

The symbolism of the Sanctuary in Eden also extends to the Sanctuary's service. When the earthly Sanctuary was established, God appointed a priestly tribe, headed by a high priest, to the holy service (Exodus 28:1). When we examine the role of Adam in the Garden, we find that the terms used to describe his duties are unique to those of the priest in Leviticus, who officiated at the

Tabernacle and Temple. Genesis 2:15 describes for us Adam's responsibility in the Garden of Eden:

"The LORD God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to cultivate it and keep it." This translation does not adequately convey the proper sense of the work the man was commanded to perform; the phrase "cultivate it and keep it" would better be translated "serve it [the ground]¹³ and to guard¹⁴ it [the Garden]."¹⁵

The terms "work" (Hebrew, *avodah*) and "keep" (*shemirah*) suggest that Adam had been commissioned to act as a "servant of God" preserving and protecting the holy ground of the Garden-sanctuary from desecration, even as the Levites protected the Tabernacle and Temple.¹⁶ This desecration was certainly the intrusion of sin proceeding from the only possible act of disobedience (Genesis 2:17; 3:3,11), but also to ward off a deceiving presence such as was manifested through the serpent (Genesis 3:1, if this was known). This parallel between Adam and the Levites is supported by the fact that the only other uses of the verbs "serve" and "guard" as a pair are found in Numbers 3:7-8; 8:26; 18:5-6, where they are used to express the duties of the Levites in ministering in and guarding the Sanctuary. The Jewish sages evidently saw this identification, for in their commentary they identified the phrase "to work and to keep it" as "an allusion to sacrifices" (*Genesis Rabbah* 16:5). Apparently, some rabbis saw this charge to Adam as a priestly commission to offer sacrifices (even under perfect conditions; see concerning the Millennial conditions, chapter 23). A further association may be found in the statement in Genesis 3:21 that God made "tunics" for Adam and Eve from animal skins and "clothed them." This act is analogous to the accounts of Moses "clothing" (same verb) the priests in their "tunics" (same noun) at their ordination (Exodus 28:41; 29:8; 40:14; Leviticus 8:13).¹⁷ Adam, then, may have been the first and ideal priest, attending God's presence in the Garden in the same way as the Levites would the Tabernacle and Temple.

13. The pronominal suffix *he* ("the") on both *avar* ("work") and *shamar* ("keep") is feminine, while *gan* ("Garden") is masculine. This may simply be a case of variable gender in nouns denoting place (cf. Gesenius, Kautsch, Cowley, *Hebrew Grammar*, par. 1221) or, as I have opted, a reference to *'adamah* ("ground") or *'aretz* ("earth"), both of which are feminine. This seems the best option, since nowhere else is *gan* ("Garden") treated as feminine.

14. This is supported by the fact that the poetic synonym of *shamar* ("keep") is *nasar* ("to protect"), and that the same root is used in Genesis 3:24 of the action of the guardian cherubim: "...and stationed at the east of the Garden of Eden the cherubim...to guard the way to the tree of life," cf. this parallelism in Deuteronomy 33:9; Psalm 12:8 [English, verse 7]; 105:45; 119:34,55-56,145-146; 140:5 [English, verse 4]; 141:3; Proverbs 2:8,11: 4:6; 5:2; 27:18.

15. This translation has deliberately emphasized the more literal rendering of the terms in order to convey their cultic overtones. The normal meaning of *avar* is "to serve," while that of *shamar* is "to exercise great care over," or "to guard." A more stylized translation might be "to till and to tend," or the traditional "to dress and keep."