

## Comments on Doctrine & Covenants 109

This section is the Kirtland Temple dedication prayer. The prayer is presented as a request for the Lord to accept the Temple in response to His command to them to build it. As such, v. 4-12 paraphrase specific statements from D&C 88, where the Lord told them to build the Temple in Kirtland.

The text draws heavily on the rhetorical style of Psalms and also employs the theme of Mosaic intercession.

In the preceding sections, there are numerous rebukes by the Lord aimed at the Missouri ecclesia for failing to be zealous in keeping the commandments in general, and for failing to build the Missouri Temple in specific (cf. D&C 101, 103). Here in the prayer, Smith is importuning the Lord using a style that draws on the classical Psalmist's appeal.

The Psalmist's appeal characterizes the one doing the appealing as being unworthy of the Lord's mercy, yet still pleading for it. The Psalmist then gives the Lord justification for his appeal. Relatively common among the Psalms, good examples of this are Ps. 6:4-5, and Ps. 30:8-9, as follows:

Return, O LORD,  
deliver my soul:  
oh save me for thy mercies' sake.  
For in death there is no remembrance of thee:  
in the grave who shall give thee thanks?

I cried to thee, O LORD; and  
unto the LORD I made supplication.  
What profit is there in my blood,  
when I go down to the pit?  
Shall the dust praise thee?  
shall it declare thy truth?

In both examples, the Psalmist makes an appeal on his own behalf and justifies the appeal by saying if the Lord lets him perish then he cannot praise Him from hell. Psalm 30:10-12 goes on to state:

Hear, O LORD, and  
have mercy upon me: LORD,  
be thou my helper.  
Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing:

thou hast put off my sackcloth, and  
girded me with gladness;  
To the end that my glory may sing praise to thee, and  
not be silent.  
O LORD my God,  
I will give thanks unto thee for ever.

Thus, the Psalmist says the Lord has shown him mercy, and the Psalmist will thereby render thanks and praise to the Lord forever. Smith uses the same pattern of appeal and justification throughout this dedication prayer, and then closes the prayer saying they will render thanks and praise to the Lord.

Also employed in the text is the figure of the Mosaic intercessor. Throughout the preceding revelations where the ecclesia gets rebuked, Smith is generally presented as being in the Lord's favor and leading the ecclesia according to the Lord's commands. Smith is in the position to plead on behalf of the ecclesia before the Lord just as Moses plead on Israel's behalf:

And Moses besought the LORD his God, and said, LORD, why doth thy wrath wax hot against thy people, which thou hast brought forth out of the land of Egypt with great power, and with a mighty hand? Wherefore should the Egyptians speak, and say, For mischief did he bring them out, to slay them in the mountains, and to consume them from the face of the earth? Turn from thy fierce wrath, and repent of this evil against thy people. Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, thy servants, to whom thou swarest by thine own self, and saidst unto them, I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have spoken of will I give unto your seed, and they shall inherit it for ever. And the LORD repented of the evil which he thought to do unto his people. (Exod. 32:11-14)

Smith, in the dedicatory prayer, employs a similar tactic.

Prior to Smith's recitation of the dedicatory prayer, Sidney Rigdon spoke, during which speech he quoted Psalms 96 and 24, the latter being a Temple entrance psalm.

The structure of the text is surprisingly complex for something ostensibly a composition of Smith, et al. When compared with text of D&C 102, which is clearly a human product with no direct inspiration or complex structure, it is clear the present composition is more than a simple prayer for recitation. If Smith was not directly inspired in its writing, then he has clearly learned a great deal from receiving revelations and become capable of eloquence that was not manifest in any of his other personal writings.

1 THANKS be to thy name, O Lord God of Israel, who keepest covenant and showest mercy unto thy servants who walk uprightly before thee, with all their hearts-- 2 Thou who hast commanded thy servants to build a house to thy name in this place [Kirtland]. 3 And now thou beholdest, O Lord, that thy servants have done according to thy commandment.

v1-3 Smith submits the House which the Lord has commanded them to build.

4 And now we ask thee, Holy Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, the Son of thy bosom, in whose name alone salvation can be administered to the children of men, we ask thee, O Lord, to accept of this house, the workmanship of the hands of us, thy servants, which thou didst command us to build. 5 For thou knowest that we have done this work through great tribulation; and out of our poverty we have given of our substance to build a house to thy name, that the Son of Man might have a place to manifest himself to his people.

6 And as thou hast said in a revelation, given to us, calling us thy friends, saying--Call your solemn assembly, as I have commanded you; 7 And as all have not faith, seek ye diligently and teach one another words of wisdom; yea, seek ye out of the best books words of wisdom, seek learning even by study and also by faith; 8 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; 9 That your incomings may be in the name of the Lord, that your outgoings may be in the name of the Lord, that all your salutations may be in the name of the Lord, with uplifted hands unto the Most High--

v4-9 Smith appeals to the Lord for Him to accept the Temple (v. 4) and uses Mosiac Intercession to encourage the Lord to accept it by repeating the Lord's command back to Him (v. 6-9), and pointing out to Him they have fulfilled His command at great

personal sacrifice (v. 5).

v4-5 Note Smith is presenting the Temple as a sacrificial offering, cp. D&C 97:12.

v5 "that the Son of Man might have a place to manifest himself", cp. D&C 110:6-7.

v6-9 A rephrasing of D&C 88:117-120. They are letting the Lord know they are being obedient to His command to build a Temple, and are therefore asking Him to accept it, because He told them to build.

v6 "Call your solemn assembly" cp. D&C 108:4.

v7 Compare 97:14.

