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Doctrine and Covenants Section 110: From Vision to Canonization

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Doctrine and Covenants Section 110:
From Vision to Canonization

Trever R. Anderson

A Thesis submitted to the faculty of
Brigham Young University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Religious Education

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ABSTRACT

Doctrine and Covenants Section 110,
From Vision to Canonization

Trever R. Anderson

Religious Education

Master of Religious Education

This thesis answers the question of how a vision recorded in Joseph Smith's journal found its home in the Doctrine and Covenants and become recognized as canonized scripture. The April 3, 1836, journal entry became known as Section 110. Section 110 serves as a foundation for the current practices and doctrines of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, involving temple building and temple ordinances. Thus it is important to understand the history of this Section from journal entry to canonization because it is an example of recovering revelation. This thesis also explores contributing factors that could have led to the rediscovery of the 1836 vision.

While Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery were in the Kirtland Temple with veils drawn around them at the Melchizedek Priesthood pulpits on April 3, 1836, they both saw Jesus Christ, Moses, Elias, and Elijah. Jesus Christ accepted the newly built temple and Moses, Elias, and Elijah committed keys to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery. The vision was recorded, but as of yet, there is no evidence that the vision was publicly taught by Joseph Smith nor by Oliver Cowdery. This thesis follows the pattern established by Section 110 and the reclamation of the revelation and looks at how this section paved the way for other revelations and visions to move from handwritten pages to doctrinal levels of canonization, such as Sections 137 and 138.

Joseph Smith had the vision recorded in his journal by Warren Cowdery, who served as a scribe to him. Joseph Smith also had the journal entry written in the *Manuscript History of the Church*. Although Joseph Smith did not publically declare that the 1836 vision had occurred to him and Oliver Cowdery, he still taught about the visitors in the vision and of their importance. After Joseph Smith's death, the leaders of the Church had his history printed in Church owned newspapers. The first time the vision was published in print was on November 6, 1852, in Salt Lake City, Utah, in the *Deseret News*.

Outside influences of the late 1850s through the 1860s put pressure on the Church. Some of these potentially destructive influences were the Utah War, Civil War, transcontinental railroad, Spiritualism movement, and the lack of understanding of the foundational doctrines of the Church by the rising generation that had been a part of the Church from its beginnings with Joseph Smith as its Prophet. This thesis explores these potentially destructive forces on the

Church and its doctrine, and looks at how the leadership of the Church responded to them and how their response influenced the canonization of the 1836 vision.

Under the direction of Brigham Young, Orson Pratt oversaw the publication of the new 1876 edition of the Doctrine and Covenants. This new edition contained twenty-six new sections, including Section 110. After the death of Brigham Young in 1877, John Taylor sat at the head of the Church as president of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. While Orson Pratt was in England, preparing to print a new edition of the Book of Mormon on electrotype plates, he asked John Taylor about printing the Doctrine and Covenants with the electrotype plates as well. John Taylor agreed on condition that Orson Pratt add cross references and explanatory notes, as he had done with the Book of Mormon. Using the 1876 edition, Orson Pratt made the requested additions and the new edition of the Doctrine and Covenants was printed in 1880 and canonized on October 10, 1880, in a General Conference of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, where all present voted unanimously to accept the 1880 edition as canonized scripture.

Keywords: Joseph Smith, Brigham Young, Wilford Woodruff, Orson Pratt, Warren Cowdery, Doctrine and Covenants 110, Section 110, 1836 Vision, Moses, Elias, Elijah, Kirtland Temple, Nauvoo Temple, Salt Lake Temple, St. George Temple, keys, temple ordinances, endowments for the dead, baptisms for the dead, sealing, Doctrine and Covenants 1876 edition, Doctrine and Covenants 1880 edition, canonization

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Chapter 1

The Provenance of Doctrine and Covenants Section 110

Introduction

Joseph Smith Jr., the founder of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, is an American religious figure whose influence and controversy surrounding his proclaimed revelations and visions have literally reached throughout the world. Joseph Smith was a farm boy with a limited education who said that he had seen the Father and Son, and it was under the direction of Jesus Christ that he established the Church. Joseph Smith proclaimed that not only the Father and Son appeared to him but many angels also. One of these was Moroni, the final writer in the Book of Mormon who buried the golden plates. Joseph Smith recorded that Moroni told him that his “name should be had for good and evil among all nations, kindreds, and tongues, or that it should be both good and evil spoken of among all people”¹ Whether one believes in what Joseph Smith taught or not, his name is currently known for good or evil. One reason for this is not only because of the Book of Mormon but also because of the revelations he claimed that were from the Lord, which he had written down. Many of these revelations were bound together in a volume known as the Doctrine and Covenants. The revelations and visions contained in the Doctrine and Covenants eventually reached the doctrinal distinction of being accepted as canonized scripture within the Mormon faith.

Central to the doctrine of the Mormon temple is the claimed visitation of Jesus Christ, Moses, Elias and Elijah to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery in the Kirtland Temple. Though

¹ Joseph Smith History, 1:33.

Joseph Smith never personally recorded this event, he did have it recorded in his journal by his scribe Warren Cowdery. Doctrine and Covenants 110 came from this journal entry. This vision occurred in 1836, but did not become recognized as canonized scripture until 1880. No source yet found shows that Joseph Smith taught in a public setting that the 1836 vision occurred. It was recorded but never publicly taught. The question to answer is: what were the events and causes that led to the reclamation of this vision, including it in the Doctrine and Covenants, and having it eventually canonized?

The reclamation of Section 110 established precedence and prepared the way for other revelations to be lifted from pages of written history and placed in the Doctrine and Covenants. Sections 137 and 138 are two primary examples of sections that became part of the Doctrine and Covenants which followed the pattern established with Section 110. Church presidents received both of these revelations and the revelations were received many years before they became canonized. Scholars and Church members were well aware of both revelations and both revelations had been published in Church literature.² Section 137 is a vision given to Joseph Smith on January 21, 1836, while he was in Kirtland, Ohio. In this vision, recorded in the *History of the Church*,³ he saw the Celestial Kingdom and he learned about the doctrine of salvation for the dead.

President Joseph F. Smith received Section 138 on October 4, 1918, in Salt Lake City. The next day in his opening address in General Conference, he shared with the Church his conviction that he had received several divine communications, including the vision of the Savior visiting the spirit world after His body was laid in the tomb. On October 31, 1918, the

² For a more complete history see, Robert J. Matthews, "The New Publications of the Standard Works - 1979, 1981," *BYU Studies* 22 (1982), 387.

³ Joseph Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 7 vols., introduction and notes by B. H. Roberts (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1932-1951), 2:380-81.

First Presidency, Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, and the Patriarch of the Church unanimously accepted the revelation. The section addressed Malachi's prophecy of the coming of Elijah, which foreshadowed, "the great work to be done in the temples of the Lord in the dispensation of the fullness of times, for the redemption of the dead, and the sealing of the children to their parents, lest the whole earth be smitten with a curse and utterly wasted at his coming" (Doctrine and Covenants 138:48). Members of the Church, in Joseph F. Smith's day, clearly understood that the vision of Elijah was directly linked to temples and salvation for the dead. Section 137 and 138 followed the pattern of Section 110 by going through an incubation period until they became part of the Doctrine and Covenants.

The Provenance of Doctrine and Covenants Section 110

On April 3, 1836, Easter Sunday, one week after the dedication of the Kirtland temple, Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery were at the Melchizedek Priesthood pulpits which were on the west side of the temple. They separated themselves from the others who were in the temple by lowering a canvas curtain—the veil—so that they could pray in private. As they prayed, Joseph Smith recorded, "the veil was taken from our minds, and the eyes of our understanding were opened" (D&C 110:1.) Warren Cowdery recorded in Joseph Smith's journal that Jesus Christ, Moses, Elias and Elijah appeared to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery.⁴

Joseph Smith not only had day-to-day events recorded in his journal, but also revelations he said he had received from the Lord. In 1836, there were only two revelations that he recorded in his journal that occurred in Kirtland. Both were in relation to the newly completed Kirtland Temple. Section 109 was the first revelation recorded in 1836. It contains the dedicatory prayer for the Kirtland Temple, which Joseph Smith taught was given to him by the Lord through

⁴ For a listing of all the published accounts of Doctrine and Covenants Section 110 see Robert J. Woodford, *The Historical Development of the Doctrine and Covenants*, Dissertation, Brigham Young University, 1974, II, 1458-66.

revelation. Joseph Smith read the dedicatory prayer and dedicated the temple on March 27, 1836. One week later on Easter Sunday, April 3, the revelation known as Doctrine and Covenants Section 110 occurred and was recorded in his journal. This was the last revelation recorded in his Kirtland journal for the year 1836.

Joseph Smith had several scribes write in his journals for him. In the one week period of March 27 through April 3, 1836, which is from the dedication of the temple to the visitation of Jesus, Moses, Elias, and Elijah, three different individuals wrote in his journal. These were Warren Parrish,⁵ Warren Cowdery⁶ and possibly Jesse Hitchcock.⁷ Joseph Smith had something recorded in his journal every day during this week. Because of the consistency of writing each day, the revelation of Doctrine and Covenants 110 must have been recorded on the day it occurred or soon afterwards. The revelation was also the last journal entry in his Kirtland journal.⁸ Joseph Smith recorded almost daily in his journal for six months, and then after this revelation, he would not write in a journal until two years later.⁹

Warren Parrish was a great friend to the Prophet Joseph Smith and served as a scribe¹⁰ to him. At one point Warren became sick and told Joseph Smith that he could not be a scribe to him anymore. Once Warren recovered his health, he began again to write a little for Joseph Smith. When Warren Cowdery arrived in Kirtland he replaced Warren Parrish as a scribe. Warren Parrish later apostatized from the Church and became an enemy to Joseph Smith.

⁵ See Joseph Smith, *The Personal Writings of Joseph Smith*, compiled and edited by Dean C. Jessee (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1984), 185.

⁶ See Smith, *The Personal Writings of Joseph Smith*, 185-86.

⁷ See Smith, *The Personal Writings of Joseph Smith*, 182-83. Jesse Hitchcock was born in Ashe Co., North Carolina on Aug. 10, 1801 and was baptized by Oliver Cowdery on July 20, 1831. He was a member of the Missouri high council and was a member of the Seventy in Nauvoo. He died at Mount Pisgah while traveling to the Salt Lake Valley. (Taken from Joseph Smith, *The Joseph Smith Papers*, edited by Dean C. Jessee, Ronald K. Esplin, Richard Lyman Bushman (Salt Lake City: The Church Historian's Press, 2008), 413-14).

⁸ See Milton V. Backman, Jr., *The Heavens Resound: A History of the Latter-day Saints in Ohio, 1830-1838* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1983), 433.

⁹ See Smith, *The Joseph Smith Papers*, 223.

¹⁰ See Backman, 286-287.

