

In the Answer to Prayer for Covenant, the Lord has explained:

Whenever I have people who are mine, I command them to build a house, a holy habitation, a **sacred place** where my presence can dwell or where **the Holy Spirit of Promise** can minister, because it is in such a place that it has been ordained **to recover you, establish by my word and my oath your marriages, and endow my people with knowledge from on high** that will unfold to you the mysteries of godliness, **instruct you in my ways, that you may walk in my path.** (T&C 157:41.)

Marriage is necessary for the exaltation of the man and woman, and is ordained by me through the Holy Spirit of Promise, or in other words by my covenant, my law, and my authority... Like the marriage in Eden, **marriage is a sacrament for a sacred place, on holy ground, in my presence, or where the Holy Spirit of Promise can minister.** (T&C 157:39.)

The Holy Spirit of Promise and the Temple are intimately connected.

HOLY SPIRIT OF PROMISE

The Holy Spirit of Promise (HSP) should be considered a role, filled by anyone authorized by the Lord to prophesy or pronounce a promise, blessing or expectation upon an individual. It might also be referred to as the Spirit of truth, as defined in the Glossary. Because of the HSP, the promises made to others in an old book cannot be the basis for your expectations from God. Rather, you have promises made to you, in a covenant between you and God, through which you are personally entitled to receive promised blessings. Remember it makes no difference of the promises are made to you by God or by his authorized servants. From either source the promises are secure. Though connected to the sealing power of the Priesthood, one does not have to previously hold the sealing power in order to speak God's word. There is power to seal when moved by the Holy Ghost. Anyone can receive that authority on a case-by-case basis, whether a woman or a man.

The HSP can and does the following:

- Make one's calling and election sure; that is, it assures and confirms the promise of eternal life. Because it is God's word, sealed by the HSP, it is the testimony of Jesus to you.
- Is the power by which all covenants, relationships, associations, promises and expectations are established and made eternal or everlasting. Without it the HSP, none will endure beyond the grave. (T&C 157:37.)
- Make a marriage eternal, which is a requirement for salvation.
- At it's culmination, when you have received the Father and the Son, you have received the HSP. You become their child of Promise, the inheritor of all the Father has, a member of His family.

The bestowal of the HSP — or a promise given by God, through His word, which is then sealed by the HSP — must occur in mortality. Mortality is the time for faith and hope. A promise sealed by the HSP gives one a “firm hope”: Hope is established because God must keep His word... This hope is to be gained in mortality as a gift of faith to empower the recipient to be able to claim it in the next life. Mortality is the time and place for obtaining faith and hope. When out of this life, the season for faith has passed, and the opportunity for hope has ended. It cannot be developed there. All those who seek His glory will need to acquire His testimony to them that they are saved. They must acquire His Word... Those who fall short of this, and do not receive this witness from Christ in mortality, but receive it afterwards, will be heirs of the Terrestrial Kingdom.

THE ASCENT TO GOD

There are two ascents. One is temporary and happens when men are “caught up,” but then return to this world. It represents overcoming the world and returning the individual back to the presence of God. It is called “redemption from the fall” (Ether 1:13) because it brings the individual back into God's presence. That form of temporary ascent is designed to establish a covenant or promise related to the other, more gradual ascent through development of the individual. The temporary mortal

ascent secures a promise for the individual that they will be permitted to make the eternal ascent to where God and Christ dwell in the afterlife.

In this fallen world, the great challenge is to lay hold of the covenant right to ascend to God's throne (Rev. 3:20-21). It is true that God is no respecter of persons and everyone CAN, but the truth is that very few will obtain the covenant while in the flesh.

The purpose of a temple (meaning an actual temple commissioned, ordered, blessed, accepted and visited with His presence) is to substitute for the temporary ascent of a mortal into God's presence. After Eden, conveying the original Holy Order required either a temple or an ascent into heaven... A real temple becomes "Holy Ground" and the means for making available to faithful people in every state of belief and hope the opportunity to receive, by authorized means, the same covenant, obligation, association, expectation and sealing through an authorized and binding arrangement in sacred space. (THIS PARTICULAR POINT WILL ONLY BE MENTIONED HERE, THOUGH THERE IS MORE MATERIAL ABOUT IT IN THE PDF BELOW.)

WHY A TEMPLE? A number of statements have been made over the years in answer to this question:

- The purpose of a temple is to allow the communication of **great knowledge and greater knowledge**, to restore what has been lost since the time of Adam in order for people to rise up and receive the Holy Order.
 - There are at least three stages in the process of restoring knowledge. The first stage is to receive it, but that's just receiving it. Receiving it is not the same thing as the second stage, which is to comprehend it. It is possible that a man receive something without understanding what it was that he had received. Time and careful and solemn and ponderous thoughts are required to untangle what has been received in order to comprehend what it is that you have been given. But it is altogether something of a different order of magnitude, completely separate from that, to teach it. You can receive it, you can comprehend it, but you may not be able to teach it. When it finally does get taught, undoubtedly it will be taught in the manner that Joseph Smith was beginning to work on in Nauvoo that he never finished, at the time that he was taken. That is, by ceremony, by covenant. And this, too, by something given by God, and it to be established in a house that is acceptable to him...
- The temple is needed to **restore all things** back to the time of Adam, as well as to endow those who are adopted into the family of God to be **endowed with all the knowledge necessary** to be a worthy holder of the Holy Order and to become fathers (and mothers) of many nations through work for the dead.
 - « Today the status of "father of many nations" still applies to the Holy Order, but the process is inverted. Instead of being the father through descendants of the body, the Holy Order contains the right to redeem the dead. But the dead do not remain as ancestors ; [they] become posterity. The living members of the Holy Order are the fathers and mothers of the dead whom they redeem.»
- **Connecting ourselves to our Fathers who are in heaven** is one of the reasons for having a temple.
 - The Holy Order is familial. It does not involve establishing a church, but instead connecting together the Family of God, or in other words the Government of God. This can only be done in a temple prepared for that purpose. "I was shown that the spirits that rose were limited to a direct line back to Adam, requiring the hearts of the fathers and the hearts of the children to be bound together by sealing, confirmed by covenant and the Holy Spirit of Promise."
 - Joseph taught that the connection which would allow living men and women to endure the day of burning was intimately connected with a priestly tie between the living children and the coming "fathers" who will return in consuming glory. Joseph recognized that unless the living who greet them are recognized as "children" through adoption as a component of their priesthood, they will burn as stubble.
- We know the purpose of that house will be for the God of Jacob to **teach those people to walk in His ways...** It will be a facility where the God of Jacob will teach His pathway of ascent back to the Throne of God. Mankind will learn the

laws governing that pathway... It will include men and women, as husband and wife. They will be given understanding of things which the world cannot know because it is forbidden for the profane to obtain what God decrees for the righteous alone to maintain in holiness.