10 And now, Holy Father, we ask thee to assist us, thy people, with thy grace, in calling our solemn assembly, that it may be done to thine honor and to thy divine acceptance; 11 And in a manner that we may be found worthy, in thy sight, to secure a fulfilment of the promises which thou hast made unto us, thy people, in the revelations given unto us; 12 That thy glory may rest down upon thy people, and upon this thy house, which we now dedicate to thee, that it may be sanctified and consecrated to be holy, and that thy holy presence may be continually in this house; 13 And that all people who shall enter upon the threshold of the Lord's house may feel thy power, and feel constrained to acknowledge that thou hast sanctified it, and that it is thy house, a place of thy holiness.

14 And do thou grant, Holy Father, that all those who shall worship in this house may be taught words of wisdom out of the best books, and that they may seek learning even by study, and also by faith, as thou hast said; 15 And that they may grow up in thee, and receive a fulness of the Holy Ghost, and be organized according to thy laws, and be prepared to obtain every needful thing;

16 And that this house may be a house of prayer, a house of fasting, a house of faith, a house of glory and of God, even thy house; 17 That all the incomings of thy people, into this house, may be in the name of the Lord; 18 That all their outgoings from this house may be in the name of the Lord; 19 And that all their salutations may be in the name of the Lord, with holy hands, uplifted to the Most High; 20 And that no unclean thing shall be permitted to come into thy house to pollute it; 21 And when thy people transgress, any of them, they may speedily repent and return unto thee, and find favor in thy sight, and be restored to the blessings which thou hast ordained to be poured out upon

those who shall reverence thee in thy house. 22 And we ask thee, Holy Father, that thy servants may go forth from this house armed with thy power, and that thy name may be upon them, and thy glory be round about them, and thine angels have charge over them; 23 And from this place they may bear exceedingly great and glorious tidings, in truth, unto the ends of the earth, that they may know that this is thy work, and that thou hast put forth thy hand, to fulfil that which thou hast spoken by the mouths of the prophets, concerning the last days.

v10-23 Smith parallels the Lord's quotation from v. 6-9 by requesting He assist them in fulfilling it, and adds justifications as to why He should help them. The parallels are as follows:

v. 6, 10	Call solemn assemblies
v. 7, 14	Teach wisdom from the best books
v. 8, 16	A house of God
v. 9, 17-19	Incomings, outgoings, salutations

The intervening text, v. 11-13, 15, 22-23 form the justifications:

Appeal (v. 10) - Assist us...in calling solemn assemblies

Justification (v. 11-13) - Secure fulfillment of promises, glory upon thy people, sanctify thy house (note the repetition of theme in v. 12-13 for emphasis).

Appeal (v. 14) - And do grant...teach wisdom from the best books

Justification (v. 15) - That they may grow up in Thee...and be prepared

Appeal (v. 16, 17-19) - And that this house may be a house of God...Incomings, outgoings, salutations to the Lord

Justification (v. 22-23) - That thy servants may go forth armed with power...unto the ends of the earth...to fulfil that which thou hast spoken

Thus, the justifications Smith present appeal to the Lord as they allow Him to fulfil His promises, same as Moses' appeal to the Abrahamic covenant in Exod. 32 from the example noted above.

v12 With respect to the request to sanctify the Temple, cp. D&C 88:68.

v20-21 Upon first glance, these two verses do not fit into the repeating appeal...justification pattern noted above. However, when reviewing the substance of D&C 94:6-9 and 97:15-17 (also cp. D&C 110:8) it can be seen that Smith has inserted something of a pre-emptive appeal to mercy and forgiveness in the event of pollution. Thus, v. 22-23 serves as a justification to this appeal as well as the appeal of v. 16-19.

24 We ask thee, Holy Father, to establish the people that shall worship, and honorably hold a name and standing in this thy house, to all generations and for eternity; 25 That no weapon formed against them shall prosper; that he who diggeth a pit for them shall fall into the same himself; 26 That no combination of wickedness shall have power to rise up and prevail over thy people upon whom thy name shall be put in this house; 27 And if any people shall rise against this people, that thine anger be kindled against them; 28 And if they shall smite this people thou wilt smite them; thou wilt fight for thy people as thou didst in the day of battle, that they may be delivered from the hands of all their enemies.

29 We ask thee, Holy Father, to confound, and astonish, and to bring to shame and confusion, all those who have spread lying reports abroad, over the world, against thy servant or servants, if they will not repent, when the everlasting gospel shall be proclaimed in their ears; 30 And that all their works may be brought to naught, and be swept away by the hail, and by the judgments which thou wilt send upon them in thine anger, that there may be an end to lyings and slanders against thy people.

31 For thou knowest, O Lord, that thy servants have been innocent before thee in bearing record of thy name, for which they have suffered these things. 32 Therefore we plead before thee for a full and complete deliverance from under this yoke; 33 Break it off, O Lord; break it off from the necks of thy servants, by thy power, that we may rise up in the midst of this generation and do thy work.

v24-33 A request for protection from their enemies, which is Psalmic (cf. Ps. 13, 74, 143), with Smith acting as intercessor on behalf of the downtrodden Saints.

Smith asks for physical protection from the Saint's persecutors (v. 24-28) and that those slandering the Church and hampering their missionary efforts be confounded (v. 29-30), so the Lord's servants may succeed in doing His work (v. 31-33).

