



The Gate of Heaven: The History and Symbolism of the Temple in Jerusalem

Margaret Barker

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The Gate of Heaven: The History and Symbolism of the Temple in Jerusalem Margaret Barker

In this book, first published in 1991, the prolific and innovative British biblical scholar Margaret Barker sets out to explore the origins and the afterlife of traditions about the Temple in Judaism. Using evidence from the deuterocanonical and pseudepigraphic texts, Qumran and rabbinic material, as well as early Christian texts and liturgies, she advances a host of radical and suggestive theories, including the following: 1. Apocalyptic writing was the temple tradition. 2. Temple buildings were aligned to establish a solar calendar, thus explaining the astronomical texts incorporated in 1 Enoch 3. The temple symbolism of priest and sanctuary antedated the Eden stories of Genesis. 4. The temple buildings depicted heaven and earth separated by a veil of created matter. 5. The throne visions, the basis of the later Merkavah mysticism, originated as high priestly sanctuary experiences, first attested in Isaiah but originating in the royal cult when king figures passed beyond the temple veil from earth into heaven, from immortality to the resurrected state, and then returned.

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