- The purpose of a temple (meaning an actual temple commissioned, ordered, blessed, accepted and visited with His presence) is **to substitute for the temporary ascent of a mortal** into God's presence.
 - The temple has only one real purpose: To convey God's promise to exalt those who experience it, provided they abide the conditions for exaltation. It portrays the real, second, eternal-form of ascent in a way that gives the initiate a promise that if they walk in the path shown them, they will arrive at the Throne of God in the afterlife.
 - The temple is a ceremony designed to teach you about the path back to God — the very same thing that the Book of Mormon teaches repeatedly. The path back to God is so that you can meet with and be instructed by our Savior. The purpose of our Savior is to prepare us in all things so that we can, at last, become Zion. Because if your heart is right and my heart is right, and if I'm looking to God and God only, and you're looking to God and God only, then the trivial things of having things in common are of so little import that they matter not... If you're faithful to the Lord, you have no reason to pick a fight with anyone else. Our Lord was a peacemaker. We ought to be peacemakers as well...
 - You come to receive an endowment, but receive through it a ceremonial instruction into the mysteries of God. You receive a wealth of information about the culture of the heavens and a symbolic treasury of principles to meditate upon drawing you nearer to God than any other ordinance of the Gospel... The Temple is a tool. But it is apparently a sadly underused and widely misunderstood tool.
 - A real temple is required for Zion because it is **the mechanism for reorienting society**. Through it, the standard of conduct for ordering peaceful lives is established, and society becomes centered on the temple for law, education, social structure, government and coexistence... A real temple is indispensable for Zion because such a society is always built upon a heavenly pattern of cooperation and equality, making a city of peace or city of righteousness possible. It is the means to provide people with the information necessary to allow them "to govern themselves."
 - A real temple is a repository for knowledge and learning. It will include a **library** for study, teaching and learning... One of the interesting things about the gathering into Zion is that, apparently, although there may be yet more revelations and commandments that roll out, apparently it will be in Zion where the "rich treasures" of the records of other scattered tribes are to be brought in order for that information or body of material to be reclaimed. If the revelations and the prophecies are correct, the records of the Jews and the records of the Nephites, they get gathered, and they are the first. But eventually there will be many others that get gathered in... The description that's given of bringing their rich treasures unto the children of Ephraim in the everlasting mountains is a description of bringing them into the place that will be built by a covenant people who have the legal right to the land... Last year I delivered a talk at the Sunstone Symposium titled "Other Sheep Indeed." In it I invited others with sacred writings to come and bring them. That invitation was first offered by Joseph Smith in 1840. He anticipated a temple to be built in Nauvoo to which records would be brought from all over the world: "...bring every thing you can bring and build the house of God and we will have a tremendous City which shall reverberate afar... then comes all the ancient records dig them up... where the Saints g[ather] is Zion." Not all of God's words are in the Bible. God has spoken to every nation (meaning every religious division of people). Truth is everywhere, among all people. If we love God and truth we will want to search for it. We will not be content to leave it unexplored and undiscovered. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after more righteousness. Blessed are those who are followers of righteousness, desiring to possess great knowledge and to be a greater follower of righteousness and to possess greater knowledge. And blessed are those who do not suppose the scriptures contain all of God's words and they (the Gods) have not provided more...
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CONCLUSION

There is a lot to consider here, All of that is included in the downloadable PDF, along with additional material.

Before closing, there's been a topic that's been used to close more than one of the Holy Order presentations: looking at us as individuals and as part of a greater community. I'd like to continue that and share some thoughts from all the study material below:

Though the prophetic pictures we have been given are terrible to contemplate, they are necessary events. We will finally end our ingratitude for each other, finally end our murmuring about each other, and then be willing to huddle together in gratitude as a result of these ordeals. We will at last find it necessary to share with each other, rather than divide into our socio-economic strata. We will rejoice in having each other as companions, rather than holding a critical and uncharitable attitude about one another. We will never arrive there voluntarily, but must be brought there by a chastening Lord, who will prepare our hearts through the refining fire preceding that return. So the Lord, in His mercy and wisdom, will grant us the difficulties which will bring us there. We will understand how adversity makes us better, and brings us closer to God... As the Prophet Joseph Smith was told in the prison-temple, experiencing and enduring are part of the essence of significant spiritual development, the end for which all serious disciples are to strive. The Missouri dungeon provided just such a tutoring mixture of obscurity, adversity, irony, and testimony.

The overwhelming majority of us will, ten minutes after death, regret we did not do more with this second estate. Our regrets will be because we did not seek more earnestly, pray more devoutly, fast more frequently, and gain a greater measure of truth and light than we gained here. Change that for yourself.

Remember that in Nauvoo the Lord offered to reconnect the saints, but clearly defined the condition for that to happen. It was necessarily an acceptable temple where He could come and restore the connection. The reconnection is ordinance-based and will require an acceptable temple before it goes beyond the single representative. First, ideas need to be advanced and accepted. Then second, we need to act on the ideas primarily by repenting and opening ourselves to the influence of God. Third, we have to be humble and patient and willing to practice the religion before we can have any hope of God deciding to gather us. Practical experience is absolutely necessary. Theories and pretensions are not going to get us anywhere. Everyone can theorize the virtues that are necessary to gather people together and live in harmony. Everyone can envision themselves as one of the residents of the City of Peace. But the practical experiences required to iron out our selfishness and competitiveness, so we can actually live in peace, is another order of magnitude harder... See, individual salvation and promises of eternal life are just that — they are individual. A restoration of the family of Israel requires more, including cooperation and inter-relationships that will be formed by God Himself. Promises made to individuals give the individual hope... We need to let God take the lead, and then we need to patiently await each step along the way. This is the stuff of which the prophecies speak, and it is the stuff that will be fulfilled. But the rights and the ordinances necessary to accomplish that — people in this generation don't even have a clue how that necessarily has to roll forth. But rest assured, it will. It will.

That was what he [Joseph] attempted to turn into a ritual to be housed in a temple, so that everyone in the ceremony could experience the same kind of angelic ministrants coming and talking to you and giving to you the obligation to live a higher life, and then a higher life still, and then yet another higher standard of conduct, until at last you're purified sufficiently to come and embrace the Lord through the veil, and upon embracing Him through the veil receive from Him not a name, but a seven-fold blessing that stretches from time into eternity...

There is absolutely no reason for the Lord to tell you another place to go and pollute if you don't rise up to bring with you the worthiness necessary to turn, at last, a place into the New Jerusalem, where the Lord can come and dwell among you, where you can be of one heart, where you can be of one mind, where there are no poor among you, and where you have all things in common, where you meet the requirements. And there's no reason to assemble you together at any spot. You can do everything that needs to be done preliminarily from wherever it is you dwell at present. And you can prepare your hearts; and you can prepare your minds; and you can begin to understand the difficulties. And instead of judging our failure that went on before, you can rather empathize with the failures that went on before and come to some appreciation for the fact that it's not going to be

any easier for you than it was for them. It's not going to be any less filled with the temptation to be envious and filled with lust and have jarrings and contentions for you than it has been for those that went and attempted before.

We're not going to arrive where we need to arrive if we perceive ourselves as unequal, if we think of ourselves as greater and lesser, if we don't think of ourselves as simply common servants, inadequate as we may be, to a Lord who loved and sacrificed Himself for our redemption. *He* is worthy...

RESOURCE MATERIAL

Marriages are identified as worthy of preservation. If you do not obtain this promise sealed to you by God, through His word, sealed by the Holy Spirit of Promise, then it does not matter... Or, more completely, by God, through His word, which is then sealed by the Holy Spirit of Promise. No union that has not been sealed by the Holy Spirit of Promise will endure beyond the grave... The reason for sealing such a marriage by the promise of the Spirit is because it replicates the kind of holy union found in heaven... The Holy Spirit of Promise was intended to be shed upon many marriages, rather than a comparative few... I hasten to add this Holy Spirit of Promise can extend to even single people, who receive the word of the Lord by revelation here that they will be sealed and live in the eternal marriage covenant, even if they do not obtain that sealing while still mortal. Any promise from God confers this hope. What He commits to you here, He is bound to deliver there. [Yet] the notion that you are going to succeed in acquiring the glory likened to God, as a separate and single individual, is nowhere found as a promise in scripture.