34 O Jehovah, have mercy upon this people, and as all men sin forgive the transgressions of thy people, and let them be blotted out forever. 35 Let the anointing of thy ministers be sealed upon them with power from on high. 36 Let it be fulfilled upon them, as upon those on the day of Pentecost; let the gift of tongues be poured out upon thy people, even cloven tongues as of fire, and the interpretation thereof. 37 And let thy house be filled, as with a rushing mighty wind, with thy glory. 38 Put upon thy servants the testimony of the covenant, that when they go out and proclaim thy word they may seal up the law, and prepare the hearts of thy saints for all those judgments thou art about to send, in thy wrath, upon the inhabitants of the earth, because of their transgressions, that thy people may not faint in the day of trouble.

39 And whatsoever city thy servants shall enter, and the people of that city receive their testimony, let thy peace and thy salvation be upon that city; that they may gather out of that city the righteous, that they may come forth to Zion, or to her stakes, the places of thine appointment, with songs of everlasting joy; 40 And until this be accomplished, let not thy judgments fall upon that city. 41 And whatsoever city thy servants shall enter, and the people of that city receive not the testimony of thy servants, and thy servants warn them to save themselves from this untoward generation, let it be upon that city according to that which thou hast spoken by the mouths of thy prophets.

42 But deliver thou, O Jehovah, we beseech thee, thy servants from their hands, and cleanse them from their blood. 43 O Lord, we delight not in the destruction of our fellow men; their souls are precious before thee; 44 But thy word must be fulfilled. Help thy servants to say, with thy grace assisting them: Thy will be done, O Lord, and not ours. 45 We know that thou hast spoken by the mouth of thy prophets terrible things concerning the wicked, in the last days--that thou wilt pour out thy judgments, without measure; 46 Therefore, O Lord, deliver thy people from the calamity of the wicked; enable thy servants to seal up the law, and bind up the testimony, that they may be prepared against the day of burning.

v34-46 Smith requests forgiveness of sins (v. 34), that the Lord anoint His servants with the Holy Spirit as in ancient times (v. 35-37), and then lead them to gather out the righteous to Zion and seal up the wicked to Judgement in fulfilment of D&C 29:7-8 (v. 38-46).

v42 "deliver...thy servants from their hands", the "their" is referring to the "this untoward generation" in referenced in v. 41.

v45 "thy prophets", in all likelihood referring to the Old Testament prophets (e.g., Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Joel, etc.) as they speak of the Day of the Lord.

47 We ask thee, Holy Father, to remember those who have been driven by the inhabitants of Jackson county, Missouri, from the lands of their inheritance, and break off, O Lord, this yoke of affliction that has been put upon them. 48 Thou knowest, O Lord, that they have been greatly oppressed and afflicted by wicked men; and our hearts flow out with sorrow because of their grievous burdens. 49 O Lord, how long wilt thou suffer this people to bear this affliction, and the cries of their innocent ones to ascend up in thine ears, and their blood come up in testimony before thee, and not make a display of thy testimony in their behalf?

50 Have mercy, O Lord, upon the wicked mob, who have driven thy people, that they may cease to spoil, that they may repent of their sins if repentance is to be found; 51 But if they will not, make bare thine arm, O Lord, and redeem that which thou didst appoint a Zion unto thy people. 52 And if it cannot be otherwise, that the cause of thy people may not fail before thee may thine anger be kindled, and thine indignation fall upon them, that they may be wasted away, both root and branch, from under heaven; 53 But inasmuch as they will repent, thou art gracious and merciful, and wilt turn away thy wrath when thou lookest upon the face of thine Anointed.

v47-53 Smith requests the Lord vindicate the blood of martyred Saints (v. 47-49), but forgive those who truly repent inasmuch as they do repent (v. 50-53). This kind of appeal for vindication of blood follows the rhetoric of Rev. 6:10, 16:6, 17:6, 18:24, 19:2.

v49 "they testimony in their behalf?", the [original manuscript #1](#) and the printed broadsheet have "power" instead of "testimony".

v53 A blatant intercession theme.

54 Have mercy, O Lord, upon all the nations of the earth; have mercy upon the rulers of our land; may those principles, which were so honorably and nobly defended, namely, the Constitution of our land, by our fathers, be established forever. 55 Remember the kings, the princes, the nobles, and the great ones of the earth, and all people, and the churches, all the poor, the needy, and afflicted ones of the earth; 56 That their hearts may be softened when thy servants shall go out from thy house, O



Jehovah, to bear testimony of thy name; that their prejudices may give way before the truth, and thy people may obtain favor in the sight of all; 57 That all the ends of the earth may know that we, thy servants, have heard thy voice, and that thou hast sent us; 58 That from among all these, thy servants, the sons of Jacob, may gather out the righteous to build a holy city to thy name, as thou hast commanded them.

v54-58 Smith asks the Lord to prepare the way before them as they go out to preach the gospel.

v58 "thy servants, the sons of Jacob", this sonship is largely by adoption as v. 60 refers to the ecclesia in general as "gentiles". However, there is surely some of scattered natural Israel among the ecclesia as Smith and others are identified as such.