Warren Cowdery (1788-1851) was born in Poultney, Vermont, was an older brother to Oliver Cowdery, and later practiced medicine in Poultney and also in Freedom, New York. William Hyde, whose farm joined with Warren Cowdery's, wrote that in 1830 or 1831 he began to hear about the Book of Mormon, which he learned about from Warren Cowdery. William Hyde recorded in his journal that Warren Cowdery, "obtained from his brother, Oliver, at an early date some of the proof sheets to the Book of Mormon, some of which we had the privilege of perusing, and we did not peruse any faster than we believed."¹¹ Warren Cowdery was baptized some time in 1831 and then became presiding high priest of the Freedom, New York, branch on November 25, 1834. He then moved to Kirtland, Ohio, with his family and arrived there on February 25, 1836.¹² In Kirtland, he became a clerk to Joseph Smith and also became the editor of the *Messenger and Advocate*, a Church-owned newspaper. Warren Cowdery was very much involved with writing and the "Church records indicate that he wrote more extensively than reference to his name, which appears over the title, 'Assistant Recorder,' would indicate. He kept Kirtland Council minutes, wrote in Joseph Smith's diary, and 1835-36 History, and patriarchal records."¹³

Joseph Smith chose Warren Cowdery to record the revelation of the visit of Jesus Christ, Moses, Elias, and Elijah in his personal journal. When Warren Cowdery recorded the revelation, he wrote it in third person as follows:

Sabbath April 3^d He attended meeting in the Lords House, assisted the other Presidents of the Church in seating the congregation and then became an attentive listener to the preaching from the Stand. T[homas] B. Marsh & D[avid] W. Patten spoke in the A.M. to an attentive audience of about 1000 persons. In

¹¹ *The Private Journal of William Hyde*, typescript, Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, 6.

¹² See Lyndon W. Cook, *The Revelations of the Prophet Joseph Smith: A Historical and Biographical Commentary of the Doctrine and Covenants* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1985), 214-15.

¹³ Dean C. Jessee, "The Writing of Joseph Smith's History," *BYU Studies* vol. 11 (1970-71), Number 4 - Summer 1971, 449.

the P. M. he assisted the other Presidents in distributing the elements of the Lords Supper to the church, receiving them from the Hands "Twelve" whose privilege it was to officiate in the sacred desk this day. After having performed this service to his brethren, he retired to the pulpit, the vails being dropped, [p. 191] and bowed himself with O. Cowdery, in solemn, but silent prayer to the Most High. After rising from prayer the following vision was opened to both of them.

The vail was taken from their minds and the eyes of their understandings were opened. They saw the Lord standing upon the breast work of the pulpit before them, and under his feet was a paved work of pure gold, in color like amber: his eyes were as a flame of fire; the hair of his head was like the pure snow, his countenance shone above the brightness of the sun, and his voice was as the sound of the rushing of great waters, even the Voice of Jehovah, saying, I am the first and the last, I am he who liveth, I am he who was slain. I am your Advocate with the Father. Behold your sins are forgiven you. You are clean before me, therefore, lift up your heads and rejoice, let the hearts of your brethren rejoice and let the hearts of all my brethren <people> rejoice, who have with their might, built this house to my name. For behold I have accepted this house and my name shall be here; and I will manifest myself to my people, in mercy, in this House, yea I will appear unto my servants and speak unto them with mine own voice, if my people will keep my commandments and do not pollute this Holy House. Yea the hearts of thousands and tens of thousands shall greatly rejoice in consequence of the blessings which shall be poured out, and the endowment with which my servants have already been endowed and shall hereafter be endowed in this House. and the fame of this House shall spread to foreign lands, and this is the beginning of the blessing, which shall [p.192] be poured out upon the heads of my people. even so amen. After this vision closed, the Heavens were again opened unto them and Moses appeared before them and committed unto them the keys of the gathering of Israel from the four parts of the Earth and the leading of the ten tribes from the Land of the North. After this Elias appeared and committed the dispensation of the gospel of Abraham, saying, that in them and their seed all generations after them should be blessed. After this vision had closed, another great and glorious vision burst [bursts] upon them, for Elijah, the Prophet, who was taken to Heaven without tasting death, also stood before them, and said, behold the time has fully come which was spoken of by the mouth of Malachi, testifying, that he should be sent before the great and dreadful day of the Lord come, to turn the hearts of the Fathers to the children, and the children to the fathers, lest the whole earth be smitten with a curse. Therefore, the Keys of this dispensation are committed into your hands, and by this ye may know that the great and the dreadful day of the Lord is near, even at the doors [12 lines blank] [p. 193]¹⁴

¹⁴ Smith, *The Joseph Smith Papers*, 219, 222.

Manuscript History of the Church

The second place this revelation was recorded was in the *Manuscript History of the Church*, which is a separate source from the *History of the Church*. The revelation is contained in Volume B-1 on pages 727-28 and is in the handwriting of Willard Richards.¹⁵ Joseph Smith began writing his history, which is found in the *History of the Church*, on April 13, 1838, but this work was interrupted due to intense persecution that occurred in Far West, Missouri.¹⁶ He resumed writing again when he was in Quincy, Illinois, where on June 10, 1839, Joseph Smith recorded that he “was engaged in study preparatory to writing my history.”¹⁷ The next day, June 11, 1839, Joseph Smith recorded, “I commenced dictating my history for my clerk, James Mulholland, to write.”¹⁸ Although Joseph Smith made several attempts to start writing his history, June 11, 1839, would serve as a point where his history would be able to continue without interruption.

Joseph Smith placed much weight on this history. When the revelations were published, Orson Pratt wrote, “Joseph, the Prophet, in selecting the revelations from the Manuscripts, and arranging them for publication, did not arrange them according to the order of the date in which they were given, neither did he think it necessary to publish them all in the Book of Doctrine and Covenants, but left them to be published more fully in his History”¹⁹

The *Manuscript History of the Church* is the unpublished compilation produced by the Historian’s Office and contains accounts of the history of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. It is a chronological history from the birth of Joseph Smith through the entire time

¹⁵ Woodford, *The Historical Development of the Doctrine and Covenants*, vol. II, 1460-61.

¹⁶ Smith, *The Personal Writings of Joseph Smith*, 196.

¹⁷ Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 3:375.

¹⁸ Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 3:375.

¹⁹ “Restoration of the Aaronic and Melchisedek Priesthood,” *Millennial Star* 17 (Apr. 25, 1857), 260. Cited in Robert J. Woodford, “The Story of the Doctrine and Covenants,” *Ensign*, Dec. 1984, 33.

period of Brigham Young's presidency and up to part of John Taylor's presidency. The Church published some parts of the *Manuscript History of the Church* in newspapers that were produced by the Church including the *Times and Seasons* (Nauvoo, Illinois), the *Millennial Star* (Liverpool, England), and the *Deseret News* (Salt Lake City, Utah).

Concerning Willard Richards's involvement in the writing of the History of the Church, Dean Jesse wrote, "Not until Willard Richards was appointed secretary to Joseph Smith in December 1842 was any significant progress made on the History. At the time he began writing, not more than 157 pages had been completed, covering events up to November 1, 1831. By May 8, 1843, he had written 114 pages beyond W.W. Phelps' last entry. At the time of Joseph Smith's death, the narrative was written up to August 5, 1838."²⁰ In the *Deseret News*, On January 20, 1858, the final entry to the "History of Joseph Smith" was published. At the conclusion of the history being completely published, George A. Smith and Wilford Woodruff wrote the following, demonstrating the close watch Brigham Young had on the completion of the history and his approval:

The History of Joseph Smith is now before the world, and we are satisfied that a history more correct in its details than this was never published. To have it strictly correct, the greatest possible pains have been taken by the historians and clerks engaged in the work. They were eye and ear witnesses of nearly all the transactions recorded in this history, most of which were reported as they transpired, and, where they were not personally present, they have had access to those who were.

Moreover, since the death of the Prophet Joseph, the history has been carefully revised under the strict inspection of President Brigham Young, and approved of by him.

We, therefore, hereby bear our testimony to all the world, unto whom these words shall come, that the History of Joseph Smith is true, and it is one of the most authentic histories ever written.²¹

²⁰ Dean C. Jesse, "The Writing of Joseph Smith's History," *BYU Studies* 11 (Summer 1971), 466.

²¹ *The Deseret News*, vol. 7 (Jan. 20, 1858), 363.

Deseret News

The next place the revelation was published was in the *Deseret News*, which started as a weekly published newspaper in Salt Lake City on June 15, 1850. The Church established the *Deseret News* under the direction of Brigham Young.²² This was the first time that the vision was published in a format to which the general body of the Church had access. The 1836 vision was recorded in the *Deseret News* on November 6, 1852, as part of the “Life of Joseph Smith” series.²³ The “Life of Joseph Smith” was taken from the *Manuscript History of the Church*, and began being published in the *Deseret News* on November 15, 1851. The publisher was Willard Richards.

Millennial Star

The *Millennial Star* published the revelation almost one year later to the day. The *Millennial Star*, the official Church publication in the British Isles, started in May, 1840, and continued until 1970. Part of the revelation was recorded in the paper on November 5, 1853, and contained the visit of Jesus Christ.²⁴ At the conclusion of the article were the words, “to be continued.” One week later, November 12, 1853, the paper contained the rest of the revelation.²⁵ The publisher at the time was Samuel W. Richards. This, then, brought the revelation to the eyes of the European Saints.

“Historical Record”

The “Historical Record” contained the next recording of the revelation. It is found in Volume 5 on page 68 of May, 1886. The publisher and editor was Andrew Jenson, assistant

²² See *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, edited by Daniel H. Ludlow, 4 vols. (New York: Macmillan, 1992), 1:377.

²³ “Life of Joseph Smith,” *Deseret News*, vol. 2 (November 6, 1852), 101.

²⁴ *Millennial Star*. vol. 15, 1853:729.

²⁵ *Millennial Star*. vol. 15, 1853:739.

Church Historian.²⁶ Andrew Jenson was always interested in historical records because he would take time to explore records in churches that he came across when he was on a mission. In 1891, he became assistant Church Historian.²⁷ The “Historical Record” was a monthly periodical devoted exclusively to historical, biographical, chronological, and statistical matters. Andrew Jenson wanted all of the volumes of the periodical to serve as a reference book. Jenson set up the periodical with subjects with accurate, relevant information contained under each subject. He recorded the 1836 vision under the subject “Kirtland.”²⁸

History of the Church

The History of the Church, edited by B. H. Roberts from 1902-1932, contained the next account of the 1836 vision. This seven volume set was taken from the *Manuscript History of the Church*. The 1836 vision is recorded in Volume 2 on pages 435-36.²⁹ Church historians compiled the Church History for four reasons: “(1) to obey a commandment of the Lord (D&C 21:1); (2) to preserve a record of the Church for later generations; (3) to combat and correct anti-Mormon publications; and (4) to provide a written record as a protection against false accusations and lawsuits.”³⁰ The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints published this work, which was “prepared and edited by B. H. Roberts, under the supervision of the Church Historian, President Anthon H. Lund. Constant reference has been made to the original manuscript, now in the Historian's office, and which was written under direction of the Prophet Joseph Smith who

²⁶ Woodford, *The Historical Development of the Doctrine and Covenants*, vol. II, 1460-61.

²⁷ A. Glen Humpherys, “Missionaries to the Saints” *BYU Studies* 17 (1976), 79.

²⁸ See Andrew Jenson, “Historical Record,” (Salt Lake City, Utah. 1889), preface.

²⁹ See Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 2:435-36.