To have the promise "abide in your heart" is to keep inside your heart the knowledge there is a promise given by God, who cannot lie about such matters, that you have the promise of eternal life... The culmination of the Lord's ministry is the promise of eternal life, as I explained in an earlier post... When His ministry does culminate in the promise, then the promise should "abide in the heart" of the person to whom the promise has been given... They ought never let it pass from within their hearts that they have obtained a promise from the Lord assuring them of life eternal.

If you open yourself to receive the visions of heaven, and behold the Father and Son, then you have received the Holy Spirit of Promise. This last Holy Spirit of Promise is given its name because when you have received the Father and the Son you become Their child of Promise, the inheritor of all the Father has, a member of His family. ... For to have been given the Holy Spirit of Promise you have seen God and received from Him a Promise.

Whether it is something as concrete as a family relationship or as vague as an expectation, all things in the next life are secured to us only through this kind of promise or hope. It is sometimes referred to as "the Holy Spirit of promise." ... This is how the power of "hope" is given to men and women. They have obtained, through the "Holy Spirit of Promise," the knowledge they are entitled to receive these associations or expectations in the life to come. The promises are theirs. They have the word of God given to them that they will receive these things. As a result they have "hope" for the next life and can depart this life firm in that hope. (EIGHTEEN VERSES: Hope and Mansions)

Joseph Smith may have taken the authority with him when he died, but he blessed others using the priesthood...He could seal others, and while mortal became the Holy Spirit of Promise. Joseph's blessings therefore remained even after we lost him...The temple anointings are not for this life. They give an "expectation" for eternity. If the expectation is not ratified by the Holy Spirit of Promise, we are left to obtain it in some later estate or cycle. Everything from God must be obtained by covenant. (PRESERVING THE RESTORATION: Marriage and Family)

The sealing of these things through the Holy Spirit of Promise must come in mortality. When people "are out of the world it cannot be received there." For this hope is to be gained in mortality as a gift of faith to empower the recipient to be able to claim it in the next life. Mortality is the time and place for obtaining faith and hope. When out of this life, the season for faith has passed, and the opportunity for hope has ended. It cannot be developed there. (EIGHTEEN VERSES: Hope and Mansions)

The law, however, is for a man and woman to be sealed together for eternity and to have that sealing ratified by “the Holy Spirit of Promise.” . . . Rather the focus is on the preservation of marriage into eternity by God and by His word (132:12) which is “sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise.” (132:7.) . . . Are you sealed by the Holy Spirit of Promise? . . . If you do not obtain this promise sealed to you by God, through His word, sealed by the Holy Spirit of Promise, then it does not matter. . . . Or, more completely, by God, through His word, which is then sealed by the Holy Spirit of Promise. (Blogpost: Cursing and Abominations.)

If you do not have a “firm hope” within you, secured by the Holy Spirit of Promise, given you by God, then this verse should awaken your desire. It should rally you. Jacob hoped his preaching would cause us to “arouse the faculties of your souls; shake yourselves that ye may awake from the slumber of death;” and repent. (Jacob 3: 11.) Joseph Smith was similarly hoping to exalt others. We cannot be content with less. (EIGHTEEN VERSES: Hope and Mansions)

Suppose we cannot find an officiator in the church who has been “anointed and appointed unto this power,” who can seal by the Holy Spirit of Promise, through the power God has entrusted to the man. That still does not impair your ability to receive all the things which the temple rites offer directly from heaven. You still can offer a broken heart and contrite spirit. Everything is still available if you approach God to receive it. We still have, at a minimum, priesthood which includes the ministry of angels. The angels have the same authority as Joseph received. Joseph received his authority from the angels. The Lord revealed to Joseph that the latter-day sealing of the chosen will be done by angels, not men. If angels are to continue sealing the chosen, then any lack of authority among men is irrelevant. It was always planned for John, the Three Nephites, and other “holy men that ye know not of” to be involved in sealing the saved in the last days. (PASSING THE HEAVENLY GIFT: Individual Salvation.)

This reference to the “Holy Spirit of Promise” has a specific meaning. As Joseph Smith used this phrase, it was connected with having your calling and election made sure. . . . First to be sealed with the Holy Spirit of Promise that is the testimony of Jesus. (EIGHTEEN VERSES: fnt 19)

Joseph tied the sealing authority to having your calling and election made sure: “Peter exhorts us to make our calling and election sure. This is the sealing power spoken of by Paul in other places.” (BELOVED ENOS: The Sealing Power, Part 2.)

There is power to seal when moved by the Holy Ghost. That authority anyone can receive on a case-by-case basis. When Christ was brought to the temple at Jerusalem, the prophetess Anna had the power of the Holy Ghost within her. It was the Holy Spirit of Promise that made the declaration through her. In these moments, the one moved simply declares, by the voice of prophecy, what God has done. Women have used this power when moved upon by the Holy Ghost. . . . Sealing is by the word of God, and in a real sense it is obtained by an ordinance. It is the power of prophecy, and that gift can be experienced by all. The prophetic word contains the power to seal when it originates from God. (PRESERVING THE RESTORATION: Priesthood.)

Fruit worthy to be laid up against the harvest are those who belong to God’s family, having been sealed to salvation by covenant and by the Holy Spirit of Promise. (PRESERVING THE RESTORATION: Preserving the Restoration.)

All those who seek His glory will need to acquire His testimony to them that they are saved. They must acquire His Word. . . . Those who fall short of this, and do not receive this witness from Christ in mortality but receive it afterwards, will be heirs of the Terrestrial Kingdom. These good but deluded souls trusted in men, rather than in Christ. As a result they fall short of the glory necessary to enter God’s presence. They do not die firm in the hope of a glorious resurrection, because Christ has not promised it to them. (PASSING THE HEAVENLY GIFT: Finding Hope.)

I hasten to add this Holy Spirit of Promise can extend to even single people, who receive the word of the Lord by revelation here, that they will be sealed and live in the eternal marriage covenant, even if they do not obtain that sealing while still mortal. Any promise from God confers this hope. What He commits to you here, He is bound to deliver there. (EIGHTEEN VERSES, fnt 49.)

The notion that you are going to succeed in acquiring the glory likened to God, as a separate and single individual, is nowhere found as a promise in scripture. (PRESERVING THE RESTORATION: Marriage and Family.)

No union that has not been sealed by the Holy Spirit of Promise will endure beyond the grave.... The reason for sealing such a marriage by the promise of the Spirit is because it replicates the kind of holy union found in heaven... The Holy Spirit of Promise was intended to be shed upon many marriages, rather than a comparative few. (Blogpost: 3 Nephi 12:31-32)

Any man whose wife is unhappy, who is exploited and treated like his property, whose behavior fails to mirror Christ's in the heart of the women who knows him best, has not yet qualified for his marriage to be sealed by the Holy Spirit of Promise. (Blogpost: The Lord Delights in Chastity.)