59 We ask thee to appoint unto Zion other stakes besides this one which thou hast appointed, that the gathering of thy people may roll on in great power and majesty, that thy work may be cut short in righteousness. 60 Now these words, O Lord, we have spoken before thee, concerning the revelations and commandments which thou hast given unto us, who are identified with the Gentiles. 61 But thou knowest that thou hast a great love for the children of Jacob, who have been scattered upon the mountains for a long time, in a cloudy and dark day. 62 We therefore ask thee to have mercy upon the children of Jacob, that Jerusalem, from this hour, may begin to be redeemed; 63 And the yoke of bondage may begin to be broken off from the house of David; 64 And the children of Judah may begin to return to the lands which thou didst give to Abraham, their father. 65 And cause that the remnants of Jacob, who have been cursed and smitten because of their transgression, be converted from their wild and savage condition to the fulness of the everlasting gospel; 66 That they may lay down their weapons of bloodshed, and cease their rebellions. 67 And may all the scattered remnants of Israel, who have been driven to the ends of the earth, come to a knowledge of the truth, believe in the Messiah, and be redeemed from oppression, and rejoice before thee.

v59-67 Smith asks the Lord to assist them, the gentiles (v. 60), in gathering natural Israel (v. 61). Scattered Israel (v. 65-67) and the Jews (v. 62-64) are addressed differently here, as is the case in D&C 133:12-13.

Of particular note is Smith's reference to the lineage of David (v. 63), which in an eschatological setting is closely tied to the Latter-day David and the Temple at Jerusalem (cf. 2 Sam. 7:12-16, Ezek. 37:21-28).

v59 "cut short in righteousness", the footnote suggests the theme of Matt. 24:22, but this identical phrase appears in D&C 52:11 and D&C 84:97 and is a quotation of KJV Romans 9:28. See comments on D&C 52:11.

It is possible Smith was using this phrase casually with a colloquial meaning which would agree with Matt. 24:22, as in this case it is Smith speaking where the other two D&C appearances are quotations of the Lord.

v61 "thou hast", the [manuscript copy #1](#) and broadsheet have "we have" instead of "thou hast".

v65-66 These verses are obviously referring to Native Americans. On v. 66, compare 3 Ne. 16:15, D&C 87:5.

68 O Lord, remember thy servant, Joseph Smith, Jun., and all his afflictions and persecutions--how he has covenanted with Jehovah, and vowed to thee, O Mighty God of Jacob--and the commandments which thou hast given unto him, and that he hath sincerely striven to do thy will. 69 Have mercy, O Lord, upon his wife and children, that they may be exalted in thy presence, and preserved by thy fostering hand. 70 Have mercy upon all their immediate connections, that their prejudices may be broken up and swept away as with a flood; that they may be converted and redeemed with Israel, and know that thou art God.

71 Remember, O Lord, the presidents, even all the presidents of thy church, that thy right hand may exalt them, with all their families, and their immediate connections, that their names may be perpetuated and had in everlasting remembrance from generation to generation.

72 Remember all thy church, O Lord, with all their families, and all their immediate connections, with all their sick and afflicted ones, with all the poor and meek of the earth; that the kingdom, which thou hast set up without hands, may become a great mountain and fill the whole earth; 73 That thy church may come forth out of the wilderness of darkness, and shine forth fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners; 74 And be adorned as a bride for that day when thou shalt unveil the heavens, and cause the mountains to flow down at thy presence, and the valleys to be exalted, the rough places made smooth; that thy glory may fill the earth; 75 That when the trump shall sound for the dead, we shall be caught up in the cloud to meet thee, that we may ever be with the Lord; 76 That our garments may be pure, that we may be clothed upon with robes of righteousness, with palms in our hands, and crowns of glory upon our heads, and reap eternal joy for all our sufferings.

v68-76 A top down request for protection and compassion which is again Psalmic: watch over us that we may praise you (v. 76) and that your words may be fulfilled (v. 73-75).

v73 See comments on D&C 5:14.

v74 "the mountains to flow down", a phrase referring to the Day of the Lord when He will tread the mountains beneath His feet causing them to melt, as well as being connected to the "mountains being laid low and valleys being exalted" apocalyptic catch phrase, cp. Isa. 64:1-3, Micah 1:3-4, D&C 133:26, ct. Joel 3:18.

v75 The verse makes reference to the so-called rapture (cf. 1 Thes. 4:17), and favors the post-tribulation position as to when it will occur (there are three groups among Christians, one favors pre-tribulation rapture [the most popular position], one favors a mid-tribulation rapture, and one favors the post-tribulation rapture). All LDS scripture favors the post-tribulation rapture, cf. D&C 45:45, D&C 88:96-97, D&C 133:56.

77 O Lord God Almighty, hear us in these our petitions, and answer us from heaven, thy holy habitation, where thou sittest enthroned, with glory, honor, power, majesty, might, dominion, truth, justice, judgment, mercy, and an infinity of fulness, from everlasting to everlasting. 78 O hear, O hear, O hear us, O Lord! And answer these petitions, and accept the dedication of this house unto thee, the work of our hands, which we have built unto thy name; 79 And also this church, to put upon it thy name. And help us by the power of thy Spirit, that we may mingle our voices with those bright, shining seraphs around thy throne, with acclamations of praise, singing Hosanna to God and the Lamb! 80 And let these, thine anointed ones, be clothed with salvation, and thy saints shout aloud for joy. Amen, and Amen.

v77-80 The closing appeal. Verse 77 starts off the closing with considerable praise, v. 78 contains a triple-repeat superlative plea for the Lord to hear them, and v. 79-80 finishes it off with a double-repeat emphatic Psalmic justification: that we may sing Hosanna to God and the Lamb (v. 79) and that we may shout aloud for joy (v. 80).

