

large open spaces. It had no ordinance rooms, no baptismal font, and no sealing rooms like we are accustomed to seeing in modern temples. The primary purpose for the temple in Kirtland was to create a sacred space where the Savior could manifest Himself and for Moses, Elias, and Elijah to appear and restore important priesthood keys.

In the revelation commanding the Saints to build the temple in Nauvoo, it is clear the Savior had different purposes in mind for this temple. The temple was to be a place “that your anointings, and your washings, and your baptisms for the dead, and your solemn assemblies” might be conducted, along with a number of other things. While the Kirtland Temple took on the appearance of a stately meetinghouse, the exterior of the Nauvoo temple was covered in rich symbolism. Stones with stars, moons, and sunstones adorned the outside of the temple.

The complexity on the outside of the Nauvoo temple was only the beginning. Inside the temple a more complicated collection of teachings were intended to introduce the Saints to the higher ordinances of the gospel and the mysteries of eternal life. Today each temple built by the Saints has its own unique set of symbols on the outside, but the symbolic teaching on the inside of the temple is the same in every holy house. When we enter that setting, the Lord prepares us for higher things.

What are some meaningful experiences you have had with the temple?

Day 309

Doctrine and Covenants 124:49

What Does the Lord Require of His Servants?

*Verily, verily, I say unto you, that when I give a commandment to any of the sons of men to do a work unto my name, and those sons of men go with all their might and with all they have to perform that work, and cease not their diligence, and their enemies come upon them and hinder them from performing that work, behold, it be-
hooveth me to require that work no more at the hands of those sons of men, but to accept of their offerings.*

The first temple built in this dispensation was not supposed to be built in Kirtland, Nauvoo, or Salt Lake City. The first temple was intended to be built in Zion, the New Jerusalem planned by the Saints in Jackson County, Missouri. The Lord gave the command to build the temple in an 1832 revelation (see Doctrine and Covenants 84:1–5). The Saints committed themselves to build the temple and went to work. Unfortunately, horrific persecution from the other settlers in Jackson County forced the Saints to leave under the threat of their lives in the fall of 1833. In the years following, the Saints found themselves as refugees in Missouri, driven from place to place until they were forcibly evicted from the state under the threat of an extermination order.

After the Saints arrived in Nauvoo and began to rebuild their lives, the Lord addressed the question of His command to build the temple in Zion. Recognizing the terrible suffering of the Saints and their sincere desire to build the temple, the Lord declared, “It behooveth me to require that work no more at the hand of those sons of men, but to accept their offering.” The temple would still be built, but for this time, the Savior was relieving the Saints of the command to build the temple at that time.

At times the Savior asks us to do hard things. This revelation reveals that the Lord doesn’t always expect us to succeed. He expects us to try. He expects to put our whole heart and soul into the work, just like the early Saints in Zion did. But accomplishing the task isn’t always the goal. The goal is to be changed by the task. One day the temple in Zion will be built, but for now the offering of the Saints was accepted by the Lord.

Have you ever failed to accomplish a task but felt that your offering was accepted by God?

Day 310

Doctrine and Covenants 125:2

What Can I Do to Be Prepared for the Future?

Verily, thus saith the Lord, I say unto you, if those who call themselves by my name and are essaying to be my saints, if they will do my will and keep my commandments concerning them, let them gather