In effect, Joseph became the Holy Spirit of Promise through operation of the Divine appointment to hold the right.... That term "Holy Spirit of Promise" we use without adequate appreciation that it can be an office held by Divine appointment. (Blogpost: Question on Sealing.)

In another place Joseph's revelation explained that heirs of Celestial glory will be sealed up to eternal life "by the Holy Spirit of Promise." (D&C 76:53.) These individuals who receive this "seal" are those who received from Jesus the testimony that He has saved them. (D&C 76:51.) They have become part of "the Church of the Firstborn" as a consequence of promises given to them by the Father and the Son. (D&C 76:54-57.) They have become "sons of God" by the decree of the Father. (D&C 76:58-59.) These individuals have received the testimony of Jesus, and the promise of eternal life which is the Holy Spirit of Promise. (D&C 88:3.) (Blogpost: God's Many Works, Part 4.)

In D&C 88 it says: 'Wherefore, I now send upon you another Comforter, even upon you my friends, that it may abide in your hearts, even the Holy Spirit of promise.'... My response: To have the promise "abide in your heart" is to keep inside your heart the knowledge there is a promise given by God, who cannot lie about such matters, that you have the promise of eternal life.... The culmination of the Lord's ministry is the promise of eternal life, as I explained in an earlier post.... When His ministry does culminate in the promise, then the promise should "abide in the heart" of the person to whom the promise has been given.... They ought never let it pass from within their hearts that they have obtained a promise from the Lord assuring them of life eternal. (Blogpost: Promise vs. Appearance.)

If you open yourself to receive the visions of heaven, and behold the Father and Son, then you have received the Holy Spirit of Promise. This last Holy Spirit of Promise is given its name because when you have received the Father and the Son you become Their child of Promise, the inheritor of all the Father has, a member of His family.... For to have been given the Holy Spirit of Promise you have seen God and received from Him a Promise. (Blogpost: God's Many Works, Conclusion.)

And that revelation appointed Hyrum Smith to be the first, to stand at the head and hold the sealing power or Holy Spirit of Promise. (Blogpost: A Stranger.)

The purpose of a temple is to allow the communication of great knowledge and greater knowledge, to restore what has been lost since the time of Adam in order for people to rise up and receive the Holy Order. (HOLY ORDER, p.16)

We know the purpose of that house will be for the God of Jacob to teach those people to walk in His ways.... We have been given a new revelation that explains resurrection and adoption to the fathers in heaven are linked together: I was shown that the spirits that rose were limited to a direct line back to Adam, requiring the hearts of the fathers and the hearts of the children to be bound together by sealing, confirmed by covenant and the Holy Spirit of Promise. (CIVILIZATION, Paper, p. 42.)

There are two ascents. One is temporary and happens when men are "caught up," but then return to this world. It represents overcoming the world and returning the individual back to the presence of God. It is called "redemption from the fall" (Ether 3:13) because it brings the individual back into God's presence. That form of temporary ascent is designed to establish a covenant or promise related to the other, more gradual ascent through development of the individual. The temporary mortal ascent secures a promise for the individual that they will be permitted to make the eternal ascent to where God and Christ dwell in the afterlife.

In this fallen world, the great challenge is to lay hold of the covenant right to ascend to God's throne. (Rev. 3:20-21.) It is true that God is no respecter of persons and everyone CAN, but the truth is that very few will obtain the covenant while in the flesh.

In His mercy, God has made provisions for all people. He loves all mankind equally, has planned for allowing those good and believing people who will not qualify in their own right to ascend the “mountain of the Lord” into His presence to receive it through more ordinary means. God’s purposes cannot be defeated, even by man’s weakness. God has other means to qualify people to be His covenant family.

The purpose of a temple (meaning an actual temple commissioned, ordered, blessed, accepted and visited with His presence) is to substitute for the temporary ascent of a mortal into God’s presence. A real temple becomes “Holy Ground” and the means for making available to faithful people in every state of belief and hope the opportunity to receive, by authorized means, the same covenant, obligation, association, expectation and sealing through an authorized and binding arrangement in sacred space. This is the same thing they can receive from God directly if they enter into His presence while still in the flesh. In effect, the temple becomes an extension of heaven. God, angels and mankind are able to associate there as in Eden. It is a return to Eden, where “God walks in the cool of the day.” (Gen. 3:8.)

The ordinances or rites of the temple are presented in ritual form. This is required. God’s House is a House of Order because it is reoriented to point away from this world in order to reflect the order of heaven and the actual eternal ascent into His presence. The volume of information conveyed by God would be too vast to set out in non-ritual form. In ritual, it is possible to convey a great body of information with symbolism, metaphor, relationships, and types that work on the mind of man the same way that visionary experiences directly with God convey. The mind is expanded and the ritual allows something of God’s viewpoint to be transmitted into the mind of man.

The temple has only one real purpose: To convey God’s promise to exalt those who experience it; provided they abide the conditions for exaltation. It portrays the real, second eternal-form of ascent in a way that gives the initiate a promise that if they walk in the path shown them they will arrive at the Throne of God in the afterlife.

A real temple is required for Zion because it is the mechanism for reorienting society. Through it, the standard of conduct for ordering peaceful lives is established, and society becomes centered on the temple for law, education, social structure, government and coexistence. A real temple is a repository for knowledge and learning. It will include a library for study, teaching and learning. A real temple is indispensable for Zion because such a society is always built upon a heavenly pattern of cooperation and equality, making a city of peace or city of righteousness possible. It is the means to provide people with the information necessary to allow them “to govern themselves.”

I preach, teach, exhort and expound to encourage every soul to rise up in this life and make the first ascension to God while in the flesh. Some have done so. Others will. Perhaps a great many will. I hope so. But if there are believers who cannot or will not do so in this life, the temple is the means God will provide to allow the “least of the Saints” to likewise obtain a hope in Christ by an authorized covenant which will bind on earth and in heaven. Then they become likewise heirs of salvation and part of the great congregation to whom the Lord will proclaim: “Well done!” They will have a legitimate and authorized means for laying ahold of the promise of eternal life and continuing the long path of ascent to the Throne of God to dwell with Him and Christ.

The LDS version of temple rites is insufficient to allow anyone to obtain the right to ascend to God’s presence in eternity. The Lord will fix this, as He intends to establish an Ensign to which all nations (meaning scattered covenant Israel) will return in the last days and there receive their crowns at the hands of servants who will minister covenants for this purpose (D&C 133:31-34).

Mankind has generally failed to rise up to the place where God and mankind can meet. He has offered to do so repeatedly. His lament, “How oft would I have gathered you as a hen gathers her chicks, but ye would not” (3 Ne. 10:5) is not just empty rhetoric. It is the actual, historical fact of how men have responded to God. God offers. We refuse. God withdraws. Generations come and go and God offers again. We refuse. God withdraws. Time passes. Again, He speaks and makes the offer.

Though the prophetic pictures we have been given are terrible to contemplate, they are necessary events. We will finally end our ingratitude for each other, finally end our murmuring about each other, and then be willing to huddle together in gratitude as a result of these ordeals. We will at last find it necessary to share with each other, rather than divide into our socio-economic strata. We will rejoice in having each other as companions, rather than holding a critical and uncharitable attitude about one another. We will never arrive there voluntarily, but must be brought there by a chastening Lord, Who will prepare our hearts through the

refining fire preceding that return. So the Lord, in His mercy and wisdom, will grant us the difficulties which will bring us there. We will understand how adversity makes us better, and brings us closer to God...