³⁰ *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, 1-4 vols., edited by Daniel H. Ludlow (New York: Macmillan, 1992), 647.

was the chief actor in the events therein narrated.”³¹ This volume of books is still in print and is a valuable research tool.

“Journal History of the Church”

Next, the 1836 vision was recorded in the “Journal History of the Church,” a scrapbook of daily events compiled by the Church Historical Department at a later date. The 1836 vision is found under the date April 3, 1836, on page 435. The historians of the Church realized that events that had seemed trivial to the people at the time they occurred during early Church history were now vital things to know. A prime example of this is the restoration of the Melchizedek Priesthood. Joseph Smith taught that the Melchizedek Priesthood was restored to him and Oliver Cowdery by Peter, James, and John, but the actual date it was restored is not known and because of this there have arisen differences of opinion concerning the date of its restoration.³² All that seemed to matter to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery was that they received the priesthood; they did not recognize the importance of the date it occurred. Because Church historians recognized the importance of having all necessary information, they went back through all of the records of the Church searching for vital information important to Church history and put them in one place, the “Journal History of the Church.”³³

Elder Andrew Jenson, the assistant Church Historian, explained in a General Conference talk in 1917 that:

Consequently we historians of a later day naturally go into the history of the Church deeper than those historians who have preceded us. We have gone over the same ground that was covered by Willard Richards, George A. Smith,

³¹ Editor's Table, *Improvement Era*, (November, 1902), 6:72.

³² Larry C. Porter wrote that the date for the restoration of the Melchizedek Priesthood occurred nearly 11 months before the organization of the Church, sometime between May 16 and 28, 1829. (See Larry C. Porter, “The Restoration of the Aaronic and Melchizedek Priesthoods,” *Ensign* Dec. 1996, 30-47). Richard Bushman wrote that the date of the restoration of the Melchizedek Priesthood could be as late as the summer after the organization of the Church. (See Richard Lyman Bushman, *Joseph Smith: Rough Stone Rolling*, 118, note 35).

³³ For a detailed history, see Elder Andrew Jenson, *Conference Report*, October 1917, 82.

and other historians, and have added a great many details that had been overlooked by them, or considered matters of so little importance that they were given no place in Church history. Thus we have, from the earlier records kept in the different branches and organizations of the Church and from thousands of letters and documents on file, culled a vast amount of historical information that had not hitherto been considered worthy of record.³⁴

Elder Jenson discussed what was recorded in the “Journal History of the Church;” “We have recorded nearly everything that has happened since the organization of the Church, in 1830, under proper date; and we are still recording events as they occur daily, just as regularly as the sun rises and sets, and as the Church is now represented in nearly all parts of the world it may be said that we historians make a journey around the world once in twenty-four hours, not physically, of course, but in our minds, and in our researches. This compilation of historical events is what we call the Journal History of the Church.”³⁵

Doctrine and Covenants

The vision of 1836 eventually found its home in the 1876 edition of the Doctrine and Covenants and became known as Section 110. Brigham Young directed Elder Orson Pratt to oversee the publication of the 1876 edition. Pratt divided the various revelations into verses, arranged them in order as to when they were received, and also included twenty-six additional revelations.³⁶

After the death of Brigham Young on August 29, 1877, Orson Pratt was in England printing the Book of Mormon with electrotype plates in 1878. He wrote to the president of the Quorum of the Twelve, John Taylor, and asked if he could print the Doctrine and Covenants on the electrotype plates as well. John Taylor gave his permission, but he wanted Orson Pratt to include cross references and explanatory notes. Pratt, by the middle of 1879, published the new

³⁴ Elder Andrew Jenson, *Conference Report*, October 1917, 85-6.

³⁵ Elder Andrew Jenson, *Conference Report*, October 1917, 85-6.

³⁶ Church Historian’s Office Journal (LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah), January 15, 1875, 70.

version of the Doctrine and Covenants in England. A set of electrotype plates were shipped to Utah and from them the Doctrine and Covenants became available in 1880. In October of 1880, George Q. Cannon presented the new edition of the Doctrine and Covenants and Pearl of Great Price to the membership of the Church and the Saints unanimously voted to accept the new version of the Doctrine and Covenants as canonized scripture.³⁷

Conclusion

The canonization of Doctrine and Covenants 110 set pattern and precedent for other visions and revelations to become canonized. When the vision of Jesus Christ, Moses, Elias, and Elijah was put into the Doctrine and Covenants, it served as a recovery or a reclamation of the history of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. It did in essence discover the childhood of the Church, or as Orson Pratt stated, it had established the “ancient order of Mormonism.”³⁸ The leaders of the Church secured current teachings and practices to doctrines that were established to the beginning of the Church. As this thesis will show, there were certain things done within the Church that were not clearly understood by the membership of the Church, and perhaps by many of its leaders, until the Church had matured, just as a child matures and is able to comprehend more things. When Moses, Elias, and Elijah committed keys to Joseph Smith, he went through a process of learning about them and how to implement them. He did not gain a perfect knowledge immediately; knowledge came gradually. Before Section 110 was canonized, there was a learning process that occurred first, and then an implementation of the acquired knowledge. Once the doctrine was known, the revelation was, in time, taught, accepted, lived by the membership of the Church, and then canonized.

³⁷ See the writings of Robert J. Woodford as found in Robert L. Millet and Kent P. Jackson, eds., *Studies in Scripture, Vol. 1: The Doctrine and Covenants* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1989), 15.

³⁸ *Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. (London: Latter-day Saints' Book Depot, 1854-1886), 17:103.

Chapter 2

Teaching of the Doctrine of the 1836 Vision Between 1836 and 1844

After Joseph Smith Jr. and Oliver Cowdery experienced the vision of Jesus Christ, Moses, Elias, and Elijah, Joseph Smith had Warren Cowdery record the vision in his journal. Warren Cowdery recorded that these heavenly messengers delivered keys to both Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery. The keys they received would come to be associated with ordinances, covenants and doctrines which were foreign to the theology of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints at the time, such as baptisms for the dead. However, this vision would have a major lasting influence on Mormon theology. Ironically there is no record of Joseph Smith publicly teaching that Moses, Elias, or Elijah visited him and Oliver Cowdery. There also are no writings by scribes, writings of close associates, or minutes taken in the meetings where Joseph Smith spoke that reference this vision. Even when he was instructing the newly formed women's organization, the Relief Society, in their preparation for their temple experience, there is no record of it. Although he did not speak about the vision publicly, there are evidences that he discussed the vision in private conversations with close, trusted associates. How did Joseph Smith teach the doctrines found in the 1836 vision between 1836 and 1844?

So far as it is known, Oliver Cowdery never made a public statement concerning the vision or that he even discussed the vision privately. Even in his last written testimony before his death, which he wrote on January 13, 1849, Cowdery testified of the validity of the visitation of Moroni, John the Baptist, Peter, James and John, without mentioning the 1836 vision.³⁹

³⁹ His letter was published in the *Deseret News* (March 26, 1844), 153.

Although the vision was not ever publicly discussed or referred to, the doctrines, ordinances, and practices associated with each of the keys were.

One reason that may explain this absence is that Joseph Smith did not keep a journal or any other written record of what occurred to him during these early developing years of the Church. It was not until a revelation he received on the day the Church of Christ, later renamed The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, was organized on April 6, 1830, that he was influenced to begin keeping a record. The opening line of the revelation, “there shall be a record kept among you” (see Doctrine and Covenants 21:1), may be the beginning of Joseph Smith learning to keep an accurate record.⁴⁰ Joseph Smith did not write about the restoration of the Aaronic or Melchizedek Priesthood until several years later. Although he did not write about it, he did teach about the importance of the priesthood, and most in the church had an understanding of the priesthood. By the time the 1836 vision occurred, Joseph Smith was keeping an accurate, up-to-date journal. Therefore, he dictated this vision into his journal on the day, or close to the day, it happened, giving added validity to the event. However, the evidence we now have shows that he never taught about the 1836 vision to the general membership of the Church. The general population of the Church would not know about the 1836 vision or the significance of it until several years after the death of Joseph Smith.

Those embarking on missions for the Church were also not informed of the vision and made no reference to it. A little over seven months after the 1836 vision, Abraham O. Smoot, a missionary for the Church, arrived in Kirtland on November 25, 1836. He met Warren Parrish who then took them to what Joseph Smith and his followers referred to as the house of the Lord, the Kirtland Temple. When they entered the temple, Abraham O. Smoot set eyes upon the prophet, Joseph Smith, for the first time. After a short interview with Joseph Smith, Abraham O.

⁴⁰ See Smith, *The Personal Writings of Joseph Smith*, 3.

Smoot and his companion were able to tour the entire temple. He wrote that they “visited the lower room first where the Saints of God meet to worship and pay their vows to the most High. The order of this room and its majestic appearance brought feelings of no ordinary kind over my mind. There I had a view of the [Melchizedek] and the Aaronic Priesthood Stands, built after the perfect order of God. The [Melchizedek] Stands in the west end and the Aaronic in the east end.”⁴¹ This was all he wrote about the pulpits. There was no mention of pondering over the significant event that occurred there approximately seven months previous. Smoot was not impressed with the pulpits, but was with what was contained on the upper floor of the temple. From the main floor of the temple they “visited the upper or second room where we had the privilege of beholding the great wonders of Egypt, the mummies that were taken from the Caticomes in Egypt; these were the greatest wonders I ever saw.”⁴²

Scholars have mistakenly written about the 1836 vision by assuming it was openly taught and accepted among the followers of Joseph Smith right after the vision occurred.⁴³ An example of this is Fawn Brodie. Of all of the scholarly writings on Doctrine and Covenants Section 110, she wrote the most elaborate detail of the feelings that Oliver Cowdery experienced when kneeling in silent prayer at the pulpits with Joseph Smith, “The audience sat enrapt while the two men, completely screened from view, prayed wordlessly. Oliver was exultant at having been

⁴¹ Abraham Owen Smoot, *Missionary Journal, 1837-1838*, Abraham Owen Smoot Papers, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, November 25, 1836.

⁴² Smoot, November 25, 1836.

⁴³ For example, when the Apostles were traveling on their mission to England, they went through Kirtland, Ohio. There they were able to visit the temple and as was written in the book published in modern times, “They no doubt remembered that it had been less than four years since the Savior, Elijah, Elias, and Moses had appeared in that sacred hall to restore certain ancient keys and authority to Joseph Smith” (James B. Allen, Ronald K. Esplin, and David J. Whittaker, *Men with a Mission, 1837-1841: The Quorum of the Twelve Apostles in the British Isles* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1992), 74-75). The reality is that these men knew nothing about the visit of the heavenly messengers. Another example is Milton V. Backman who wrote “Later, while Joseph Smith was living in Nauvoo, he explained to the Saints on a number of occasions the significance of the appearance of Elijah in the Kirtland Temple” Milton V. Backman Jr., *The Heavens Resound: A History of the Latter-day Saints in Ohio, 1830-1838* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1983), 302. Joseph Smith did teach about Elijah, but never connected Elijah to the 1836 vision.

chosen above Hyrum Smith and Rigdon for this holy moment. He was once again Second Elder, a rank for which he had long hungered and fought. All the jealous dissatisfaction that had gnawed him since Rigdon's ascendancy vanished as he knelt beside his prophet in the tiny white-curtained room."⁴⁴ She then alluded to the fact that the overflowing congregation was told about the great vision at the moment the veils were lifted. Yet, the only things that are known about the vision are what Warren Cowdery recorded in Joseph Smith's journal; anything outside of the journal entry of Joseph Smith is pure speculation. So far as we know, there were no other written records of the vision from either Oliver Cowdery or Joseph Smith. This showed that they were the sole custodians of all keys and knowledge gained from the visitors in the vision.

