“Holiness to the Lord”
Temples Research Paper
Old Testament 301

“Temples are literally houses of the Lord” (First Presidency, 2004, 170). The Lord’s work is to bring back his children from this mortal experience (Moses 1:39). He has made this possible by providing temples wherein covenants are made with individuals, couples and families to return to him (Nelson, 2002, p. 17). It is essential that Heavenly Father’s children learn the significance of Temples (Benson, 1986, p. 1).

What are temples?

President Gordon B. Hinckley (1982) said, temple is a house of God, and he is Everlasting. It was he who required that special houses be built in which to administer these eternal ordinances. There is no adequate substitute on all the face of the earth (p. 4).

President Lorenzo Snow [1984] said, we feel when we go into these temples that we enjoy the Spirit of the Lord more fully than in any other place. They are the Lord buildings, and His most important work is carried on within their walls (p. 96).

What is the purpose of Temples?

ach of [the temples] has been built to one great eternal purpose: to serve as a House of the Lord, to provide a place sacred and suitable for the performing of holy ordinances that bind on earth as in heaven rdinances for the dead and for the living that assure those who receive them and who are faithful to their covenants, the possession and association of their families, worlds without end, and exaltation with them in the celestial kingdom of our Father (Smith, 1945, p. 561).

e are to receive in temples, through, temples, from temples, power from on high (D&C 95:8). Christ is the source of that power. The temple is His. Every symbol in and out of that
sacred structure points toward Him and, as a cup carries water, transmits the Holy Spirit
(Madsen, 1994, p. 118.)

the main object was to build unto the Lord a house whereby He could reveal unto His
people the ordinances of His house and the glories of his kingdom, and teach the people the way
of salvation; for there are certain ordinances and principles that, when they are taught and
practiced, must be done in a place or house built for that purpose (Joseph Smith, 5: 423).

e have now finished this temple, and some people inquire, what is for? For many things:
that our sealings and ordinances may be performed in a manner that will be acceptable before
God and the holy angel; that whatsoever is bound on the earth according to the laws of the
eternal priesthood shall be bound in the heavens; that there may be a connecting link between the
living and the dead (Taylor, [1948], p. 134).

Members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints enter temples to worship the
Lord Jesus Christ. Elder Wirthlin shares a good example of those who are dedicated in their
temple worship. "The Punta Arenas Chile Stake is the Church's southernmost stake anywhere on
this planet, its outermost borders stretching toward Antarctica. Any stake farther south would
have to be staffed by penguins. For the Punta Arenas Saints it is a 4,200-mile round-trip bus ride
to the Santiago temple. For a husband and wife it can take up to 20 percent of an annual local
income just for the transportation alone. Only 50 people can be accommodated on the bus, but
for every excursion 250 others come out to hold a brief service with them the morning of their
departure. Pause for a minute and ask yourself when was the last time you stood on a cold,
wind-swept parking lot adjacent to the Strait of Magellan just to sing with, pray for, and cheer on
their way those who were going to the temple, hoping your savings would allow you to go next
time? One hundred ten hours, 70 of those on dusty, bumpy, unfinished roads looping out through
Argentina's wild Patagonia. What does 110 hours on a bus feel like? I honestly don't know, but I do know that some of us get nervous if we live more than 110 miles from a temple or if the services there take more than 110 minutes. While we are teaching the principle of tithing to, praying with, and building ever more temples for just such distant Latter-day Saints, perhaps the rest of us can do more to enjoy the blessings and wonder of the temple regularly when so many temples are increasingly within our reach” (Holland, 2004, p. 31).

In the temples one learns and prepares. Elder Eyring (2002) said, "he real life we're preparing for is eternal life. Secular knowledge has for us eternal significance. Our conviction is that God, our Heavenly Father, wants us to live the life that He does. We learn both the spiritual things and the secular things 'so we may one day create worlds [and] people and govern them' (Spencer W. Kimball, The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball, ed. Edward L. Kimball [1982], 386). All we can learn that is true while we are in this life will rise with us in the Resurrection. And all that we can learn will enhance our capacity to serve. That is a destiny reserved not alone for the brilliant, those who learn the most quickly, or those who enter the most respected professions. It will be given to those who are humbly good, who love God, and who serve Him with all their capacities" (Eyring, 2002, p. 21).