As the Prophet Joseph Smith was told in the prison-temple, experiencing and enduring are part of the essence of significant spiritual development, the end for which all serious disciples are to strive. The Missouri dungeon provided just such a tutoring mixture of obscurity, adversity, irony, and testimony. (Blogpost: Why a Temple?)

Connecting ourselves to our Fathers who are in heaven is one of the reasons for having a temple. « Today the status of “father of many nations” still applies to the Holy Order, but the process is inverted. Instead of being the father through descendants of the body, the Holy Order contains the right to redeem the dead. But the dead do not remain as ancestors but become posterity. The living members of the Holy Order are the fathers and mothers of the dead whom they redeem.” (THE HOLY ORDER, p.13-14.)

The temple is needed to restore all things back to the time of Adam, as well as to endow those who are adopted into the family of God to be endowed with all the knowledge necessary to be a worthy holder of the Holy Order and to become fathers (and mothers) of many nations through work for the dead.

It was to give Joseph a basis to understand enough so that a temple could be built to house God’s revelations. If men are to be taught enough to have “great knowledge” as Abraham had, then the information must be revealed from heaven. These words are like Abraham’s words. Joseph affirms he had “great knowledge” and sought for and obtained “greater knowledge.” This is all required for the Holy Order to return. (Ibid., p.24.)

The overwhelming majority of us will, ten minutes after death, regret we did not do more with this second estate. Our regrets will be because we did not seek more earnestly, pray more devoutly, fast more frequently, and gain a greater measure of truth and light than we gained here. Change that for yourself. (The Second Comforter : Testimony, Sayings and Conclusion)

After Eden, conveying the original Holy Order required either a temple or an ascent into heaven. It is one of the reasons why prophecy foretells of a last days temple. (EIGHT ESSAYS, p.199.)

It will be a facility where the God of Jacob will teach His pathway of ascent back to the Throne of God. Mankind will learn the laws governing that pathway... It will include men and women, as husband and wife. They will be given understanding of things which the world cannot know because it is forbidden for the profane to obtain what God decrees for the righteous alone to maintain in holiness. (Ibid., p.200.)

Information can be sacred. It can be controlled by God so that when He determines to communicate it to man He will do so either by catching the individual up into the heavenly realm or by commanding that a temple be built to house His revelations. (Ibid., p.202.)

Today the status of “father of many nations” still applies to the Holy Order, but the process is inverted. Instead of being the father through descendants of the body, the Holy Order contains the right to redeem the dead. But the dead do not remain as ancestors but become posterity. The living members of the Holy Order are the fathers and mothers of the dead whom they redeem. But that topic is best left for the future time when the temple exists. If this generation fails to obtain the right, and neglects the responsibility to prepare for the coming commandment to build a temple, then the information will be useless to those living today. Therefore, if there is ever a temple built at God’s command, this topic will become important then. It is enough for now to note that the Holy Order still includes becoming a “father of many nations.” But the method at the end is different than it was in the time of the first patriarchs, including Abraham. (THE HOLY ORDER, p.13.)

Recently, there was a **new revelation that explains more about this event**. The purpose of these visits was not to confer priesthood, but to explain the history of God’s dealings with mankind, and to convey essential knowledge about this creation. It was to give Joseph a basis to understand enough so that a temple could be built to house God’s revelations. If men are to be

taught enough to have “great knowledge” as Abraham had, then the information must be revealed from heaven. These words are like Abraham’s words. Joseph affirms he had “great knowledge” and sought for and obtained “greater knowledge.” This is all required for the Holy Order to return. (Ibid., p.24.)

The Holy Order is familial. It does not involve establishing a church, but instead connecting together the Family of God, or in other words the Government of God. This can only be done in a temple prepared for that purpose. (Ibid., p.41.)

Joseph taught that the connection which would allow living men and women to endure the day of burning was intimately connected with a priestly tie between the living children and the coming “fathers” who will return in consuming glory.⁶⁰⁶ Joseph recognized that unless the living who greet them are recognized as “children” through adoption as a component of their priesthood, they will burn as stubble. It goes back to Abraham, whose posterity would include any and all who received the same Gospel and priesthood given Abraham. (Abr. 2: 9.) (PASSING THE HEAVENLY GIFT: Wrapping Up.)

Nearly a decade after Joseph died, when temple ceremonial work resumed in the Endowment House in Salt Lake, Brigham Young declared that adoption was the crowning ordinance.... It was more important than the other temple rites, including washing, anointing, endowment, and marriage sealing: This Chain must not [be] broken for mankind Cannot be saved any other way.... He also taught the fulfillment of God’s promise to Abraham regarding “his seed” would only be fulfilled through the temple ordinance of adoption. (CIVILIZATION, p.11.)

This is something that has to be attended to through the restoration and construction of an authentic temple conforming to the pattern of heaven, in which these things can be attended to and the knowledge and understanding imputed, in order for people to comprehend what it means to be a “greater follower of righteousness.” ... Abraham—because he came at a time of apostasy and because his father had turned to the worshipping of dumb idols—could not inherit that same standing as the first uninterrupted period, unless it were possible for that to be accomplished through adoption. (COVENANT PATTERN, p.12.)

Is the temple an end, or is the temple a means? If the temple is an end, then everyone who goes through the temple obtains everything that the temple has to offer by virtue of going in and participating in the ceremony. But if the temple ceremony is instead a means, a means of trying to take you somewhere—if it is a means, then what is it a means to? Because one possible meaning that you should come away with is that it is a means to inform you that there is a veil, and not a wall, to permit you to talk through and to touch through and to feel your way through to the symbolic presence of God. And then, that veil is not a wall but something that can be, with merely the brush of the hand of our Lord, drawn aside so that you may enter into His presence. And the way you get there is by being prepared in all things, having been true and faithful in all things, coming to learn something from Him; not coming to tell Him something, not coming to impose upon Him, but coming to learn from Him...

The purpose of the Holy Ghost is to allow you to see things in their true light with the underlying intent behind them and to allow you to do that without distortion and without confusion. The temple is a ceremony designed to teach you about the path back to God — the very same thing that the Book of Mormon teaches repeatedly. The path back to God is so that you can meet with and be instructed by our Savior. The purpose of our Savior is to prepare us in all things so that we can, at last, become Zion. Because if your heart is right and my heart is right, and if I’m looking to God and God only, and you’re looking to God and God only, then the trivial things of having things in common are of so little import that they matter not.

If you’re faithful to the Lord, you have no reason to pick a fight with anyone else. Our Lord was a peacemaker. We ought to be peacemakers as well... (Podcast: Temple, Part 2.)

“Go to and finish the temple, and God will fill it with power, and you will then receive more knowledge concerning this priesthood” (TPJS, p. 322)...

So, everything that you hope to receive into the next life, even your expectations, all of that has to be obtained from God by covenant. I mentioned an answer to a question in Ephraim that the role of the woman was significant, even in the life of Christ. I mentioned that she anointed Him preliminary to His death and burial. One of the things that gave Him the expectation of coming forth out of the grave was the anointing that promised Him.

