



# The Serpent and the Dove: Messianic Mysteries of the Mormon Temple

Written by Paul Toscano

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# Serpent and the Dove: Messianic Mysteries of the Mormon Temple

By Paul Toscano

## The Serpent And The Rainbow

In *The Serpent and The Dove*, Paul Toscano reclaims the Mormon temple endowment as a Messianic sacrament. In Part I: *The Gods of the Temple*, Toscano interprets the endowment as the final expression of Joseph Smith's innovative godhead teachings. In Part II: *The Mysteries of Godliness*, he provides a detailed analysis of the symbols of the ceremony. In Part III: *Restoring the Holy Order*, he lays out a blueprint for LDS Church organization and administration that is consonant with the temple's revelation of Messianic priesthood on both men and women alike. This work is not an expose, but a plea for a new direction—a temple-centered Messianic Mormonism for the Third Millennium."

A good friend asked me to read this book, having read many things by the Toscano's, apostates of the LDS church, I must admit I wasn't expecting a burst of heavenly enlightenment or some hidden mystical meaning brought to light. My expectations were on target. I can sum up this book in Paul Toscano's own words, pg 35 "work of imagination" and pg 100 "interpretation set forth in this book is easy to dismiss as a fantasy". Imagination and Fantasy - pretty much sums it up. He completely misconstrues Joseph Smith's teachings, presents his whimsical interpretation as fact in most places, doesn't present the real Adam-God teachings of Brigham, but comes up with his own ideas. If you're well grounded and need imagination and fantasy theology, it might be worth a skim, if you're not well grounded, don't get yourself confused by the philosophical babble. I would consider this a modern gnostic work and I happen to enjoy the gnostic teachings of the early Christian church, Jewish Kabbalah and other mystical fantasies created by man over the ages. However, it's a poor substitute for the real truth revealed by Joseph Smith and taught by the LDS church today. ...more

## The Serpent And The Rainbow Book

Clocking in at only 123 pages, this isn't a large book, which is good in a sense as the material presented can be a bit overwhelming at times. Having been raised Mormon, served an LDS mission and going through a crisis of faith, the book presents a snippet of familiarity without irreverence toward the topic that it discusses regardless if the author is considered an Apostate, a term which I feel is thrown around too loosely in the Mormon culture.

Within the pages the author presents through older church history what he feels is the true nature of the godhead as taught by Joseph Smith before his death and the comments of Brigham Young. And for the first time I've had the answer questioned on the topic of the Adam-God Theory, one that seemed to be glossed over or quickly dismissed at face value by apologists of Mormon history.

The value and thing that I took away most from this book is the degradation of women in the priesthood and the suggestion put forth that had Joseph Smith lived, that women would be recognized as having authority to hold the priesthood.

All this being said, I can't say I have skin in the game as to which side is correct in their assumptions of pure LDS doctrine, but I still hold interest in LDS history. Seeing that there is possibly another side just adds more layer to this peculiar American religious/cult movement. ...more

Written by Paul Toscano, one of the "September Six" group of "intellectuals" excommunicated from the LDS Church in 1993, this book claims "the Mormon temple endowment is a Messianic sacrament that cannot, upon close reading, be viewed narrowly as a magical ceremony, a Mosaic ritual, a secular Masonic rite, or a patriarchal artifact that subordinates women." The following is my take on the book. On the positive side: the book plays around with a number of ideas concerning various explanations Joseph Smith gave of God and who/what God is. The book also contains historical information that some may be unfamiliar with. On the negative side: the author is a former member who tries to interpret a sacred ritual for faithful current members. He reveals in detail the temple ritual and like many modern "intellectuals" he is obsessed with egalitarianism. He obviously has contempt for the LDS Church, referring to it as "corporate Mormonism," and believes those leading it have been heading in the wrong direction since the death of Joseph Smith. Although some of his interpretations are interesting, I disagree with much of what he has to say. Members of Ordain Women and various fringe Mormons on the far left will

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likely find much of interest here. However, most LDS Church members will be offended by what the author has to say. ...more

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