**What is the importance of the temple?**

President Joseph Fielding Smith [1954-56] said, "marriage for eternity can be performed only in the temples. It cannot be performed anywhere else. Authority by which such marriages are solemnized must be vested in the one who performs the ordinances, by virtue of appointment by the one who holds the keys (2:73-74)."

President Heber J. Grant (1913) said, "one of the great works in this Gospel of salvation, devolving upon us as Saints, is to labor in the temples of God for the salvation of our dead (p.
Speaking to members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Elder Henry B. Eyring (2005) expounds upon this responsibility, "[The Lord] has trusted you by letting you hear the gospel in your lifetime, giving you the chance to accept the obligation to offer it to those of your ancestors who did not have your priceless opportunity. Think of the gratitude He has for those who pay the price in work and faith to find the names of their ancestors and who love them and Him enough to offer them eternal life in families, the greatest of all the gifts of God. He offered them an infinite sacrifice. He will love and appreciate those who paid whatever price they cold to allow their ancestors to choose His offer of eternal life." (p. 79)

**Why is there symbolism in the temple?**

Symbolism is found everywhere in the scriptures. Before Christ came to the earth, righteous men offered sacrifice in imilitude of the sacrifice of the Only Begotten of the Father (Moses 5:7). The Sacrament that members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints have the opportunity to partake of every week is another symbol of Jesus Christ sacrifice and in remembrance of the covenant they have made with God. During Christ mortal ministry, He spoke in parables one form of symbolic language. Symbolic Language conceals certain doctrinal truths from the wicked and thereby protects sacred things from possible ridicule. At the same time, symbols reveal truth to the spiritually alert (McConkie, et al.,1990, p. 1.)

Essential ordinances of the gospel symbolize the Atonement. Baptism by immersion is symbolic of the death, burial, and Resurrection of the Redeemer. Partaking of the sacrament renews baptismal covenants and also renews our memory of the Savior broken flesh and of the blood He shed for us. Ordinances of the temple symbolize our reconciliation with the Lord and seal families together forever. (Nelson, 1996, p. 35)
What are the blessings of the temple?

The importance of going to do work for the dead in the temples and the blessings accompanying this service is explained by President Wilford Woodruff (1897), e have blessings which have never been given to any other generation since the days of Jesus Christ and the Apostles . . . you hold the keys of the destiny of your father, your mothers, your progenitors, from generation to generation; you hold the keys of their salvation. God has put that power into you hands. (p. 47)

"Those only who have shared with us in the temple ordinances know for themselves the satisfaction there is in realizing that we are indeed co-workers with our Lord and Savior; that we bear a humble part in the great work of salvation; that we have the privilege of receiving and obeying the truth, and of securing to ourselves that happiness which the Gospel alone affords; and not only of performing these ordinances for ourselves, but of doing the necessary work for our parents and forefathers who have slept without the Gospel, that they may partake also of the waters of life, and be judged according to men in the flesh [see 1 Peter 4:6]. This is a privilege, a blessing, which no one can sense unless he is in possession of it. We are happy to know by our faith and feelings through the spirit of revelation within us that our labors have been accepted of the Lord. We have enjoyed ourselves exceedingly in the society of each other; the aged, the middle-aged and the youth have rejoiced and been made glad in this glorious work. (Young, [1997], pp. 300-301)

"The ideals of faith, hope, and charity are most evident in the holy temples. There we learn the purpose of life, strengthen our commitment as disciples of Christ by entering into sacred covenants with Him, and seal our families together for eternity across generations. Receiving our own endowment in a temple and returning frequently to perform sacred
ordinances for our kindred dead increases our faith, strengthens our hope, and deepens our charity. We receive our own endowment with faith and hope that we will understand the Lord's plan for His children, will recognize the divine potential within each of us as children of our Heavenly Father, and will be faithful to the end in keeping the covenants we make. Performing temple ordinances for the dead is a manifestation of charity, offering essential blessings to those who have preceded us, blessings that were not available to them during their mortal lives. We have the privilege of doing for them what they are unable to do for themselves. (Wirthlin, 1998, p. 27)