Why the Delay in Teaching About the 1836 Vision?

This was not the first time Joseph Smith delayed teaching a new doctrine that he stated he had received by revelation from the Lord. One would think that with a revelation that would have such a large impact upon the theology of the Church, it would have been immediately taught and implemented and would be widely accepted by the Church, but this was not the case. Joseph Smith also did not directly explain the delay in teaching about what eventually became Section 110 of the Doctrine and Covenants.

One reason for this silence may have been the opposition that some members exhibited towards new doctrines that were presented by Joseph Smith. One example of this is what is now Section 76 regarding the three degrees of glory. Said Brigham Young, "When God revealed to Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon that there was a place prepared for all, according to the light they had received and their rejection of evil and practice of good, it was a great trial to many, and some apostatized because God was not going to send to everlasting punishment heathens and

⁴⁴ See Fawn M. Brodie, *No Man Knows My History* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1946), 179.

infants, but had a place of salvation, in due time, for all, and would bless the honest and virtuous and truthful, whether they ever belonged to the church or not. It was a new doctrine and many stumbled at it.”⁴⁵ Thus Joseph Smith may not have wanted to take a chance of having more turn away from following him by sharing the revelation.

Further, on Sunday, June 11, 1843, Joseph Smith taught about the doctrine of gathering, a doctrine that stemmed from the revelation associated with the keys of Moses. After attempting to teach part of the doctrine, Joseph declared, “many men will say, ‘I will never forsake you, but will stand by you at all times.’ But the moment you teach them some of the mysteries of the kingdom of God that are retained in the heavens and are to be revealed to the children of men when they are prepared for them, they will be the first to stone you and put you to death. It was this same principle that crucified the Lord Jesus Christ, and will cause the people to kill the prophets in this generation.”⁴⁶ Joseph Smith feared that his followers were not yet prepared to hear the doctrine.

Another caution Joseph Smith had in sharing revelations and sacred experiences he shared with the newly formed Relief Society. In an address he gave them on April 28, 1842, he spoke about, “the difficulties he had to surmount ever since the commencement of the work, in consequence of aspiring men. ‘Great Big Elders,’ as he called them, who had caused him much trouble; to whom he had taught the things of the kingdom in private councils, they would then go forth into the world and proclaim the things he had taught them, as their own revelations.” He said the same aspiring disposition will also be found in the Relief Society and it must be guarded against. He then stated that, “he had been trampled under foot by aspiring Elders, for all were

⁴⁵ *Journal of Discourses*, 16:42.

⁴⁶ Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 5:424.

infected with that spirit.”⁴⁷ For this reason, Joseph Smith could have been leery of sharing the 1836 vision even in private circumstances with close associates.

Another reason may have been the sacredness of this Kirtland vision. This revelation would be associated with all future temple ordinances and covenants which are not discussed outside of the Mormon temples. In a proclamation to the Church during the Nauvoo time period, Elder Parley P. Pratt stated that of all the keys of the priesthood, the keys of Elijah are “the most sacred of all.”⁴⁸

Prior to the vision, Joseph Smith also personally taught the importance of not speaking openly of such sacred events. In a private meeting with the Council of the Twelve in November 1835, Joseph Smith taught them how to prepare for the solemn assembly, soon to be held in the Kirtland temple. He counseled them to prepare their hearts, to be faithful in all things, and to be clean every whit. “Let us be faithful and silent, brethren, and if God gives you a manifestation, keep it to yourselves.”⁴⁹

Later in Nauvoo, three days prior to Joseph giving the endowment to selected brethren, he recorded that on Sunday, May 1, 1842, he preached about the keys of the kingdom and that, “the keys are certain signs and words by which false spirits and personages may be detected from true, which cannot be revealed to the Elders till the Temple is completed.” Concerning signs, Joseph Smith continued, “There are signs in heaven, earth and hell; the Elders must know them all, to be endowed with power, to finish their work and prevent imposition. The devil knows many signs, but does not know the sign of the Son of Man, or Jesus. No one can truly say he knows God until he has handled something and this can only be in the holiest of holies.”⁵⁰ Thus,

⁴⁷ Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 4:604.

⁴⁸ Parley P. Pratt, “Proclamation,” *Millennial Star*, (June 1844-May 1845), March 10, 1845, 5:151.

⁴⁹ Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 2:309.

⁵⁰ Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 4:608.

the followers of Joseph Smith became convinced that there were some things that they would only learn in the temple.⁵¹

Another reason for Joseph Smith's reluctance to discuss the vision was the amount of spiritual understanding a follower needed to have in order to comprehend its doctrinal magnitude. For example, on January 21, 1844, just five months before his death, he taught several thousands gathered at the southeast corner of the Nauvoo Temple about the sealing keys of Elijah. At this time period the Nauvoo Temple was still under construction. At the conclusion of the address, he said, "I have tried for a number of years to get the minds of the Saints prepared to receive the things of God; but we frequently see some of them, after suffering all they have for the work of God, will fly to pieces like glass as soon as anything comes that is contrary to their traditions: they cannot stand the fire at all. How many will be able to abide a celestial law, and go through and receive their exaltation, I am unable to say, as many are called, but few are chosen."⁵² There were so many things on Joseph Smith's mind that he wanted to share with his followers, but he felt they were not ready to hear them.

On another occasion, eight months earlier on Sunday May 21, 1843, Joseph Smith taught about 2 Peter 1 and also explained how Paul had ascended into the third heaven and could now understand that the three levels of Jacob's ladder were the telestial, terrestrial, and celestial glories or kingdoms. He said, "I could explain a hundred fold more than I ever have of the glories of the kingdoms manifested to me in the vision, were I permitted, and were the people

⁵¹ Andrew Ehat also wrote a note in his book, *The Words of Joseph Smith: The Contemporary Accounts of the Nauvoo Discourses of the Prophet Joseph* about the sacredness of the endowment, which is received in the temple. After Heber C. Kimball received his endowment he, "wrote to fellow apostle Parley P. Pratt just a few weeks later, he said that Joseph had taught them some precious things on the priesthood that would cause his soul to rejoice if he knew them, but that Joseph had given instructions that these keys not be written about. Heber concluded his description of the newly revealed endowment by saying that Parley would have to come to Nauvoo to receive the instruction for himself (Letter of Heber C. Kimball to Parley P. Pratt, June 17, 1842, Church Archives), Joseph Smith, *The Words of Joseph Smith: The Contemporary Accounts of the Nauvoo Discourses of the Prophet Joseph*, compiled and edited by Andrew F. Ehat and Lyndon W. Cook (Provo: BYU Religious Studies Center, 1980), 20-21.

⁵² Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 6:185.

prepared to receive them. The Lord deals with this people as a tender parent with a child, communicating light and intelligence and the knowledge of his ways as they can bear it.”⁵³

There were things that he knew that he could not tell his followers until they were prepared to receive them, or as he said, “I will from time to time reveal to you the subjects that are revealed by the Holy Ghost to me.”⁵⁴ Learning one step at a time, he apparently knew far more than he ever revealed publicly to his followers. Joseph Smith gained knowledge of spiritual truths and doctrines line upon line, as his followers would also need to do, but the membership of the Church learned at a slower rate; too slow, it seems, for him.

The 1836 Vision – An Unexpected Event?

Joseph Smith wrote that he received from Moroni, “instruction and intelligence from him at each of our interviews, respecting what the Lord was going to do, and how and in what manner his kingdom was to be conducted in the last days” (Joseph Smith—History 1:54).

What is now Section 2 makes clear that Joseph Smith learned about Elijah during his initial visit with Moroni. After his First Vision of 1820, Joseph Smith did not have another heavenly visitor until three years later. On the evening of September 21, 1823, Moroni quoted, with some variation, from the book of Malachi found in the Old Testament, a prophecy that Elijah, the prophet from the Old Testament, would come before the great and dreadful day of the Lord. “Behold, I will reveal unto you the Priesthood, by the hand of Elijah” (Joseph Smith—History 1:38). At this stage, Joseph Smith may have known little about priesthood and “could no more grasp its meaning than he comprehended the full significance of the First Vision as a

⁵³ Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 5:402.

⁵⁴ Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 6:366.

teenager.”⁵⁵ It would take time for Joseph Smith to comprehend the power of the priesthood and longer yet to understand what power Elijah would add to the priesthood.

From the time of his visits with Moroni, Joseph Smith stated that he had different types of experiences, such as visions and revelations that taught and prepared him for the coming of Moses, Elias and Elijah. At the time of the organization of the Church on April 6, 1830, Joseph Smith was known to have had the Aaronic and Melchizedek priesthood. Orson Pratt, a member of the original Quorum of Twelve Apostles from the beginning, stated that Joseph had held the priesthood in the life before this as a preparation for receiving the priesthood here in the flesh. He further stated that after Joseph Smith had the vision of the Father and the Son, had translated and printed the Book of Mormon, and had received the command from the Godhead to organize the Church, “and having received the Priesthood re-confirmed upon him by Peter, James and John and prior to that having received the keys of the Aaronic Priesthood, on the 15th day of May, 1829,” he continued, “having all these preparations here in the flesh as well as having been preordained to this mission, he was prepared to begin the work that should be everlasting, or in other words, the establishment of the kingdom of God that should never again be taken away from the earth.”⁵⁶ The Aaronic and Melchizedek priesthoods gave him the right to organize a church and perform saving ordinances, but as of that time there was no appearance of Elijah or his priesthood keys.

The first time Joseph Smith began to write his history in 1832, he did not include Moroni’s reference to Elijah. This was one of the few records that Joseph Smith penned with his own hand, and it contained a written history of the visions he had received. Unfortunately this

⁵⁵ Richard Lyman Bushman, *Joseph Smith: Rough Stone Rolling* (New York: Knopf, 2005), 158-59.

⁵⁶ *Journal of Discourses*, 22:30.

written history was only six pages long.⁵⁷ Although he referenced the visitation of Moroni and how he told him about the gold plates,⁵⁸ yet there was nothing concerning Moroni's quoting of Malachi and the prophecy of the coming of Elijah.

In a revelation given him the first day of the organization of the Church, Joseph Smith stated that the Lord told him, "that as many as would believe and be baptized in his holy name, and endure in faith to the end, should be saved—Not only those who believed after he came in the meridian time, in the flesh, but all those from the beginning, even as many as were before he came, who believed in the words of the holy prophets, who spake as they were inspired by the gift of the Holy Ghost, who truly testified of him in all things, should have eternal life, as well as those who should come after, who should believe in the gifts and callings of God by the Holy Ghost, which beareth record of the Father and of the Son" (Doctrine and Covenants 20:25-27). How, he might have asked, does salvation come to those who lived before Christ, and how do they participate in such saving ordinances as baptism?