Why do you think in the temple the rights include preserving some of the functions of the body? It's not to make you healthy here and now. It's so that you can lay claim upon this as an expectation in the eternities. Because if you do not have the expectation conferred upon you by the Holy Spirit of Promise, you'll have to get that in some other cycle. Because the only thing you will be able to take with you into eternity you obtain in this manner. Everything has to be obtained by a covenant...

Although God is talking about the eternity of the marriage covenant, He extends this into everything. Everything, even your associations — all of them are obtained by a covenant from Him. Because His word, and His word alone, will endure...

The “keeper of the gate” is the Holy One of Israel, indeed. These words should mean something to you if you've listened to or read the text that we reviewed in Orem on priesthood. You should understand what God is saying here. You should understand that when it comes to some things that you hope to have continue into eternity, it is not enough to have even one of the noble and great, even one of those who we regard as an archangel, it doesn't matter. God, and God alone, holds the keys of death and hell. Christ paid that price. Christ has to be the one because He is the only one qualified to do this. He has to be the one. This is a non-delegable responsibility by He who, by virtue of bringing you back and promising you, becomes your Father in Heaven...

There are at least three stages in the process of restoring knowledge. The first stage is to receive it, but that's just receiving it. Receiving it is not the same thing as the second stage, which is to comprehend it. It is possible that a man receive something without understanding what it was that he had received. Time and careful and solemn and ponderous thoughts are required to untangle what has been received in order to comprehend what it is that you have been given. But it is altogether something of a different order of magnitude, completely separate from that, to teach it. You can receive it, you can comprehend it, but you may not be able to teach it. When it finally does get taught, undoubtedly it will be taught in the manner that Joseph Smith was beginning to work on in Nauvoo that he never finished, at the time that he was taken. That is, by ceremony, by covenant. And this, too, by something given by God, and it to be established in a house that is acceptable to him...

Remember that in Nauvoo the Lord offered to reconnect the saints, but clearly defined the condition for that to happen. It was necessarily an acceptable temple where He could come and restore the connection. The reconnection is ordinance-based and will require an acceptable temple before it goes beyond the single representative. First, ideas need to be advanced and accepted. Then second, we need to act on the ideas primarily by repenting and opening ourselves to the influence of God. Third, we have to be humble and patient and willing to practice the religion before we can have any hope of God deciding to gather us. Practical experience is absolutely necessary. Theories and pretensions are not going to get us anywhere. Everyone can theorize the virtues that are necessary to gather people together and live in harmony. Everyone can envision themselves as one of the residents of the City of Peace. But the practical experiences required to iron out our selfishness and competitiveness, so we can actually live in peace, is another order of magnitude harder... See, individual salvation and promises of eternal life are just that—they are individual. A restoration of the family of Israel requires more, including cooperation and inter-relationships that will be formed by God Himself. Promises made to individuals give the individual hope... We need to let God take the lead, and then we need to patiently await each step along the way. This is the stuff of which the prophecies speak, and it is the stuff that will be fulfilled. But the rights and the ordinances necessary to accomplish that — people in this generation don't even have a clue how that necessarily has to roll forth. But rest assured, it will. It will. (Podcast: Temple, Part 3.)

That was what he attempted to turn into a ritual to be housed in a temple, so that everyone in the ceremony could experience the same kind of angelic ministrants coming and talking to you and giving to you the obligation to live a higher life, and then a higher life still, and then yet another higher standard of conduct, until at last you're purified sufficiently to come and embrace the Lord through the veil, and upon embracing Him through the veil receive from Him not a name, but a seven-fold blessing that stretches from time into eternity...

So briefly then, a temple is the Lord's house. It's not actually a temple unless He comes to, visits, and accepts it, and then it is His house, until it has been profaned. Therefore, when it is the Lord's, the timing of when it is to be built, where it is to be built, how it is to be built, and exactly what it is that He wants to be built are entirely within His control...

One of the interesting things about the gathering into Zion is that, apparently, although there may be yet more revelations and commandments that roll out, apparently it will be in Zion where the “rich treasures” of the records of other scattered tribes are to be brought in order for that information or body of material to be reclaimed. If the revelations and the prophecies are correct, the

records of the Jews and the records of the Nephites, they get gathered, and they are the first. But eventually there will be many others that get gathered in... The description that's given of bringing their rich treasures unto the children of Ephraim in the everlasting mountains is a description of bringing them into the place that will be built by a covenant people who have the legal right to the land...(Podcast: Temple, part 4.)

"The mountain of the Lord's 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."

The paths of God lie in the heavens. Therefore, if you are going to learn to walk in his paths, you are going to have to learn to walk in the heavens.

"For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." The ensign that is prophesied to be established in the context, in the meaning, of that day had reference to a zodiacal, a constellation, a depiction of the heavens themselves. So when an ensign is going to be reared, and it's going to tell you about how to walk in the paths of God, this is talking about something very, very different than what most of us today would envision.

Zion is going to be a connection between heaven and earth, and at that place you will learn of the God of Jacob's ways, and you will walk in His paths, because heaven and earth will be connected, and the stairway connecting the two will be open, and the heavens and the earth will be reunited again. And this is going to happen in the top of the mountains.

There is absolutely no reason for the Lord to tell you another place to go and pollute if you don't rise up to bring with you the worthiness necessary to turn, at last, a place into the New Jerusalem, where the Lord can come and dwell among you, where you can be of one heart, where you can be of one mind, where there are no poor among you, and where you have all things in common, where you meet the requirements. And there's no reason to assemble you together at any spot. You can do everything that needs to be done preliminarily from wherever it is you dwell at present. And you can prepare your hearts; and you can prepare your minds; and you can begin to understand the difficulties. And instead of judging our failure that went on before, you can rather empathize with the failures that went on before and come to some appreciation for the fact that it's not going to be any easier for you than it was for them. It's not going to be any less filled with the temptation to be envious and filled with lust and have jarrings and contentions for you than it has been for those that went and attempted before.

The only purpose behind the last-days work, both what was happening at the time of Joseph and what the Lord is offering to us today, is to accomplish that fulsome restoration of the family of God. I mean, Joseph talked about temples, and they were built incrementally, and they never reached the finish line, even on the second one before he was killed, but he laid a fabulous foundation and pointed in a direction that the Restoration necessarily must go to and complete. Because if we don't have the tabernacle of God where He comes to dwell with His people, which He does when He has a family on earth, then the prophecies are not going to be fulfilled. Then the promises that were made to Enoch will not be realized. Then the statements of what will happen in the last days through Moses will not be vindicated. Then Adam's prophecy concerning his descendants to the end of time will not be realized. All of these things point, so we know it is going to happen. The question is not, "Is it going to happen?" The question is, "Will we rise up, or will we not?" Because what He's offering is, in fact, a legitimate opportunity for that to indeed happen.

We seem to get so easily distracted that we have a hard time staying on task. It's one of the gentile afflictions. We're very ambitious people, and we're very egocentric. And a lot of what is going to be required will require sacrifice and selflessness.

If you cannot reconstruct the family through an adoption ordinance process, the work cannot be accomplished. There just isn't time. We're in the process of walking back to how it was in the beginning. A lot of people think that by getting a New Testament church put on the ground that Joseph Smith accomplished the fulsome Restoration. It was never intended to stop there; it's supposed to go all the way back to the beginning. It's a giant chiasm, and it's a giant mirror. And today we do not live 900 years. And so the way in which it will be rebuilt at the end is going to be by ordinance in the house of the Lord, in a place that He has accepted. The only kinds of places that are legitimately the house of God are houses that God has come to dwell in, in order for those who seek His face to find Him...