"At the funeral of Patriarch Joseph Smith Sr., his feelings about the temple were described in these words: 'To dwell in the house of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple, was his daily delight; and in it he enjoyed many blessings, and spent many hours in sweet communion with his heavenly Father. He has trod its sacred aisles, solitary and alone from mankind, long before the king of day has gilded the eastern horizon; and he has uttered his aspirations within its walls, when nature has been asleep. In its holy enclosures have the visions of heaven been opened to his mind, and his soul has feasted on the riches of eternity' (History of the Church, 4:194)." (Faust, 2005, pp. 62, 67)

**When were temples first on the earth?**

They have always been here, even since Adam! Let me suggest that the reason why temple building and temple worship have been found in every age, on every hand, and among every people, is because the gospel in its fullness was revealed to Adam, and that all religions and religious practices are therefore derived from the remnants of the truth given to Adam and transmitted by him to the patriarchs. The ordinances of the temple in so far as then necessary,
were given, no doubt, in those early days, and very naturally, corruptions of them have been handed down the ages. Those who understand the eternal nature of the gospel lanned before the foundations of the earth understand clearly why all history seems to revolve about the building and use of temples (Widtsoe, 1950, p. 163).

**Where are temples in the world and in relation to people?**

President Joseph F. Smith (1902) said, we hope to see the day when we shall have temples built in the various parts of the land where they are needed for the convenience of the people: for we realize that one of the greatest responsibilities that rest upon the people of God today is that . . . they may be joined together fitly in the bond of the New and Everlasting covenant from generation to generation: (p. 3).

Isaiah, a great Old Testament prophet said, and it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and *all nations shall flow unto it*. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths; for out of Zion shall o forth the law, and the work of the Lord from Jerusalem (Isaiah 2: 2-3, emphasis added).

**How can one prepare to enter into the temple?**

To begin with, one must be worthy to hold a temple recommend. President Harold B. Lee (1973) said, in one of the early revelations in this dispensation, it was made known by the Lord that it was His will that a holy House should be built with the promise that His glory would rest upon it and His presence would be here and He would come into it, and all the pure in heart that should come into it should see God on one condition. That condition was that they o not suffer any unclean thing to come into it, that it be not defiled ([D&C] 97:15-16.) Obedient to
that instruction these holy temples are carefully safeguarded, not because of the necessity of secrecy but because of the sacredness of the work performed therein, by forbidding those who by the measure of the Lord standards may be considered unclean in that they do not keep His commandments (p. 137).

President Howard W. Hunter (1994) said, "ru ly, the Lord desires that His people be a temple-motivated people. It would be the deepest desire of my heart to have every member of the Church be temple worthy. I would hope that every adult member would be worthy of nd carry current temple recommend, even if proximity to a temple does not allow immediate or frequent use of it (p. 5).

In order to qualify for a temple recommend, one must follow what is found in the 4th Article of Faith, written by Joseph Smith. One must have first, Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; second, Repentance; third, Baptism by immersion for the remission of sins; fourth, Laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost (Articles of Faith 1:4). One must feel that their hearts had been changed; that they had no more desire to do evil (Alma 19:33). One must become converted and say as Lamoni father did in Alma 18:8, "will give away all my sins to know thee."

In conclusion temples are essential because we are trying to save the living and the dead. The living can have their choice, the dead have not. Millions of them died without the Gospel, without the Priesthood, and without the opportunities that we enjoy. We shall go forth in the name of Israel God and attend to the ordinances for them. . . . We will build temples and officiate therein for those . . . who would have received the truth if they had had the opportunity. (Young 1954 P. 404)
Alma 18:8.

Alma 19:33.

Articles of Faith 1:4.


Doctrine & Covenants 95:8.


Isaiah 2: 2-3.


Moses 1:39.

Moses 5:7.


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