Although the writings of Joseph Smith are silent about Elijah, the press of William W. Phelps was not. When asked by Joseph Smith to be the editor of the first Church periodical, *The Evening and Morning Star*,⁵⁹ in Jackson County Missouri, William W. Phelps published a lengthy article in 1832 about the Ten Tribes of Israel; their scattering and gathering. Near the conclusion of his article Phelps said:

Elijah was translated to paradise in a chariot of fire, and Malachi says he shall return before the great and dreadful day of the Lord: and he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers. Now the Savior said he is come already, but the Jews knew it not, so he did not turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the following extract from

⁵⁷ See Jessee, *The Joseph Smith Papers, Journals Vol. 1:1832-1839*, xxxvi.

⁵⁸ See Smith, *The Personal Writings of Joseph Smith*, 4-8.

⁵⁹ See Dean C. Jessee, "The Writing of Joseph Smith's History," *BYU Studies* 11 (1971), 446.

[Ecclesiastes]⁶⁰, chap. 48th, shows that Elijah, as he is called in Hebrew, and Elias in Greek, will yet come and restore the tribes of Jacob.⁶¹

Phelp's final words in the above statement referred to Elijah as yet to come.

Through the revelations Joseph Smith said he received, he was being instructed to prepare a place where Elijah could come. The Church was not quite a year old when on January 2, 1831, Joseph Smith stated that he was told by the Lord that, "for this cause I gave unto you the commandment that ye should go to the Ohio; and there I will give unto you my law and there you shall be endowed with power from on high" (Doctrine and Covenants 38:32). From that time on, Joseph Smith worked at moving his followers to Kirtland, Ohio, so that he and his followers could receive this endowment of power from on high.

Shortly after his arrival in Kirtland on December 27, 1832, Joseph Smith stated that the Lord instructed him to, "Organize yourselves; prepare every needful thing; and establish 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" (Doctrine and Covenants 88:119). On November 25, 1836, Abraham O. Smoot beheld the Kirtland Temple for the first time. "The scenery was worth beholding, a house built by a special commandment of the Lord, even as Moses built the Tabernacle." This was the first time he had met Joseph Smith in person. He wrote, "On entering the threshold of the door my eyes for the first time beheld a prophet, seer and revelator of the Church of God, who like Moses of old could by the power of God receive revelation from heaven."⁶² Thus followers of Joseph Smith looked to him as a Moses-type figure in leading them to a greater land where Zion could be established.

⁶⁰ The spelling has been modernized and corrected throughout the thesis, but the grammar of the quotations has not been altered.

⁶¹ William W. Phelps, "The Ten Tribes," *Evening and Morning Star*, Vol. 1 September, 1832, No. 5, 34.

⁶² Smoot, *Missionary Journal, 1837-1838*, November 25, 1836.

As construction on the temple progressed, Joseph Smith was apparently trying to prepare his people for additional revelation. Sometime between October 1835 and January 1836, William W. Phelps wrote in a letter to his wife that by, “the time you get this letter, the ‘covenants’ will arrive, and the Saints must learn their duty from the Revelations.”⁶³ There is no further information as to what the “covenants” were but it is evident that Joseph Smith had been preparing his followers for covenants that were beyond baptism; now they were anticipating them. Saints were performing ordinances in the Kirtland Temple, such as washing and anointing, but there was no mention of covenants per se.

Then in February 1836, two months before the dedication of the Kirtland Temple, Joseph Smith saw in vision his brother Alvin in the Celestial Kingdom, the highest level of salvation in the Mormon faith. Joseph Smith marveled at this, wondering how Alvin was already in the Celestial Kingdom when he was never baptized by the correct priesthood authority for the remission of sins. During the vision he was told that, “all who have died without a knowledge of this gospel, who would have received it if they had been permitted to tarry, shall be heirs of the celestial kingdom of God” (see Doctrine and Covenants 137:7). Did Joseph Smith know by this time that the keys of Elijah would make the exaltation of Alvin possible?

Not until 1838, when he dictated his official history,⁶⁴ did Joseph Smith dictate in detail the message of Moroni and the prophecy of Malachi concerning the return of Elijah. In the thirteen years between Moroni’s first appearance in 1823 and the dedication of the Kirtland Temple in 1836, Joseph Smith learned “line upon line” about how Elijah would influence the theology of the Church he established.

⁶³ William W. Phelps, Letter to Sally Phelps, April 1-6, 1836, William Wines Phelps Papers, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, 69-70. (Underlined in original).

⁶⁴ Jesse, *The Joseph Smith Papers, Journals Vol. 1:1832-1839*, xxxvi.

Earliest Evidence Joseph Smith Discussed the 1836 Vision with Close Associates

Although it appeared that Joseph Smith did not discuss the vision in public settings, there is evidence that he discussed elements of it with close associates. There is also evidence that Joseph Smith had taught about Elijah even before he made his appearance on April 3, 1836, indicating Elijah's anticipated return. In June of 1835, William W. Phelps wrote in the *Messenger and Advocate*, a paper published under the direction of Joseph Smith, "'Are the angels in glory the former prophets and servants of God?' Yes, or how could Elijah come before the great and terrible day of the Lord, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, &c. Peter, James and John saw Elias, along with Moses, in the mount."⁶⁵

As early as 1835, William W. Phelps also knew about the doctrine of sealing. In a letter to his wife dated May, 1835, Phelps wrote, "A new idea, sally, if you and I continue faithful to the end we are certain of being one in the Lord throughout eternity. This is one of the most glorious consolations we can have in the flesh. Do not forfeit your birth right."⁶⁶ Joseph Smith understood the sealing power before he received it; thus he was anticipating receiving the power to seal, which would come from Elijah. In another letter to his wife, William W. Phelps addressed his wife, "beloved, and rewarded, in time and in eternity."⁶⁷

The earliest evidence of Joseph Smith discussing the vision actually occurred on the day of the revelation on April 3, 1836. Several of his followers recorded in their journals the incredible spiritual experiences that occurred in the Kirtland Temple during the time period surrounding the solemn assembly and dedication. Because of the intensity of the spiritual manifestations that occurred within the temple, this time period is known as the Pentecostal

⁶⁵ William W. Phelps, "Letter No. 8," *Messenger and Advocate*, 1 (June, 1835), 130.

⁶⁶ Phelps, Letter to Sally Phelps, May 18, 1835, 2-3.

⁶⁷ William W. Phelps Journal, September 9, 1835, William Wines Phelps Papers, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, 20.

experience of the Kirtland Temple. Besides the journal of Joseph Smith referencing the vision of 1836,⁶⁸ the only other written account is by William W. Phelps.

William W. Phelps wrote several letters to his wife, Sally, while he was in Kirtland. He told her to take his letters and lock them up because he wanted to make a book of them. On the day the revelation occurred, April 3, 1836, William W. Phelps wrote a letter to his wife: “On Sunday, April 3, the twelve held meeting and [administered] the sacrament. It was a glorious time, The curtains were dropt in the afternoon. And there was a manifestation of the Lord to Br Joseph and Oliver, [by] which they [learned] thus the great & terrible day of the Lord as mentioned by [Malachi], was near, even at the doors.”⁶⁹ Thus Joseph Smith spoke at least to William W. Phelps about the appearance of the Savior. Perhaps others were also informed but did not record it.

What Joseph Smith Taught About Moses and the Gathering

Although Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery did not talk or teach publicly about the vision, Joseph Smith did teach about the doctrines associated with the keys that were delivered to them by the three heavenly visitors. He waited until the Nauvoo time period before publicly teaching the significance the Kirtland Temple vision. Joseph Smith did not make specific reference to the revelation, but what he taught may have been derived from it.⁷⁰

⁶⁸ See, *Opening the Heavens: Accounts of Divine Manifestations, 1820-1844*, edited by John W. Welch (Brigham Young University Press, Provo, Utah 2005), 332.

⁶⁹ Phelps, Letter to Sally Phelps, April 3, 1836.

⁷⁰ Joseph’s translation of the Bible (JST) may have bearing on this matter. This revelation of the Book of Moses may have prepared him for the visitation of Moses. Some of the doctrines contained in the Book of Moses that are not present in the Genesis biblical record are baptism and the gift of the Holy Ghost. Joseph Smith had recorded from a revelation he received from the Lord that the Lord’s work and glory was to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man (see Moses 1:39). With time, Joseph Smith taught what all of the necessary ordinances were to gaining eternal life. These requirements included temple ordinances that would be established after the vision. This is an area that needs further study.

Six months earlier Joseph Smith had also taught about the importance of completing the temple and prophesied that, “as soon as we get the Temple built, so that we shall not be obliged to exhaust our means thereon, we will have means to gather the Saints by thousands and tens of thousands.”⁷¹

According to Warren Cowdery’s dictated account, Moses “committed unto us the keys of the gathering of Israel from the four parts of the earth” (See Doctrine and Covenants 110:11). In Nauvoo on Sunday, June 11, 1843, Joseph Smith delivered an entire discourse on the gathering. He asked, “What is the object of gathering the Jews, or the people of God in any age of the world?” He answered his own question. The main object for gathering, “was to build unto the Lord a house.”⁷² The house he referred to was the temple. The first purpose of gathering, then, was to build temples and gather believers to the temple.

A second reason for building a temple was so that the Lord, “could reveal unto His people the ordinances of His house and the glories of His kingdom, and teach the people the way of salvation; for there are certain ordinances and principles that, when they are taught and practiced, must be done in a place or house built for that purpose,”⁷³ and “that the principles and laws of the priesthood should be predicated upon the gathering of the people in every age of the world.”⁷⁴ Joseph Smith continued, “It is for the same purpose that God gathers together His people in the last days, to build unto the Lord a house to prepare them for the ordinances and endowments, washings and anointing, etc. One of the ordinances of the house of the Lord is

⁷¹ Church Historian’s Office, Salt Lake City, Utah, (January 20, 1843), 96.

⁷² Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 5:423.

⁷³ Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 5:423.

⁷⁴ Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 5:423.

baptism for the dead.”⁷⁵ Thus, a second reason for gathering was to participate in the ordinances of the temple, both for the living and the dead.

The highest ordinance in the temple is the fullness of the priesthood. Joseph Smith declared that “If a man gets a fullness of the priesthood of God, he has to get it in the same way that Jesus Christ obtained it, and that was by keeping all the commandments and obeying all the ordinances of the house of the Lord.”⁷⁶ He continued, “All men who become heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ will have to receive the fullness of the ordinances of his kingdom; and those who will not receive all the ordinances will come short of the fullness of that glory, if they do not lose the whole.”⁷⁷ This doctrine of the necessity of receiving the fullness of the priesthood became part of Mormon theology.

Joseph Smith taught that the Savior preached in the world of spirits “so that they who received it could have it answered by proxy by those who live in earth,” meaning all of the necessary ordinances for salvation could be performed for them in the temple. He said:

How oft would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!"—that they might attend to the ordinances of baptism for the dead as well as other ordinances of the priesthood, and receive revelations from heaven, and be perfected in the things of the kingdom of God—but they would not. This was the case on the day of Pentecost: those blessings were poured out on the disciples on that occasion. God ordained that He would save the dead, and would do it by gathering His people together.⁷⁸

A third purpose for the gathering and building of the temple was that Joseph Smith believed that there the Lord would manifest the glory of His kingdom unto His people.

“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; Yea, and my

⁷⁵ Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 5:424.