## **Historical Material Pertaining to Doctrine & Covenants 109**

Smith wrote the prayer before the dedication, apparently during the preceding week, assisted by Oliver Cowdery, Sidney Rigdon and Warren Parrish. Whether they acted solely as scribes, or had input into the composition is unclear. Given the theological and structural complexity of the text, it is likely it is more of an inspired text than a simple human construction.

This section was first published in the Messenger and Advocate, volume 2, number 6, pages 277-280, dated March, 1836. It was then published as a broadsheet in Kirtland entitled PRAYER, At the Dedication of the Lord's House in Kirtland, Ohio, dated March 27, 1836. It was not published again until quite a bit later in the 1876 edition Doctrine and Covenants.

### **Excerpt from Sketch Book for the use of Joseph Smith, jr.**

26 March 1836 • Saturday

Saturday the 26th At home attending to my domestick concerns in the morning.— after brekfast met with the presidency to make arrangements for the solemn assembly which occupied the remainder of the day

27 March 1836 • Sunday

Sunday morning the 27th The congregation began to assimble at the chapel at about 7 oclock one hour earlier than the doors were to be opened many brethren had come in from the region's [p. 172] round about to witness the dedication of the Lord's House and share in his blessings and such was the anxiety on this occasion that some hundreds, (probably five or six,) assembled before the doors were opened—

The presidency entered with the door keepers and aranged them at the inner and outer doors also placed our stewards to receiv donations from those who should feel disposed to contribute something to defray the expenses of building the House of the Lord—we also dedicated the pulpits & consecrated them to the Lord The doors were then opened President Sidney Rigdon President Oliver Cowdery and myself seated the congregation as they came in, and according to the best calculation we could make we received between 9 and 10,00 hundred which is as many as can be comfortably situated we then

informed the door keepers that we could receive no more, and a multitude were deprived of the benefits of the meeting on account of the house not being sufficiently capacious to receive them, and I felt to regret that any of my brethren and sisters should be deprived of the Meeting, and I recommended them to repair to the School-house and hold a meeting which they did and filled that house also and yet many were left out-

The assembly were then organized in the following manner,-  
viz. [p. 173]

West end of the. house

Presdt. Frederick G. Williams Presdt. Joseph Smith, Sen and Presdt. William W. Phelps occupied the 1st pulpit for the Melchisedic priesthood- Presdt. S. Rigdon myself and Presdt Hyrum Smith in the 2ond-

Presdt. David Whitmer Presdt. O. Cowdery and Presdt. John Whitmer in the 3d.- The 4th was occupied by the president of the high-preists and his counsellors, and 2 choiristers- The 12. Apostles on the right in the 3. highest seats-

The presdt of the Eldrs his clerk & counsellors in the seat immediatly below the 12- The high council of Kirtland consisting of 12, on the left in the 3, first seats- the 4th seat below them was occupied by Eldr's Warren A. Cowdery & Warren Parrish who served as scribes.-

The pulpits in the east end of the house for the Aaronic priesthood were occupied as follows.- The Bishop of Kirtland and his counsellors in the 1st pulpit,- The Bishop of Zion and his counsellors in the 2ond- The presdt. of the priests and his counsellors in the 3d.- The presdt. of the Teachers and his counsellors & one choirister in the 4th- The high council of Zion consisting of [p. 174] 12. counsellors on the right- The presdt of the Deacons and his counsellors in the seat below them.- The 7. presdts of the Seventies on the left- The choir of singers were seated in the 4 corners of the room in seats prepared for that purpose- recd by contribution \$960.00  
9 oclock A. M the servises of the day were opened by Presdt S. Rigdon by reading 1st the 96 Psalm secondly the 24th Psalm-the choir then sung hymn on the 29th page of Latter day Saints collection of hymn's-prayer by Presdt Rigdon choir then sung hymn on 14th page Presdt Rigdon then read the 18, 19, & 20, verses of the 8th chapter of Mathew and preached more particularly from the 20th verse.- his prayer and address were very forcible and sublime, and well adapted to the occasion.-

after he closed his sermon, he called upon the several quorums commencing with the presidency, to manifest by rising up, their willingness to acknowledge me as a prophet and seer and uphold me as such by their prayers of faith, all the quorums in their turn, cheerfully complied with this request he then called upon all the congregation of Saints, also to give their assent by rising on their feet which they did unanimously

After an intermission of 20, minutes the services of the day were resumed, by singing Adam ondi ahman. I then made a short address and called upon the several quorums, and all the congregation of saints to acknowledge the Presidency as Prophets and Seers, and uphold them by their prayers, they all covenanted to do so by rising; I then called upon the quorums and congregation of saints to acknowledge the 12 [p. 175] Apostles who were present as Prophets and Seers and special witnesses to all the nations of the earth, holding the keys of the kingdom, to unlock it or cause it to be done among them; and uphold them by their prayers, which they assented to by rising, I then called upon the quorums and congregation of saints to acknowledge the high council of Kirtland in all the authorities authority of the Melchisedec priesthood and uphold them by their prayers which they assented to by rising. I then called upon the quorums and congregation of saints to acknowledge and uphold by their prayer's the Bishops of Kirtland and Zion and their counsellors, in all the authority of the Aaronic priesthood, which they did by rising. I then called upon the quorums and congregation of saints to acknowledge the high-council of Zion, and uphold them by their prayers in all the authority of the high priesthood which they did by rising. I next called upon the quorums and congregation of saints to acknowledge the Presidents of the seventy's who act as their representatives as Apostles and special witnesses to the nations to assist the 12 in opening the gospel kingdom, among all people and to uphold them by their prayer's which they did by rising- I then called upon the quorums and all the saints to acknowledge president of the Elders and his counsellors and uphold them by their prayers which they did by rising-. The quorums and congregation of saints were then called upon to acknowledge and uphold by their prayer's the Presidents of the Priests, Teachers, and Deacons and their counsellors, which they did by rising.

