

September 1–7: Doctrine and Covenants 94–97 “For the Salvation of Zion”

Temples

In Section 95 the Lord chastises the Saints for not building a temple in Kirtland as He had earlier commanded them to do (D&C 88:119-136). In Section 97 He commands them to also build a temple in Jackson County.

D&C 95:1

1 Verily, thus saith the Lord unto you whom I love, and whom I love I also chasten that their sins may be forgiven, for with the chastisement I prepare a way for their deliverance in all things out of temptation, and I have loved you—

How do you think that receiving spiritual chastisement can be a blessing in your life?

(that their sins may be forgiven
I prepare a way for their deliverance in all things out of temptation)

Taniela B. Wakolo

“Sometimes God manifests His love by chastening us. It is a way of reminding us that He loves us and that He knows who we are.... When we recognize the chastening and are willing recipients, it becomes a spiritual surgery.... That chastening, or spiritual surgery, will bring about needed change in our lives. We will realize, brothers and sisters, that it refines and purifies our inner vessels.” (CR, April 2021)

D&C 95:2-4

2 Wherefore, ye must needs be chastened and stand rebuked before my face;
3 For ye have sinned against me a very grievous sin, in that ye have not considered the great commandment in all things, that I have given unto you concerning the building of mine house;
4 For the preparation wherewith I design to prepare mine apostles to prune my vineyard for the last time, that I may bring to pass my strange act, that I may pour out my Spirit upon all flesh—

What had the members failed to do that brought about this chastisement from the Lord?

(ye have not considered the great commandment... concerning the building of mine house)

In what ways do you think that temples are designed “to prepare mine apostles to prune my vineyard”?

(that I may pour out my Spirit upon all flesh)

The Lord explains why many who had been ordained at this time had not fulfilled their calling

D&C 95:5-8,12

5 But behold, verily I say unto you, that there are many who have been ordained among you, whom I have called but few of them are chosen.

6 They who are not chosen have sinned a very grievous sin, in that they are walking in darkness at noon-day.

7 And for this cause I gave unto you a commandment that you should call your solemn assembly, that your fastings and your mourning might come up into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth, which is by interpretation, the creator of the first day, the beginning and the end.

8 Yea, verily I say unto you, I gave unto you a commandment that you should build a house, in the which house I design to endow those whom I have chosen with power from on high;

12 If you keep not my commandments, the love of the Father shall not continue with you, therefore you shall walk in darkness.

How do you think that temples resolve that fact that many who have “been ordained” are “walking in darkness at noon-day?”

(for this cause I gave unto you a commandment that you should call your solemn assembly
to endow those whom I have chosen with power from on high)

Joseph B. Wirthlin

“When President Gordon B. Hinckley announced an unprecedented number of new temples last April, he declared that ‘temple ordinances become the crowning blessings the Church has to offer’ (CR, April 1998). He is extending these crowning blessings to more Latter-day Saints than ever before. In the house of the Lord, faithful Church members can be endowed ‘with power from on high,’ power that will enable us to resist temptation, honor covenants, obey the Lord’s commandments, and bear fervent, fearless testimony of the gospel to family, friends, and neighbors.” (CR, Oct. 1998)

The Lord was specific about how the Kirtland Temple was to be built and how the space was to be allocated

D&C 95:13-17

13 Now here is wisdom, and the mind of the Lord—let the house be built, not after the manner of the world, for I give not unto you that ye shall live after the manner of the world;

14 Therefore, let it be built after the manner which I shall show unto three of you, whom ye shall appoint and ordain unto this power.

15 And the size thereof shall be fifty and five feet in width, and let it be sixty-five feet in length, in the inner court thereof.

16 And let the lower part of the inner court be dedicated unto me for your sacrament offering, and for your preaching, and your fasting, and your praying, and the offering up of your most holy desires unto me, saith your Lord.

17 And let the higher part of the inner court be dedicated unto me for the school of mine apostles, saith Son Ahman; or, in other words, Alphus; or, in other words, Omegus; even Jesus Christ your Lord. Amen.

In what ways do you think the Kirtland Temple was built specifically to meet the needs of the Church at that time?

(the inner court... for your sacrament offering, and for your preaching, and your fasting
the higher part... for the school of mine apostles)

ElRay L. Christiansen

“Evidently the Kirtland Temple was not designed structurally for such ordinances as baptisms or endowments for the dead, but rather as an appropriate place in which certain of those chosen for the work in the ministry were endowed with essential blessings, keys, and power from on high.

“In it the Savior appeared in person to the Prophet Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery, and he accepted it as his house. This glorious vision was followed by personal visitations of Moses, Elias, and Elijah, who appeared in succession, and each one of them committed the keys of this dispensation.”
(CR, April 1968)

The Lord commends many of the Saints in Jackson County for their faithfulness

D&C 97:1-2,7

1 Verily I say unto you my friends, I speak unto you with my voice, even the voice of my Spirit, that I may show unto you my will concerning your brethren in the land of Zion, many of whom are truly humble and are seeking diligently to learn wisdom and to find truth.