⁷⁶ Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 5:424.

⁷⁷ Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 5:424.

⁷⁸ Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 5:425.

presence shall be there, for I will come into it, and all the pure in heart that shall come into it shall see God” (Doctrine and Covenants 97:15-16).

Approximately four months before the dedication of the Kirtland Temple, Joseph Smith met with his Twelve Apostles on November 12, 1835, and spoke to them about their anticipated endowment.

The endowment you are so anxious about, you cannot comprehend now, nor could Gabriel explain it to the understanding of your dark minds; but strive to be prepared in your hearts, be faithful in all things, that when we meet in the solemn assembly, that is, when such as God shall name out of all the official members shall meet, we must be clean every whit. Let us be faithful and silent, brethren, and if God gives you a manifestation, keep it to yourselves; be watchful and prayerful, and you shall have a prelude of those joys that God will pour out on that day. Do not watch for iniquity in each other, if you do you will not get an endowment, for God will not bestow it on such. But if we are faithful, and live by every word that proceeds forth from the mouth of God, I will venture to prophesy that we shall get a blessing that will be worth remembering, if we should live as long as John the Revelator; our blessings will be such as we have not realized before, nor received in this generation. The order of the house of God has been, and ever will be, the same, even after Christ comes; and after the termination of the thousand years it will be the same; and we shall finally enter into the celestial Kingdom of God, and enjoy it forever. You need an endowment, brethren, in order that you may be prepared and able to overcome all things.⁷⁹

Joseph Smith proclaimed the power that comes from righteous living combined with the temple: “I feel disposed to speak a few words more to you, my brethren, concerning the endowment. All who are prepared, and are sufficiently pure to abide the presence of the Savior, will see Him in the solemn assembly.”⁸⁰ Although Joseph Smith had no concept of what priesthood was during his first visits with Moroni, at this later stage in his life he had a clearer understanding of the purpose and power of the priesthood. “The priesthood had one purpose in every age: exaltation. Rather than being a governmental hierarchy or a corporate organization,

⁷⁹ Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 2:309.

⁸⁰ Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 2:310.

the priesthood held the sacral power to bring people into the presence of God.”⁸¹ To the followers of Joseph Smith, the endowment meant to witness the Savior as Joseph Smith declared he had witnessed Him. Thus, Joseph Smith desired to bring his followers into the angelic realm he had witnessed.

Soon after establishing the city of Nauvoo, Illinois, on the banks of the Mississippi River, Joseph Smith announced on January 8, 1841, that there they would build a temple. Six months earlier Parley P. Pratt had declared from Manchester, England, “God is again saying to men, Build me places as I shall direct you, where I can manifest myself to you, and send my angels to minister to you as in days of old.”⁸² Joseph Smith used the temple to help prepare his followers through ordinances and covenants to receive the greater spiritual manifestations.

Joseph Smith asked, “Why gather the people together in this place? For the same purpose that Jesus wanted to gather the Jews—to receive the ordinances, the blessings, and glories that God has in store for His Saints. I will now ask this assembly and all the Saints if you will now build this house and receive the ordinances and blessings which God has in store for you; or will you not build unto the Lord this house, and let Him pass by and bestow these blessings upon another people? I pause for a reply.”⁸³

What Joseph Smith Taught About Elias

According to Section 110, after the visit of Moses, Elias appeared and “committed the dispensation of the gospel of Abraham, saying that in us and our seed all generations after us should be blessed” (see Doctrine and Covenants 110:12). There are two definitions of Elias: “Elias is the name of a person, the name of a prophet who lived, doubtless, in the days of

⁸¹ Bushman, 203.

⁸² Larry C. Porter and Milton V. Backman Jr., “Doctrine and the Temple in Nauvoo,” *BYU Studies* 32 (1992), 41.

⁸³ Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 5:427.

Abraham [D&C 110:12] and who also appeared to Jesus on the occasion above named; Elias is also the name of an office—the office of Restorer.”⁸⁴ Joseph Smith never stated who this Elias was; the actual person Elias, or a person acting in the office of Elias.

On Sunday, March 10, 1844, Joseph Smith gave his only public discourse where he expounded upon Elias. He distinguished between Elias and Elijah by discussing the doctrine of baptism as was currently being performed in the Church.

He taught that he received the Aaronic Priesthood from John the Baptist, and from him he learned about the spirit of Elias. The angel also told him that he now had authority from God to baptize. “But I was informed that this office did not extend to the laying on of hands for the giving of the Holy Ghost; that that office was a greater work, and was to be given afterward; but that my ordination was a preparatory work, or a going before, which was the spirit of Elias; for the spirit of Elias was a going before to prepare the way for the greater, which was the case with John the Baptist.”⁸⁵ Elias is thus a preparer; a preparer to greater things.

Thus the spirit of Elias was “to prepare the way for a greater revelation of God, which is the Priesthood of Elias, or the Priesthood that Aaron was ordained unto. And when God sends a man into the world to prepare for a greater work, holding the keys of the power of Elias, it was called the doctrine of Elias, even from the early ages of the world.”⁸⁶ Further, when one with authority baptizes someone, they are acting under the spirit or power of Elias, but when one lays hands on the head of an individual who has been baptized and gives them the Holy Ghost, then they are acting under the direction of the spirit of Elijah. Joseph Smith’s final statement about Elias in his discourse was, “that person who holds the keys of Elias hath a preparatory work.” In the 1836 vision, it appears that Elias is the preparer for another work; the work of Elijah.

⁸⁴ B. H. Roberts, *Outlines of Ecclesiastical History* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1927), 42.

⁸⁵ Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 6:249.

⁸⁶ Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 6:250.

What Joseph Smith Taught About Elijah

Regarding Elijah, Warren Cowdery recorded in Joseph Smith's journal that, "After this vision [Elias] closed, another great and glorious vision burst upon us; for Elijah the prophet, who was taken to heaven without tasting of death, stood before us, and said: Behold, the time has fully come, which was spoken of by the mouth of Malachi—testifying that he [Elijah] should be sent, before the great and dreadful day of the Lord come—To turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the children to the fathers, lest the whole earth be smitten with a curse—Therefore, the keys of this dispensation are committed into your hands; and by this ye may know that the great and dreadful day of the Lord is near, even at the doors" (Doctrine and Covenants 110:13-16). Although Joseph Smith did not make a direct reference to the vision that occurred in the Kirtland Temple, he linked Elijah with the ordinances and doctrines that would have lasting impact upon the theology of his founded movement.

Joseph Smith's first reference to Elijah may have been when he addressed the Twelve Apostles and some of the Seventy on Tuesday, July 2, 1839, on the Iowa side of the river. He taught, "The hearts of the children of men will have to be turned to the fathers, and the fathers to the children living or dead to prepare them for the coming of the Son of Man. If Elijah did not come, the whole earth would be smitten."⁸⁷ It is interesting to note that he was subtle in his teaching about work for the dead during this moment, because he did not teach about saving ordinances for the dead until a little over a year later on August 15, 1840, at Seymour Brunson's funeral.

Joseph Smith wrote a letter to the members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles in October 1840, who were serving mission in England, instructing them on the doctrine of baptisms for the dead. "The Saints have the privilege of being baptized for those of their relatives

⁸⁷ Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 3:390.

who are dead, whom they believe would have embraced the Gospel, if they had been privileged with hearing it, and who have received the Gospel in the spirit, through the instrumentality of those who have been commissioned to preach to them while in prison.” He added, “it presents the Gospel of Christ in probably a more enlarged scale than some have imagined it.”⁸⁸

After teaching the doctrine of baptisms for the dead, Joseph Smith began to teach more about Elijah. The minutes of the General Conference of the Church of October, 1840, refer to an article on priesthood composed by Joseph Smith. He explained, “We frequently have mention made of the offering of sacrifice by the servants of the Most High in ancient days, prior to the law of Moses; which ordinances will be continued when⁸⁹ the Priesthood is restored with all its authority, power and blessings.” He continued, “Elijah was the last Prophet that held the keys of the Priesthood, and who will,⁹⁰ before the last dispensation, restore the authority and deliver the keys of the Priesthood, in order that all the ordinances may be attended to in righteousness.” He then asked, “Why send Elijah? Because he holds the keys of the authority to administer in all the ordinances of the Priesthood; and without the authority is given, the ordinances could not be administered in righteousness.”⁹¹ These ordinances of the priesthood would be administered in the temple.

A year later in the General Conference of the Church on October 3, 1841, Joseph Smith, “by request of the Twelve Apostles, gave instructions on the doctrines of baptism for the dead,

⁸⁸ Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 4:231.

⁸⁹ The choice of the word *when* is interesting here because Elijah had already appeared to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery. Why did he not use the word because? One explanation given is, “apparently in his mind it was not sufficient that he alone had these keys and this power, but he intended by way of ordinances to confer a portion of this power on others who were faithful, thereby actually bringing about the restoration of all things” (Smith, *The Words of Joseph Smith: The Contemporary Accounts of the Nauvoo Discourses of the Prophet Joseph*, 54 footnote 22).

⁹⁰ Again it is interesting that Joseph Smith chose the word *will* instead of *has*. See footnote 89.

⁹¹ Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 4:211.

which was listened to with interest by the large assembly.”⁹² He stated that the purpose of baptisms for the dead are to save the spirits who have lived on the earth, yet died without having the saving ordinance of baptism done while they were living on the earth. Joseph Smith exclaimed that, “it is no more incredible that God should save the dead, than that he would raise the dead.”⁹³ Joseph Smith then made a connection between the doctrine of baptisms for the dead to Elijah, the sealing power which binds or looses in heaven, when he declared, “There is a way to release the spirits of the dead; that is by the power and authority of the Priesthood—by binding and loosing on earth.” He continued, “This doctrine appears glorious, inasmuch as it exhibits the greatness of divine compassion and benevolence in the extent of the plan of human salvation. This glorious truth is well calculated to enlarge the understanding, and to sustain the soul under troubles, difficulties and distresses.”⁹⁴ After expounding upon the doctrine of baptisms for the dead, Joseph Smith stated that the doctrine of baptisms for the dead, “presents in a clear light the wisdom and mercy of God in preparing an ordinance for the salvation for the dead.”⁹⁵

Joseph Smith further taught that they lived in the dispensation of the fullness of times. “The dispensation of the fullness of times will bring to light the things that have been revealed in all former dispensations; also other things that have not been before revealed. He shall send Elijah, the Prophet, &c., and restore all things in Christ”⁹⁶ The appearance of Elijah would confirm the restoration of all priesthood keys. Elijah had already come to him, yet Joseph Smith used language here that made it appear that the visitation of Elijah was still forthcoming. Perhaps

⁹² Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 4:424-25.

⁹³ Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 4:425.

⁹⁴ Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 4:425.

⁹⁵ Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 4:426.

⁹⁶ Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 4:426.

Joseph Smith was preparing his followers for more doctrines and ordinances that were yet to come.⁹⁷

Joseph Smith did not have a clear understanding of the correct procedures for baptisms for the dead when he first taught about it. With time, Joseph Smith learned more about baptisms for the dead through what he referred to as revelation from God. As corrections were received, he gave guidance and correction to his followers about the ordinance of baptisms for the dead. In the same General Conference on October 3, 1841, Joseph Smith announced: “There shall be no more baptisms for the dead, until the ordinance can be attended to in the Lord’s House.”⁹⁸ Baptisms were being performed in the Mississippi River and now they would have to be done in a temple indicating that the keys of Elijah were to be used in a temple setting.