So we don't have time. And if you think about it, Enoch taught for 365 years — 365 years before his people were prepared enough to go up. And we have to be prepared enough for them to come down and not destroy us by the brightness of their presence...

A fuller explanation of woman's role will require worthy people willing to be taught and to build an acceptable house for the Elohim to return. And I don't know why some things get said at one point in history that are not said at other points; I just know that as we move along the path towards what is inevitable at this point — that is the coming of the Lord and the establishment of a place of peace, a city of Zion, and a New Jerusalem — that more information needs to be in the possession of those that will find themselves there.

Last year I delivered a talk at the Sunstone Symposium titled "Other Sheep Indeed." In it I invited others with sacred writings to come and bring them. That invitation was first offered by Joseph Smith in 1840. He anticipated a temple to be built in Nauvoo to which records would be brought from all over the world: "...bring every thing you can bring and build the house of God and we will have a tremendous City which shall reverberate afar... then comes all the ancient records dig them up... where the Saints g[ather] is Zion."

Not all of God's words are in the Bible. God has spoken to every nation (meaning every religious division of people). Truth is everywhere, among all people. If we love God and truth we will want to search for it. We will not be content to leave it unexplored and undiscovered. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after more righteousness. Blessed are those who are followers of righteousness, desiring to possess great knowledge and to be a greater follower of righteousness and to possess greater knowledge. And blessed are those who do not suppose the scriptures contain all God's words and They (the Gods) have not provided more...

There's always an obligation, when God has a people, to build a temple. When God first established the original religion at the time that He created Adam and Eve, He put them in what is a temple setting. It was a garden in which God, angels, and man mingled together. They were cast out of the garden. But when He's had people on the earth, He has commanded that they construct sacred space. The purpose of the sacred space has always been to reunite heaven and earth. It's not to endlessly repeat a ceremony that you can memorize if you go often enough. Its purpose is to reunite heaven and earth and to accomplish what was originally the status of mankind in the Garden of Eden, being reunified with heaven itself.

We don't have a commandment to do that, but we have been told we are going to be commanded to do that. And so an effort has been made to begin to gather funds necessary...

We were told in a get-together in Boise, Idaho that God's people are always required to build a temple. It will serve exactly the same purpose that was intended at the beginning of the Restoration to have been accomplished while Joseph and Hyrum were alive. To this point, we do not yet have a commandment to do so, but we know it is coming. And we know its purpose is exactly the same. Joseph could have accomplished a great deal more. Hyrum and Joseph together could have completed the process of the Restoration. It's still a great undone work...

And when it comes to the construction of Zion, God has said in revelation it cannot be done in haste because haste brings pestilence. And what is pestilential is not just bugs and rodents; it's confusion. We have a season of peace, and we have a season of prosperity, and we have an opportunity in which we might be able to accomplish something with nothing more than the same thing that Joseph Smith was talking about in July of 1840. But when a command is given and sufficient time is accorded and the clock begins to run, then the tendency is to move quickly, like John Bennett. Everything's in a hurry.

When you have a season of peace upon you and an opportunity to reflect upon what went wrong with the Restoration at the beginning, and we have again the opportunity established by the word of the Lord that was read to and accepted by, for the first time in the Restoration, a covenant to accept the obligations that were devolving upon us in the Restoration, and we have an opportunity to prepare and to do something—we delay, we hesitate, and we squander the opportunity, ultimately at our peril.

I don't care how much you think you know about what God is up to, I guarantee you that unless God has shown it to you plainly, as He had done to Joseph at the beginning, you're not going to figure out what God is up to. There's a reason for that. If you could figure out what God is going to do and where and when and how, then the adversary could prevent that work from

being accomplished. It is precisely because God keeps His secrets and entrusts them carefully and guardedly, that the work of God cannot be frustrated; and the covenants will be fulfilled; and the prophecies will be vindicated; and what was offered through Joseph will, in fact, be accomplished.

And we have an opportunity, if we will avail ourselves of it, at a time of peace and prosperity, to do something to prepare in order to have that day come upon us with adequate preparation having been made in advance...

We're not going to arrive where we need to arrive if we perceive ourselves as unequal, if we think of ourselves as greater and lesser, if we don't think of ourselves as simply common servants, inadequate as we may be, to a Lord who loved and sacrificed Himself for our redemption. *He* is worthy... (Podcast: Temple, Part 5.)

I think it's one thing to prepare financially to have the structure, it's another thing for God to fill it with His glory so that His name can be uplifted there in grateful remembrance of the work that He has undertaken, as He explains Himself to us. And it's still another thing altogether to have people who are contrite and broken-hearted and grateful and come to willingly receive what God can dispense to us in His house. Those are very different things. And we think if the first two are accomplished, then the third one necessarily follows. But I think we can go to God's house and damn ourselves by the hardness of our heart and the pride of our spirit. And I think the Answer to the Covenant sort of warns us about that and about how we can come, and we can do everything that we think will satisfy Him, but if we are not of the right mind, of the right spirit, of the right heart, we can still offend Him—even if we're doing what He asked us to do. We have to do it in the right spirit. And that's the biggest challenge of all... (Podcast : Temple, Part 6.)

Similarly the rites of the Temple are intended to convey to the recipient the actual promises, in their own name, which assure for them cleanliness and holiness before God. Washing you was to remove sins. If you were prepared for the rites when you received them, then through the washing you had the sins of this generation taken from you. Since earlier you had been fully washed in baptism, the rite of washing you anew was intended to remove those specific additional stains which have accumulated in your life since baptism. The washing away of the defects and errors of life take place within this ordinance, with a promise to you in your own name from God, if you are prepared.

Anointing confers holiness and sanctity. The olive oil used is a symbol of the Holy Spirit, as St. Cyril explained in his 21st Lecture. Cleansing you is not all the Lord intended for you through His Atonement. He intended also to make you sanctified. The rites of washing and anointing are to sanctify you and tie you directly into the power of the Atonement. After receiving these rites, the promises made to others in an old book are no longer the basis for your expectations from God. Rather you have promises made to you, in a covenant between you and God, through which you are personally entitled to receive promised blessings. Remember it makes no difference if the promises are made to you by God or by His authorized servants. From either source the promises are secure. We are not supposed to let our hearts be troubled over the efficacy of these things. Instead we are supposed to rest secure in the knowledge we are entitled to the promises given, and to let our minds meditate upon them as our own property. They are among the only things we will take with us into eternity.

After you have been washed and anointed in the Temple you are then clothed. The account of clothing Adam and Eve by God occurs in Genesis 3:21 where they are given coats of skin. Remember the context in which Adam and Eve were clothed by God. Adam had previously named all the animals, and these animals were his initial earthly friends and companions. There was an intimacy between these animals and Adam.

Through his and Eve's transgression, the two had become aware of their nakedness before God. To remove this guilt and shame from being naked, Adam and Eve initially put on aprons made of fig leaves. This initial unsuitable covering was a symbol of the newly acquired knowledge of good and evil, which gave to them their sense of guilt and awareness of their nakedness. It was a sign they had become as God knowing the difference between good and evil.