2 Verily, verily I say unto you, blessed are such, for they shall obtain; for I, the Lord, show mercy unto all the meek, and upon all whomsoever I will, that I may be justified when I shall bring them unto judgment.

7 The ax is laid at the root of the trees; and every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit shall be hewn down and cast into the fire. I, the Lord, have spoken it.

The Lord acknowledges that building temples by these early church members was a considerable sacrifice

D&C 97: 8

8 Verily I say unto you, all among them who know their hearts are honest, and are broken, and their spirits contrite, and are willing to observe their covenants by

sacrifice—yea, every sacrifice which I, the Lord, shall command—they are accepted of me.

What does the Lord outline in this verse that we should do in order to be “accepted” by Him?

Erich W. Kopischke

“I will share a simple pattern which, if applied, can help every one of us find ultimate acceptance.... This pattern consists of three simple steps:

- Know that our hearts are honest and broken,
- Know that our spirits are contrite, and
- Be willing to observe our covenants by sacrifice, as commanded by the Lord....

“The third step to being accepted by the Lord is a conscious decision to observe our covenants through sacrifice, ‘yea, every sacrifice which I, the Lord, shall command.’” (CR, April 2013)

Jeffrey R. Holland

“From Adam to the present hour, true faith in the Lord Jesus Christ has always been linked to the offering of sacrifice, our small gift to be a symbolic echo of His majestic offering. With his eye firmly on the Atonement of Jesus Christ, the Prophet Joseph Smith taught that a religion that does not include covenants of sacrifice cannot have the power to bring the promise of eternal life.” (CR, Oct. 2002)

The Lord promised great blessings to the Church members who sacrifice sufficiently to build these temples

D&C 97:9-12

9 For I, the Lord, will cause them to bring forth as a very fruitful tree which is planted in a goodly land, by a pure stream, that yieldeth much precious fruit.
10 Verily I say unto you, that it is my will that a house should be built unto me in the land of Zion, like unto the pattern which I have given you.
11 Yea, let it be built speedily, by the tithing of my people.
12 Behold, this is the tithing and the sacrifice which I, the Lord, require at their hands, that there may be a house built unto me for the salvation of Zion—

What does the Lord promise to those who sacrifice to help build the temple?

(will cause them to bring forth as a very fruitful tree)

Erich W. Kopischke

“The Lord uses a wonderful illustration to show how we profit as individuals and families as we seek His acceptance. He said, ‘For I, the Lord, will cause them to bring forth as a very fruitful tree which is planted

in a goodly land, by a pure stream, that yieldeth much precious fruit' (D&C 97:9)....

“We will be among those to whom He has said, ‘Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord (Matt 25:21).’”
(CR, April 2013)

The Lord continues to elaborate on the blessings of temples

D&C 97:13-16

13 For a place of thanksgiving for all saints, and for a place of instruction for all those who are called to the work of the ministry in all their several callings and offices;

14 That they may be perfected in the understanding of their ministry, in theory, in principle, and in doctrine, in all things pertaining to the kingdom of God on the earth, the keys of which kingdom have been conferred upon you.

15 And inasmuch as my people build a house unto me in the name of the Lord, and do not suffer any unclean thing to come into it, that it be not defiled, my glory shall rest upon it;

16 Yea, and my presence shall be there, for I will come into it, and all the pure in heart that shall come into it shall see God.

What are some of the blessing we are promised when we build temples “in the name of the Lord”?

(a place of thanksgiving
a place of instruction... in all their several callings and offices
my presence shall be there
the pure in heart that shall come into it shall see God)

Orson Pratt

“He has said that his people are always to build unto his name a house. What for? That his name might be there; that his angels might be there; that his presence might be there; and that there the fullness of the holy Priesthood might be more fully revealed, and that there all the ordinances might be performed, that were ordained from before the foundation of the world.” (JD, 19:8)

Joseph B. Wirthlin

“The House of the Lord is a place where we can escape from the mundane and see our lives in an eternal perspective. We can ponder instructions and covenants that help us understand more clearly the plan of salvation and the infinite love of our Heavenly Father for his children. We can ponder our relationship to God, the Eternal Father, and his Son, Jesus Christ....

“Regular temple work can provide spiritual strength. It can be an anchor in daily life, a source of guidance, protection, security, peace, and revelation.”
(CR, April 1992)

David B. Haight

“It is true that some have actually seen the Savior, but when one consults the dictionary, he learns that there are many other meanings of the word see, such as coming to know Him, discerning Him, recognizing Him and His work, perceiving His importance, or coming to understand Him.

“Such heavenly enlightenment and blessings are available to each of us.”
(CR, Oct. 1990)