Two years after he taught the doctrine of baptisms for the dead, he added additional clarification. In a letter dated September 6, 1842, Joseph Smith wrote that the subject of baptisms for the dead had been occupying his mind and was upon his feelings the strongest.⁹⁹ In the letter, Joseph Smith expounded upon several scriptures from the New Testament that referenced the binding power of the keys of Elijah. One of the references he quoted from was from the book of Matthew: “And I say unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give upon thee the keys of the kingdom: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven” (Matthew 16:18-19).

⁹⁷ Andrew Ehat explained: “Apparently in his [Joseph Smith’s] mind it was not sufficient that he alone had these keys and this power, but he intended by way of ordinances to confer a portion of this power on others who were faithful, thereby actually bringing about the restoration of all things. For example, in D&C 132:45-46, where by revelation Joseph Smith is reassured that he received the keys of the binding and loosing power of Elijah, the Lord says, “For I have conferred upon you the keys and power of the priesthood, wherein I restore all things, *and make known unto you all things in due time.*” (Smith, *The Words of Joseph Smith: The Contemporary Accounts of the Nauvoo Discourses of the Prophet Joseph*, 54 footnote 22). (Italicized in the original.)

⁹⁸ Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 4:426.

⁹⁹ See Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 5:148.

Joseph Smith then expressed the importance of sealing keys, “Now the great and grand secret of the whole matter, and the *sum-mum bonum* of the whole subject before us, consists in obtaining the power of the holy priesthood; for him to whom these keys are given, there is no difficulty in obtaining a knowledge of facts in relation to the salvation of the children of men, both as well for the dead as for the living.”¹⁰⁰

One of the first corrections given to the ordinance of baptisms for the dead was that there needed to be a recorder, someone to witness the baptism and then record who was baptized. “Whatsoever you record on earth shall be recorded in heaven, and whatsoever you do not record on earth shall not be recorded in heaven; for out of the books shall your dead be judged, according to their own works, whether they themselves have attended to the ordinances in their own *propria persona* or by the means of their own agents, according to the ordinance which God has prepared for their salvation from before the foundation of the world, according to the records which they have kept concerning their dead.”¹⁰¹ He then summed this idea up by stating, “this, therefore, is the sealing and binding power, and, in one sense of the word, the keys of the kingdom, which consist in the key of knowledge.”¹⁰² The practice of keeping of records of ordinances performed in the temple became a vital part of the Church that continues to this day.

In reference to 1 Corinthians 15:29, which mentions baptisms for the dead, Joseph Smith linked ancient teachings with his modern movement when he declared, “I will give you a quotation from one of the prophets, who had his eye fixed on the restoration of the priesthood, the glories to be revealed in the last days, and in an especial manner this most glorious of all subjects belonging to the everlasting gospel, *viz.*, the baptism for the dead; for Malachi says, last chapter, verses 5th and 6th, ‘Behold I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the

¹⁰⁰ Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 5:150.

¹⁰¹ Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 5:149.

¹⁰² Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 5:150.

great and dreadful day of the Lord; and he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.”¹⁰³

Again Joseph Smith was reluctant to openly state the coming of Elijah to the Kirtland Temple, but he did reference the importance of the keys for work for the dead. Joseph Smith taught his followers that they were living in the dispensation of the fullness of times, “which dispensation is now beginning to usher in, that a whole, and complete, and perfect union, and welding together of dispensations, and keys, and powers, and glories should take place, and be revealed, from the days of Adam even to the present time; and not only this, but those things which never have been revealed from the foundation of the world, but have been kept hid from the wise and prudent, shall be revealed unto babes and sucklings in this the dispensation of the fullness of times.”¹⁰⁴ Because of the keys, powers, and glories, Joseph Smith explained to his followers that they shall learn things that the world did not know. He then urged his followers to complete the temple and present to the Lord a book containing the records of their dead, because it would only be in the temple where they could learn those hidden things.

Almost a year later at the funeral services of Judge Higbee on Sunday, August 13, 1843, Joseph Smith associated the sealing power of Elijah to covenants. From Malachi chapter four, Joseph Smith taught that “The world is reserved unto burning in the last days. He shall send Elijah the prophet, and he shall reveal the covenants of the fathers in relation to the children, and the covenants of the children in relation to the fathers.” He continued: “Four destroying angels holding power over the four quarters of the earth until the servants of God are sealed in their foreheads, which signifies sealing the blessing upon their heads, meaning the everlasting covenant, thereby making their calling and election sure. When a seal is put upon the father and

¹⁰³ Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 5:151.

¹⁰⁴ Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 5:151.

mother, it secures their posterity, so that they cannot be lost, but will be saved by virtue of the covenant of their father and mother.”¹⁰⁵

Dr. Willard Richards recorded that Joseph Smith, in a conference where he was teaching about the priesthood on August 27, 1843, asked the question, “How shall God come to the rescue of this generation? He will send Elijah the prophet. The law revealed to Moses in Horeb never was revealed to the children of Israel as a nation.”¹⁰⁶ Because the children of Israel would not live according to the ways of the Lord and revealed by Moses, they were not able to see what Moses saw. After giving this example he taught that, “Elijah shall reveal the covenants to seal the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the children to the fathers.”¹⁰⁷ The sealing of Elijah occurs through covenants. He continued, “The anointing and sealing is to be called, elected and made sure.”¹⁰⁸ Joseph distinguished the difference between the Aaronic and Melchizedek Priesthood. The Aaronic Priesthood “is called the Levitical Priesthood, consisting of priests to administer in outward ordinances, made without an oath; but the Priesthood of Melchizedek is by oath and covenant.”¹⁰⁹ He urged the Saints to, “finish the temple, and God will fill it with power, and you will then receive more knowledge concerning this [Patriarchal] priesthood.”¹¹⁰

Five months later on Sunday, January 21, 1844, at the Nauvoo Temple in somewhat unpleasant weather, Joseph Smith asked the gathered crowd what he should speak about and then stated, “I know what Brother Cahoon wants me to speak about. He wants me to speak about the Coming of Elijah in the last days.”¹¹¹ This address was originally recorded in Wilford Woodruff’s Journal. Joseph Smith quoted from Malachi 4:5-6 about the coming of Elijah. He

¹⁰⁵ Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 5:530.

¹⁰⁶ Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 5:555.

¹⁰⁷ Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 5:555.

¹⁰⁸ Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 5:555.

¹⁰⁹ Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 5:555.

¹¹⁰ Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 5:555.

¹¹¹ Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 6:183.

read, “he shall turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to the fathers” (see Malachi 4:6). Joseph Smith added clarification to this verse, “the word *turn* here should be translated *bind*, or seal.”¹¹² Again Joseph Smith made reference to the fact that the keys of Elijah are used to seal.

He then asked what was the object of Elijah and how was the mission of Elijah to be fulfilled. He explained, “The keys are to be delivered, the spirit of Elijah is to come, the Gospel to be established, the Saints of God gathered, Zion built up, and the Saints to come up as saviors on Mount Zion.”¹¹³ Again Joseph Smith taught his followers that it is not just that Elijah will come but there were also keys associated with his coming that have power to establish Zion.

At this point in time, the followers of Joseph Smith only knew that the ordinance of baptism was necessary for salvation. Joseph Smith expanded their minds to not only what additional ordinances were necessary for them to gain eternal life, but that those who had died would need to have those same ordinances performed for them also. Therefore his followers learned that there was more to do than baptisms for the dead. In this discourse, Joseph Smith drew the connection between the keys of Elijah to the saving ordinances of the temple. He asked his followers how they were to be saviors on Mount Zion. He answered, “by building their temples, erecting their baptismal fonts, and going forth and receiving all the ordinances, baptisms, confirmations, washings, anointings, ordinations and sealing powers upon their heads, in behalf of all their progenitors who are dead, and redeem them that they may come forth in the first resurrection and be exalted to thrones of glory with them; and herein is the chain that binds the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the children to the fathers, which fulfills the mission

¹¹² Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 6:184.

¹¹³ Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 6:184.

of Elijah.”¹¹⁴ Joseph Smith made it clear that the mission of Elijah is performing all the ordinances necessary for salvation for the dead. Joseph Smith was not able to see, in his lifetime, those additional ordinances performed for the dead outside of baptism for the dead. Joseph Smith taught, “the question is frequently asked ‘Can we not be saved without going through with all these ordinances &c?’ I would answer, No, not the fullness of Salvation.”¹¹⁵ Temple endowments for the dead did not occur until the completion of the St. George Temple.¹¹⁶

Now that Joseph Smith had linked Elijah together with the sealing ordinance, he made an indirect reference to the keys of Elijah being here on the earth. “I would to God that this temple was now done, that we might go into it, and go to work and improve our time, and make use of the seals while they are on earth.”¹¹⁷ Still without referencing the vision in the Kirtland Temple, Joseph Smith made an obvious declaration that he had the sealing power, but was not able to use it to its full extent until the temple was completed.

One week later on January 28, 1844, Wilford Woodruff met with the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles and others. He recorded in his journal that, “the Subject of Elijah’s coming to seal the hearts of the fathers to the Children &c was spoken of. Seal the hearts of the children to the fathers Malachi IVth Ch. 6 vers.”¹¹⁸ This subject of Elijah was on the minds of the leadership of the Church.

Joseph Smith waited another two months before he once again addressed the subject of Elijah. The date was March 10, 1844, under much more favorable conditions. Wilford Woodruff recorded in his journal that this address by Joseph Smith was, “one of the most important &

¹¹⁴ Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 6:184.

¹¹⁵ Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 6:184.

¹¹⁶ For an in-depth study on the St. George Temple being the first temple where not only baptisms for the dead occurred, but also the endowments for the dead were first performed, see Richard E. Bennett, “Line Upon Line, Precept upon Precept,” *BYU Studies* 44 (2005), 39-77.

¹¹⁷ Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 6:184.

¹¹⁸ *Wilford Woodruff’s Journal*, Edited by Scott G. Kenney (Midvale, UT: Signature Books, 1985), vol. 2. 344.

interesting subjects ever presented to the saints & the principles presented were of the greatest importance to be understood it was as follows the work & calling & spirit of Elias, Elijah, & [Messiah].”¹¹⁹ This most important address was a subject that occupied the mind of Wilford Woodruff to his dying day as he learned the great importance Elijah and temple ordinances for the living and dead.

Joseph Smith taught that: “The spirit, power, and calling of Elijah is, that ye have power to hold the key of the revelation, ordinances, oracles, powers and endowments of the fullness of the Melchizedek Priesthood and of the kingdom of God on the earth; and to receive, obtain, and perform all the ordinances belonging to the kingdom of God, even unto the turning of the hearts of the fathers unto the children, and the hearts of the children unto the fathers, even those who are in heaven.”¹²⁰ The key of Elijah is the key to the fullness of the Melchizedek Priesthood, which is the highest ordinance in the temple, and all other ordinances of the kingdom of God which operate for the living and those who are dead. From a revelation Joseph Smith said he received from the Lord in 1841, Joseph Smith taught his followers that the fullness of the priesthood could only be received in the temple (see Doctrine and Covenants 124:28).