No doubt the shame remained, for Adam brings it up again with God, while wearing his fabricated fig leaf apron, saying: "I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself." (Gen. 3: 10.) To cure the guilt and remove the shame, God provides a covering for Adam and Eve. He provides this through the "coats of skins" with which He clothed them.

Having been washed and clothed, you are then presented with the endowment ceremony. Ritual teaching and covenant making are intended to bring you into harmony with God. It is through these means you acquire the “power of godliness” that was lacking in Christianity before the Restoration. D&C 84: 19–22: “And this greater priesthood administereth the gospel and holdeth the key of the mysteries of the kingdom, even the key of the knowledge of God. Therefore, in the ordinances thereof, the power of godliness is manifest. And without the ordinances thereof, and the authority of the priesthood, the power of godliness is not manifest unto men in the flesh; For without this no man can see the face of God, even the Father, and live.” These higher ordinances of the Temple are performed by the Melchizedek Priesthood. These verses **do not say** the key to this knowledge requires a person hold this priesthood. Rather, they say this priesthood is required in order to obtain **the ordinances**, and it is **the ordinances** which prepare people for the power of godliness, receiving mysteries, and seeing the face of God. Anyone who has received these ordinances has the foundation for these things in their lives. It is a false notion that these things are confined to priesthood holders, even though thoughtless people do sometimes assert this notion. Men and women both receive Temple rites, and are equally entitled to the benefits the rites confer.

The Lord opened this dispensation in order to return to the earth a faith which held the power of godliness within it. And in Section 84, above, He tells us how it is accomplished through the ordinances of the higher priesthood. Those higher ordinances include laying on of hands for the Gift of the Holy Ghost and Temple rites. How then is the Temple an endowment of power?

There is a relationship between holding sacred knowledge *sacred* and profaning it by disclosing it to the unprepared or unworthy. This improper disclosure was called “casting pearls before swine” and has been discussed previously. You gain the Lord’s confidence when you show the Lord you are willing to keep the things which are sacred as holy things before Him. The Temple allows you to do this. Without the Temple there is no institutionalized method of dispensing sacred knowledge. The Temple allows the Saints an opportunity to be proven in this necessary requirement. The Temple gives you teachings and experiences which you must covenant never to reveal.

The Temple rites include symbols and instruction which orient the mind of man toward God and godliness. The whole of their teachings can be captured with this thought: We are to be prepared in all things to receive further light and knowledge by conversing with the Lord through the veil. The Temple prepares you to do that. The Temple includes, within its rites, the symbolic act of conversing with God in a symbolic version of “oracles in your most holy places wherein you receive conversations.” (D&C 124: 39.)

When the Lord spoke about preparing the Saints to enter Zion, He taught: “And this cannot be brought to pass until mine elders are endowed with power from on high. For behold, I have prepared a great endowment and blessing to be poured out upon them, inasmuch as they are faithful and continue in humility before me. Therefore it is expedient in me that mine elders should wait for a little season, for the redemption of Zion.” (D&C 105: 11–13.) We need still to receive that endowment of power. The Temple is the way that happens. It confers power when it is understood in the proper light.

The Temple provides tools directly to you to help in your search for God’s presence. It is perhaps the single most powerful tool for that purpose in the entire Gospel of Christ. Section 84 does not overstate the case. Within the rites the power of godliness is manifest, and without them no person can be prepared to see the face of God.

The Temple is also intended to educate you about the mysteries of God. The fact that God dispenses to man sacred knowledge with restrictions on its use is communicated in the Temple more powerfully than in any other place, including the scriptures. Nowhere is this message about God holding you accountable for sacred knowledge more clearly set out. He requires you to covenant not to reveal aspects of the rites. As a consequence, you learn in the Temple as from no other source, that God expects you to be His confidant. And if you are unwilling to accept that burden, then you cut yourself off from receiving further sacred knowledge.

The Temple is a type of these things. You come to receive an endowment, but receive through it a ceremonial instruction into the mysteries of God. You receive a wealth of information about the culture of the heavens and a symbolic treasury of principles to meditate upon drawing you nearer to God than any other ordinance of the Gospel. The suggestions of David John Buerger in his

Mysteries of Godliness, supra, illustrate just how little these things are recognized. The Temple is a tool. But it is apparently a sadly underused and widely misunderstood tool.

The Lord attempted to point the Saints toward understanding what He was providing to them in D&C 88: 119: “Organize yourselves; prepare every needful thing; and establish a house, even a house of prayer, a house of fasting, a house of faith, a house of learning, a house of glory, a house of order, a house of God.” The house was to be a sevenfold blessing to the Saints: 1) prayer; 2) fasting; 3) faith; 4) learning; 5) glory; 6) order; and 7) God. This list of seven, ties the mind back to the original list of seven in the creation. The number seven is a symbol of completion, perfection or the entirety of the matter. The Temple is, therefore, a complete, perfect and entire presentation of the Lord’s Gospel. This list, too, is a progression from one degree to another in grace, light and truth.

- **Prayer** prepares you to enter into the right frame of mind to receive these things.
- **Fasting** prepares your spirit and subdues the flesh.
- **Faith** grows from the prayer and fasting which precedes it and prepares you to learn.
- **Learning** in the highest sense comes from faith, fasting and prayer.
- This brings to you the “**glory** of God” or in other words “intelligence” or “light and truth.” As you receive further light and truth, you gain an appreciation for the order of heaven and earth.
- This **order** requires a ceremonial orientation and understanding.
- All of which prepare you for the presence of **God**, or the Second Comforter.

This seven-fold list is, therefore, a perfect whole and complete description of the Temple’s purpose.

The Temple rites are intended themselves to be a revelation. They reveal much about God if you are willing to receive it. You first see things through the eyes of faith before seeing the things themselves. In the Temple you are permitted the opportunity of seeing, if you have the eyes of faith, the deepest things of God. They are presented before your mind as if seeing the visions of heaven themselves. Receive them as you would receive a visitation from God Himself. Then, when you have the eyes to see these things through faith, you are finally ready to receive the Second Comforter and the comfort coming from that experience; which will leave you with calmness and indescribable peacefulness “Therefore, sanctify yourselves that your minds become single to God, and the days will come that you shall see him; for he will unveil his face unto you, and it shall be in his own time, and in his own way, and according to his own will.” (D&C 88: 68.)

Through the process of the Temple rites, you become holy, or potentially become so. Whether you are willing actually to accept the holiness offered or not is up to you. But if you choose to accept the holiness offered in the spirit with which it is offered, and to obey the covenants, charges and obligations found there, you then have a tool for recovering your lost association with God. The Temple can make *you* a Temple. You become the “House of God” with His Spirit dwelling within you. (THE SECOND COMFORTER : The Temple as a Tool.)

Everyone who accepts the fullness of the Gospel becomes “adopted” into the covenant and made a part of Israel. The Gospel promises to all converts that they are co-heritors. Being adopted into the house of Israel is the first of 2 steps of adoption. Once within Israel, we next need to be adopted into the house/family of God. (NEPHI’S ISAIAH: Nephi’s Brother Jacob and Isaiah.)

SUBSEQUENT RESEARCH SOURCES

Podcasts: Temple, Parts 1-6

Blogpost: Why a Temple?

The Second Comforter: The Temple as a Tool

Nephi’s Isaiah: Nephi’s Brother Jacob and Isaiah

Eighteen Verses: Hope and Mansions