitation the prophet described the Savior's features for the artist."

Temples to Dot the Earth

- What has Christ done in our premortal, earthly and postmortal lives so that you and others can progress?
- The fence around the Temple protects it from desecration. We make covenants in the temple. How do those covenants provide protection to you?

Fountains

You will find fountains as you enter temple grounds. Go sit beside one of the fountains. Notice that the water is continually flowing. Next time you are in the temple notice that the water in the baptismary is also continually flowing.

- **What might the continuous flow represent to you?**

"The woman saith unto him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence then hast thou that living water? Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle? Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." John 4: 11-14

- **What is the water that Christ provides you?**



"How long can rolling waters remain impure? What power shall stay the heavens? As well might man stretch forth his puny arm to stop the Missouri river in its decreed course, or to turn it up stream, as to hinder the Almighty from pouring down knowledge from heaven upon the heads of the Latter-day Saints. "
D & C 121:33

- **How does your activity in the church help you stay pure?**

Architectural Patterns

"From the clothing worn in the temple to the decor, to the ceremonies performed there, symbolism plays a central role in teaching us about our true nature and the divine plan God has for our exaltation."

Why Symbols, Liahona 2007

Take a look around the building and notice the shapes that are repeated in the architecture. Prominent are squares, connected squares, squares within squares, interposed circles with squares and pyramids. The interior of the temple includes these same designs in the furnishing. Notice these patterns next time you attend the temple.

As with other symbols there is not one meaning connected with each symbol. Following is just a very brief list of what other people and religions have seen in these symbols. Study and personal revelation can help you to discover what these symbols can teach you. Look for these symbols and as you do ask the following questions:

- **Why did the Lord chose this symbol to be placed in the architecture of the temple?**
- **What does this symbol teach you about the great work that is done in this and other temples?**
- **How can you live your life so that you can qualify for the blessings received in the temple?**
- **What commitments can you make so that you can be blessed by priesthood ordinances and bring those blessings to others?**

Palm Trees

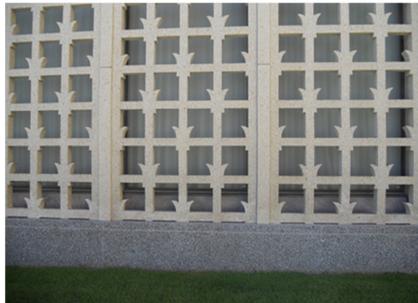
"On the next day much people that were come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, Took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried, Hosanna: Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord." John 12:12-13

"From the ground unto above the door were cherubims and palm trees made, and on the wall of the temple." Ezekiel 41:20



"Hosanna: At the Feast of Tabernacles, which celebrated the Lord's deliverance of Israel into the promised land, people chanted the words of Psalm 118 and waved palm branches. At the Lord's triumphal entry into Jerusalem, the multitudes cried "Hosanna" and spread palm branches for Jesus to ride upon, thus demonstrating their understanding that Jesus was the same Lord who had delivered Israel anciently. These people recognized Christ as the long-awaited Messiah." Guide to the Scriptures

Palm trees surround temples that are located in climates that will support their growth. The date palm was the symbol of the tree of life in many cultures. Because they grow tall and straight they can be seen from long distances. In a desert this tall tree would be the first sign to a traveler that an oasis with life giving water is there.



- How do you show others that you recognize Christ as the Messiah and the giver of eternal life?
- How can you share your testimony of Christ so that you are a beacon to others?

He Has Walked These Paths

Walk the paths that lead from the front gates. Notice the trees that line these paths. Count the number of trees along the paths.

- What might these numbers symbolize? *
- You are standing among olive trees. Where in the scriptures have you read about olive trees?



"And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives. Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder. And he went a little further, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt." Matthew 26: 30, 36, 39

"For behold, I, God, have suffered these things for all, that they might not suffer if they would repent; But if they would not repent they must suffer even as I; Which suffering caused myself, even God, the greatest of all, to tremble because of pain, and to bleed at every pore, and to suffer both body and spirit—and would that I might not drink the bitter cup, and shrink—Nevertheless, glory be to the Father, and I partook and finished my preparations unto the children of men." D & C 19:16-19

"In Aramaic, the word gethsemane means olive press." Bible Dictionary

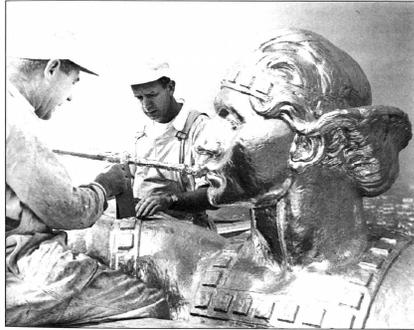
- As you walk away from the gate where are you pointing and what have you turned your back on?
- Who helps you to stay on the straight and narrow path?
- When has the Spirit borne witness to you that the Savior suffered for you because of his personal love for you?

** There are 10 trees on one path and 12 on the other for those unable to go and count them yourself :)*

Angel Moroni

"And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people." Revelations 14:6

The statue of the Angel Moroni is placed on top of all but 5 Temples. Take a close look if you can at the statue and see if you can tell what he is wearing and what he is holding. The LA Temple has the only statue where Moroni is dressed in Mayan style clothing.



"The 15½-foot figure of the angel Moroni, sculpted by Millard F. Malin, was placed atop the temple in October 1954. During one of his frequent visits to the temple, President David O. McKay noticed that the angel faced southeast as did the temple. He informed architect Edward O. Anderson 'that it was not correct in that position...that the angel must face east.' The angel had generated much conversation among the neighbors, and one indicated, perhaps tongue in cheek, that she 'certainly never would be interested [in learning more about the Church] until the angel faced her home.' One morning she awoke to find the statue was 'looking directly at her place.' Brother Anderson had followed President McKay's instructions to turn the angel."

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- Why do you think the statue needed to face east?

"For as the lightning (sunlight) cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."

Matthew 24:27

- The scriptures symbolize knowledge as light. What knowledge have you gained as you attend the temple?

Look at Moroni and notice what he is holding in his hand?

- What does the trumpet bring to your mind about your role in declaring the gospel?



Tree and flowers

"And the LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed." Genesis 2:8

"Gethsemane: A garden spoken of in the New Testament as being near the Mount of Olives..." Jesus went to the garden on the night that Judas betrayed him. There he prayed and suffered in Gethsemane for the sins of mankind." Bible Dictionary

"Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid." John 19:41



- Why do you think that so much expense and time is given to plant flowers and trees around temples?
- What do you feel when you step onto the temple grounds?
- How can you keep that feeling when you leave?