N. B. The Presidents of the seventy's were acknowledged first after the 12 Apostles [p. 176]

The hymn on the hundred and 14 page was then sung, after which I offered to God the following dedication prayer.

[text of D&C 109 quoted]

Sung Hosanah to God and the Lamb after which the Lords supper was administered

I then bore testimony of the administering of angels.— Presdt Williams also arose and testified that while Presdt Rigdon was making [p. 184] his first prayer an angel entered the window and took his seated between father Smith, and himself, and remained their during his prayer Presdt David Whitmer also saw angels in the house

We then sealed the proceedings of the day by shouting hosannah to God and the Lamb 3 times sealing it each time with Amen, Amen, and Amen and after requesting all the official members to meet again in the evening we retired—met in the evening and instructed the quorums respecting the ordinance of washing of feet which we were to attend to on wednesday following

(Joseph Smith, Jr., "[Sketch Book for the use of Joseph Smith, jr.](#)," Journal, Sept. 1835–Apr. 1836; handwriting of Warren Parrish, an unidentified scribe, Sylvester Smith, Frederick G. Williams, Warren Cowdery, JS, and Oliver Cowdery; 195 pages; JS Collection, CHL. Includes redactions and archival marking.)

**Excerpt from Oliver Cowdery's Kirtland, Ohio, Sketchbook**

From Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> attended Heb. School, up to Saturday the 26. Nothing of note's transpiring. This day our school did not keep, we prepared for the dedication of the Lord's house. I met in the president's room, pred. J. Smith, jr. S. Rigdon, my brother W. A. Cowdery & Elder W. Parrish, and assisted in the writing a prayer for the dedication of the house.

Sunday, the 27<sup>th</sup> attended on the dedication of the Lord's house. For the particulars of this great event see my account written by myself, and printed in the March No, of The Messenger and Advocate, signed C. In the evening I met with the officers of the church in the Lord's house. The Spirit was poured out—I saw the glory of God, like a great cloud, come down and rest upon the house, and fill the same like a mighty rushing wind. I also saw cloven tongues, like as a fire rest upon many, (for there were 316 present,) while they spake with other tongues and

prophesied. ([Leonard J. Arrington, BYU Studies Quarterly, volume 12, issue 4, article 6, October 1, 1972](#))

**Excerpt from Life of Heber C. Kimball**

This building [Kirtland Temple] the saints commenced in 1833, in poverty, and without means to do it. In 1834 they completed the walls, and in 1835-6 they nearly finished it. The cost was between sixty and seventy thousand dollars.... This house was 80 x 60 feet, and 57 feet high to the eaves. It was divided into two stories, each 22 feet high and arched overhead. Ten feet were cut off from the front by a partition, and used as an entry or outer court, which also contained the stairs. This left the main room 55 x 65 feet in the clear, both below and above. In each of these rooms were built two pulpits, one in each end. Each pulpit consisted of four different apartments; the fourth standing on a platform raised a suitable height above the floor; the third stood directly behind and elevated a little above the fourth; the second in rear of and elevated above the third; and in like manner the first above the second. Each of these apartments was just large enough and rightly calculated to seat three persons, and the breastwork in front of each of these three last mentioned was constituted of three semi-circles joining each other, and finished in good style. The fourth or lower one, was straight in front, and had an elegant table leaf attached to it, that could be raised at pleasure for the convenience of administering the Sacrament, etc. These pulpits were alike in each end of the house. One was for the use of the Melchizedek or High Priesthood, and the other for the Aaronic or lesser Priesthood. The first or highest apartment was occupied by the First Presidency over the whole Church; the second apartment by the Melchizedek High Priesthood; the third by the President of the High Priests' Quorum; and the fourth by the President of the Elders and his two counselors. The highest apartment of the other pulpit was occupied by the Bishop of the Church and his two counselors; the next by the President of the Priests and his two counselors; the third by the President of the Teachers and his two counselors; and the fourth by the President of the Deacons and his two counselors.

Each of these apartments had curtains hanging from the ceiling over head down to the top of the pulpit, which could be rolled up or dropped down at pleasure; and when dropped down would completely exclude those within the apartment from the sight of all others. The room itself was finished with slips and



seats so calculated that by slipping the seats a little the congregation could change their faces toward either pulpit they chose; for in some cases the high Priesthood would administer, and in other cases the lesser Priesthood would administer. The room was also divided into four compartments by means of curtains or veils hanging from the ceiling over head down to the floor, which could be rolled up at pleasure, so that the house could be used all in one or divided into four rooms and used for different purposes. Thus the house was constructed to suit and accommodate the different quorums of the priesthood and worship peculiar to the Church. The first story or lower room was dedicated for divine worship alone. The second story was finished similar in form to the first, but was designed wholly for instructing the Priesthood, and was supplied with tables and seats instead of slips. In the attic, five rooms were finished for the convenience of schools and for different quorums of the Church to meet in. There was no baptismal font in this temple, the ordinance of baptism for the dead not having been revealed.

At the time of dedication the first story was finished, also the attic, but the second story was in an unfinished condition.

At the dedication an address was delivered by Elder [Sidney] Rigdon, from Matthew 8th chap. 18th, 19th and 20<sup>th</sup> verses more particularly the 20th. He spoke two hours and a half. The tenor of his discourse went to show the toils, sufferings, privations, and hardships the brethren and sisters had to endure while building this house, and compared it with the sufferings of the Saints in the days of the Savior.

During the ceremonies of the dedication [Kirtland Temple] an angel appeared and sat near President Joseph Smith, Sen., and Frederick G. Williams, so that they had a fair view of his person. He was a very tall personage, black eyes, white hair, and stoop shouldered; his garment was whole, extending to near his ankles; on his feet he had sandals. He was sent as a messenger to accept of the dedication....

We had been commanded to prepare ourselves for a solemn assembly. [Sec. 108:4.] At length the time arrived for this assembly to meet; previous to which the Prophet Joseph exhorted the Elders to solemnize their minds, by casting away every evil from them, in thought, word and deed, and to let their hearts become sanctified, because they need not expect a blessing from God without being duly prepared for it, for the Holy Ghost would not dwell in unholy temples. This meeting took place soon after the house of the Lord had been dedicated....

When the Prophet Joseph had finished the endowments of the First Presidency, the Twelve and the Presiding Bishops, the First Presidency proceeded to lay hands upon each one of them to seal and confirm the anointing; and at the close of each blessing the whole of the quorums responded to it with a loud shout of Hosanna! Hosanna! etc.

While these things were being attended to the beloved disciple John was seen in our midst by the Prophet Joseph, Oliver Cowdery and others. After this all the quorums arose in order, together with the three Presidencies; and the Twelve then presented themselves separately and individually before the First Presidency, with hands uplifted towards heaven, and asked of God whatever they felt to desire; and after each individual petition the whole of the quorums answered aloud Amen! Hosanna! Hosanna! Hosanna! To God and the Lamb, forever and ever, amen and amen!

The 6th day of April being the day appointed for fasting and prayer, all the Elders, Priests, Teachers and Deacons, numbering about four hundred, met together in the House of the Lord to attend to further ordinances; none being permitted to enter but official members who had previously received their washings and anointings. (Heber C. Kimball, Life of Heber C. Kimball, March 27, 1836, pages 88-92)

### **Excerpt from Journal of Discourses**

When the Temple was completed there was a great manifestation of power. The brethren gathered together to its dedication. We considered it a very large building. Some nine hundred and sixty could be seated, and there would be room for a few to stand, the congregation was swelled to a little over a thousand persons at the time of the dedication. It was a trial of faith. The Elders from every part of the country had come together. The finishing of the Temple had involved a debt of many thousands, and we all came together to the dedication. The congregation was so large that we could not all get in; and when the house was full, then, of course, the doors were closed, and no more admitted.... When the dedication prayer was read by Joseph, it was read from a printed copy. This was a great trial of faith to many. "How can it be that the prophet should read a prayer?" What an awful trial it was, for the Prophet to read a prayer! The service of the dedication being over, it was repeated again on the next day, to accommodate those who had not been able to get in on the first day, and all those who had been

there on the first day, excepting the authorities, being required to remain outside, till those who could not get in the day before were seated; the result of this arrangement was two days dedication. (George A. Smith, Journal of Discourses, volume 11, pages 9-10.)

**Excerpt from Life of Joseph Smith**

Joseph was acknowledged by the several quorums, standing upon their feet, as the Prophet and Seer of the Church, and they gave a solemn pledge to uphold him as such by their faith and prayers. [Kirtland Temple dedication.] This action was also ratified by the entire congregation of the Saints in the same manner. The Prophet then called upon the quorums and the congregation to acknowledge the other members of the First Presidency and the several quorums in their offices and callings, and the vote was unanimous in every instance.

After the administration of the Lord's Supper and the expression of many solemn testimonies, the dedication was sealed by shouting Hosanna, Hosanna to God and the Lamb, three times sealing it, each time with Amen, Amen, and Amen.

Brigham Young had the gift of tongues powerfully upon him and made an address, which David W. Patten interpreted. Then the Prophet made a short exhortation also in tongues, and afterward blessed the congregation in the name of the Lord, and the assembly dispersed. (George Q. Cannon, Life of Joseph Smith, pages 190-91)

**Excerpt from Doctrine and Covenants Commentary**

The dedication of the Temple in Kirtland, on the 27th of March, 1836, was an ever memorable event in the history of the Church. That structure was reared in compliance with Revelations received (See Sec. 88:119; 95:8-9), at a time when the Saints were few and poor, and when to raise the money required (between sixty and seventy thousand dollars) meant a great deal of self-sacrifice on their part. "While the brethren labored in their departments," says Tullidge, "the sisters were actively engaged in boarding and clothing workmen not otherwise provided for all living as abstemiously as possible, so that every cent might be appropriated to the grand object." And thus they toiled on from the 23rd of July, 1833, when the corner stones were laid, until it was completed for dedication.

In the Revelation given on the 1st of June, 1833, the Lord

indicated the special object for which this house was to be built: "I gave unto you a commandment, that you should build an house, in the which house I design to endow those whom I have chosen, with power from on high" (Sec. 95:8). It was to be a place in which the Church would receive a Pentecostal baptism in the fire of the Holy Spirit. A special house, consecrated and dedicated, was needed for that purpose. Hence the commandment of God to the Saints concerning this house.

Now the day of dedication had come. The people assembled early, full of joy and gratitude, and they were not disappointed in their expectations. The manifestations of the divine presence were such as to leave no room in the minds of the true Saints for doubt concerning the nature of the work in which they were engaged. Heber C. Kimball relates that during the ceremonies of the dedication, an angel appeared and sat near Joseph Smith, Sr., and Frederick G. Williams, so that they had a fair view of his person. He was tall, had black eyes and white hair; wore a garment extending to near his ankles, and had sandals on his feet. "He was sent," President Kimball says, "as a messenger to accept of the dedication" (Whitney's Life of Heber C. Kimball, p. 103). A few days afterwards, a solemn assembly was held in accordance with a commandment received (See Sec. 108:4), and blessings were given. "While these things were being attended to," Heber C. Kimball says, "the beloved disciple John was seen in our midst by the Prophet Joseph, Oliver Cowdery, and others" (Ibid., p. 104). On the 6th of April, a meeting was held which was prolonged into the night. On this occasion the spirit of prophecy was poured out upon the Saints, and many in the congregation saw tongues of fire upon some of those present, while to others angels appeared. "This," President Kimball says, "continued several days and was attended by a marvelous spirit of prophecy. Every man's mouth was full of prophesying, and for a number of days and weeks our time was spent in visiting from house to house, administering bread and wine, and pronouncing blessings upon each other to that degree, that from the external appearances one would have supposed that the last days had truly come, in which the Spirit of the Lord was poured out upon all flesh," (Ibid., p. 105; see also Hist. of the Church, Vol. II., p. 427). Nor were the Saints the only ones who were aware of supernatural manifestations at this time. Elder George A. Smith rose to prophesy, when a noise was heard like the sound of a rushing wind. All the congregation arose, and many began to speak in tongues and prophesy. And then people of the neighborhood came running together (hearing an unusual sound

within and seeing a bright light like a pillar of fire resting upon the Temple), and were astonished at what was taking place. This continued until the meeting closed, at 11 p.m. (History of the Church, Vol. II., p. 428).

The dedicatory prayer opens with an expression of gratitude to God for His faithfulness and mercy (v. 1). Then the Prophet humbly asks Him to accept the house which had been built in obedience to His command (v. 4). It was not a magnificent building, compared with the Temple of Solomon, for instance, but, the Prophet says, "Thou knowest that we have done this work through great tribulation" (v. 5). Then he asks the Lord to bless His people in the solemn assembly that is to be called (vv. 10-13), and to grant that those who shall worship in the Temple may be instructed and learn wisdom (vv. 14-20). He asks for blessings upon the servants of the Lord (v. 22), and on the Saints generally (vv. 24-8), and that the enemies may be confounded (vv. 29-31). He prays for all nations (v. 54), for kings, princes, etc., (vv. 55-8); for the Church (v. 59); for the children of Jacob; the children of Judah (v. 64); for Israel (v. 67); and then he prays for himself and his house (vv. 68-70); for the officers of the Church (v. 71), and for the Church (vv. 72-6). This remarkable prayer can be studied, profitably, in connection with the dedicatory prayer of King Solomon. See I. Kings 8:23-53, and II. Chron. 6: 14-42.

Elder George A. Smith says of the Kirtland Temple:

"We considered it a very large building. Some 960 could be seated, and there would be room for a few to stand; the congregation was swelled to a little over a thousand persons at the time of the dedication. It was a trial of faith. The Elders from every part of the country had come together. \* \* \* The congregation was so large that we could not all get in; and when the house was full, then, of course the doors were closed and no more admitted. This caused Elder Frazier Eaton, who had paid \$700 towards building the house, to apostatize, because he did not get there early enough to the meeting. When the dedication prayer was read by Joseph, it was read from a printed copy. This was a great trial of faith to many, 'How can it be that the Prophet should read a prayer?'" (Jour. of Dis., Vol. XI., p. 9).

"The erection of the Temple at Kirtland seemed to increase the hostile opposition to which the Church had been subjected since its organization; and persecution soon became so violent that all of the Saints who could dispose of their property and leave did so and joined their fellow religionists in Missouri. Within two years following the dedication, a general exodus of

the Saints had taken place, and the Temple soon fell into the hands of the persecutors" (Dr. James E. Talmage, *The House of the Lord*, p. 123).

Nor is this to be wondered at. The rearing of a Temple of God in the world is the construction of a citadel by the followers of Prince Immanuel in the territory claimed by Diabolus. Hence his rage when the people of God build Temples. But the Temple in Kirtland served its divine purpose, as did that in Nauvoo, though both were abandoned. In it the Saints received that power from on high which enabled the Church to withstand, successfully, the attacks of all enemies. Owing to that baptism by the Holy Spirit received in the Temples, the Church, notwithstanding persecution, exile, and apostasy, has grown in spiritual power and become able to make itself felt in the world as a regenerating force. But for the Temples and the communion with God established through the Temple service, the Church might have been overwhelmed in the persecutions of Missouri and Illinois, just as the Primitive Church might have perished in the early persecutions but for the power it received on the day of Pentecost. Comp. Acts. 1:8. (Hyrum M. Smith and Janne M. Sjodahl, *Doctrine and Covenants Commentary*)

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