Joseph Smith taught that the Lord destroyed the world by a flood, and He also promised that in the last days He would destroy the world by fire. But before the destruction by fire, the Lord promised to send Elijah to seal the hearts of the children to their fathers and the hearts of the fathers to their children. Joseph Smith proclaimed that the “office and work of Elijah, it is one of the greatest & most important subjects that God has revealed.”¹²¹ He then asked in reference to the sealing of sons to fathers, “now was this merely confined to the living, to settle

¹¹⁹ *Wilford Woodruff's Journal*, vol. 2. 359.

¹²⁰ Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 6:251.

¹²¹ Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 6:251.

difficulties with families on earth? By no means. It was a far greater work.”¹²² Again, Joseph Smith emphasized that the keys of Elijah were not just for the living, but also for the dead. He referred the large crowd to the scriptures where the “subject is manifest: that is, without us, they could not be made perfect, nor we without them; the fathers without the children, nor the children without the fathers.”¹²³

Joseph Smith declared, “I wish you to understand this subject, for it is important; and if you will receive it, this is the spirit of Elijah, that we redeem our dead, and connect ourselves with our fathers which are in heaven, and seal up our dead to come forth in the first resurrection; and here we want the power of Elijah to seal those who dwell on earth to those who dwell in heaven. This is the power of Elijah and the keys of the kingdom of Jehovah.”¹²⁴ The doctrine Joseph Smith was teaching here served as the doctrinal foundation for temples and performing ordinances for the living and the dead.

Joseph Smith then clarified the difference between Elias and Elijah, “Then what you seal on earth, by the keys of Elijah, is sealed in heaven; and this is the power of Elijah, and this is the difference between the spirit and power of Elias and Elijah; for while the spirit of Elias is a forerunner, the power of Elijah is sufficient to make our calling and election sure; and the same doctrine, where we are exhorted to go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of laying on of hands, resurrection of the dead, &c.”¹²⁵ Joseph Smith continued, “Again: The doctrine or sealing power of Elijah is as follows;—If you have power to seal on earth and in heaven, then we should be wise. The first thing you do, go and seal

¹²² Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 6:251-52.

¹²³ Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 6:252.

¹²⁴ Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 6:252.

¹²⁵ Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 6:252.

on earth your sons and daughters unto yourself, and yourself unto your fathers in eternal glory.”¹²⁶ In this discourse Joseph Smith made a subtle reference to holding the sealing keys.¹²⁷

Sunday April 7, 1844, in a conference to the Church, Joseph Smith reflected upon the death of King Follett and gave an address about doing work for the dead. “The greatest responsibility in this world that God has laid upon us is to seek after our dead. The apostle says, ‘They without us cannot be made perfect’; for it is necessary that the sealing power should be in our hands to seal our children and our dead for the [fullness] of the dispensation of times—a dispensation to meet the promises made by Jesus Christ before the foundation of the world for the salvation of man.”¹²⁸ He then stated that with Elijah and the power to turn hearts was how perfection was obtained for the living and dead.

The next day, April 8, 1844, in a conference he said that it would be impossible to continue with what he discussed the previous day because of the weakness of his lungs. He spoke for a very short while, yet in this small discourse he gave a charge to the elders concerning the temple ordinances. Wilford Woodruff recorded that Joseph Smith proclaimed, “I now have a great proclamation for the Elders to teach the Church here after which is in relation to Zion.” He continued, “When the House is done, Baptism font erected and finished & the worthy are washed, anointed, endowed & ordained kings and priests, which must be done in this life, when the place is prepared you must go through all the ordinances of the house of the Lord so that you

¹²⁶ Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 6:253.

¹²⁷ Joseph Smith made a subtle declaration that he held the sealing keys of Elijah. The followers of Joseph Smith who knew the scriptures understood this declaration. Jesus Christ told Peter, “I give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven (Matthew 16:19). Those of the Mormon faith conclude that Peter spoke about the sealing keys of Elijah. In the Book of Mormon similar language is found with an added statement. Nephi was given this same sealing power and was told by the Lord that, “all things shall be done unto thee according to thy word, for thou shalt not ask that which is contrary to my will (Helaman 10:5). While teaching about Elijah and the sealing power, Joseph Smith boldly declared, “the Lord once told me that what I asked for I should have.” (Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 6:253). Those who understood the sealing power could not mistake what Joseph Smith was declaring.

¹²⁸ Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 6:313.

who have any dead friends must go through all the ordinances for them the same as for yourselves; then the Elders are to go through all America & build up Churches until all Zion is built up, but not to commence to do this until the Temple is built up here and the Elders endowed.”¹²⁹

Joseph Smith’s Teachings about the Spirit of the Messiah

When Jesus Christ appeared to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery, Joseph Smith recorded that not only did the Savior accept the temple, but he also declared, “I will manifest myself to my people in mercy in this house. Yea, I will appear unto my servants, and speak unto them with mine own voice, if my people will keep my commandments, and do not pollute this holy house” (Doctrine and Covenants 110:7-8). Joseph Smith desired for his followers to have the Lord manifest Himself unto them. What Joseph Smith recorded about what the Savior said next was prophetic: “Yea the hearts of thousands and tens of thousands shall greatly rejoice in consequence of the blessings which shall be poured out, and the endowment with which my servants have been endowed in this house. And the fame of this house shall spread to foreign lands; and this is the beginning of the blessings which shall be poured out upon the heads of my people” (Doctrine and Covenants 110:7-10).

On Sunday, March 10, 1844, Joseph Smith spoke of the Messiah in relation to Elias and Elijah. He taught, “The spirit of Elias is first, Elijah second, and Messiah last. Elias is a forerunner to prepare the way, and the spirit and power of Elijah is to come after, holding the keys of power, building the Temple to the capstone, placing the seals of the Melchisedec Priesthood upon the house of Israel, and making all things ready; then Messiah comes to His

¹²⁹ *Wilford Woodruff’s Journal*, vol. 2. 388-89.

Temple, which is last of all.”¹³⁰ He continued his instruction about the spirit of the Messiah by stating the “Messiah is above the spirit and power of Elijah, for He made the world, and was that spiritual rock unto Moses in the wilderness. Elijah was to come and prepare the way and build up the kingdom before the coming of the great day of the Lord, although the spirit of Elias might begin it.”¹³¹ Joseph Smith taught that, “those holding the fullness of the Melchizedek Priesthood are kings and priests of the Most High God.”¹³²

In his diary, Thomas B. Bullock gave greater insight into what the prophet meant by the spirit of Messiah. His journal entry is about the discourse Joseph Smith gave on March 10, 1844. He recorded that the “spirit of Elijah is the sealing power—to seal the hearts of the Fathers to the children—and the children to the Parents as Paul declared that the Saints of the last days could not be perfect without them—neither can they be perfect without us—the Spirit of Messiah is all power in Heaven and in Earth—Enthroned in the Heavens as King of Kings and Lord of Lords.”¹³³ The *Church Historian’s Office Journal* also contained this same information: “the Spirit of Messiah is all power in Heaven and in Earth – Enthroned in the Heavens as King of Kings and Lord of Lords.”¹³⁴ The Spirit of Messiah is the power given by the Messiah to an individual that enables them to become a joint-heir with Him after the resurrection; to become a king or queen.

¹³⁰ Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 6:254.

¹³¹ Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 6:254.

¹³² Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 5:555.

¹³³ Smith, *The Words of Joseph Smith: The Contemporary Accounts of the Nauvoo Discourses of the Prophet Joseph*, 336.

¹³⁴ *Church Historian’s Office Journal*, Salt Lake City, Utah, 1 (May 10, 1844), 5.

Evidences that Joseph Smith Discussed Principles, Doctrines, and Practices in Relation to the 1836 Vision

Eleven months after the 1836 vision occurred, Warren Cowdery wrote an article in the *Messenger and Advocate*, which was appropriately titled “Love of God,” and was concerned with salvation for the dead. After Warren Cowdery defined love, he related it to God’s love for His children. Warren Cowdery quoted 1 Peter 4:6: “For, for this cause was the gospel preached to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit.” He then described the Apostle Peter and what he experienced. This description is fascinating because it can also be attributed to Joseph Smith in relation to his life, his believed mission, and the keys he had received in the vision. Warren Cowdery wrote, “To the apostle who penned these words for our instruction; were committed the keys of the kingdom, altho' he was a fisherman by occupation previously to his being chosen and ordained by his divine Master to proclaim that gospel for which he eventually suffered martyrdom. He accompanied the Savior during his travels and public ministry, almost constantly. He witnessed his transfiguration on the mount, saw and heard him converse with Moses and Elias.”¹³⁵

Cowdery asked what was to become of all those who were not able to receive the gospel because they lived during the time when the gospel was not on the earth. He asked, “Are they all lost? We answer no, we unhesitatingly and unequivocally answer no. Was the gospel preached to them?—No. Were they baptized for the remission of their sins? again we answer no, for the very good reason that since that period, till the renewal of the covenant and the restoration of the priesthood, no one was authorized to do it. Then are not thousands of souls lost, who have come into the world and died since the days of the apostles?”¹³⁶ He answered the question with a

¹³⁵ Warren Cowdery, “Love of God,” *Messenger and Advocate*, 3 (March, 1837), 470.

¹³⁶ Cowdery, “Love of God,” 471.

resounding no, because God is not an impartial God. It appeared that Warren Cowdery, in 1837, did not know about the doctrine of baptisms for the dead, but he knew these souls could be saved. Warren Cowdery further explained, “Again, we find this idea more fully supported in the preceding chapter of the same epistle from which our text is taken, at the 18th, 19th and 20th verses: ‘For Christ hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the spirit; by which also he went and preached to the spirits in prison, which sometime were disobedient when once the long suffering of God waited in the days of Noah while the ark was a preparing, &c.’ Here are the words of inspiration that the antediluvians had the offer of life, eternal life and salvation, and that too, some thousands of years since they had fallen asleep.”¹³⁷ Thus Cowdery had a clear understanding of the doctrine of salvation of the dead, but as of yet he did not appear to know of the ordinances that would make it possible. The only way he could have learned this doctrine was through Joseph.

That Joseph Smith taught the 1836 vision to the Twelve Apostles is apparent since David W. Patten taught it. On July 31, 1838, Patten gave a discourse on dispensations and how Joseph Smith and his followers lived in the dispensation of the fullness of times. He wrote about how the keys of the dispensation of the fullness of times had been bestowed upon Joseph Smith and, “that from him the Priesthood of God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, might be given to many, and the order of this dispensation established on the earth.” Patten wrote that those who sin against Joseph Smith not only sin against him, but all of the holy prophets who had lived previously. Patten then made a list of some of these holy prophets and gave added insights to the purpose of the keys each one held. He wrote about Moroni and the keys he held, “and also Elias, who holds the keys of bringing to pass the restitution of all things.” He continued, “and also

¹³⁷ Cowdery, “Love of God,” 471.

Elijah who holds the keys of committing the power to turn the hearts of the father to the children, and the hearts of the children to the fathers, that the whole earth may not be smitten with a curse.”¹³⁸

Joseph Smith also taught Parley P. Pratt about the sealing power while he was on a mission with him in Philadelphia in 1839. Pratt recorded, “It was at this time that I received from him the first idea of eternal family organization, and the eternal union of the sexes in those inexpressibly endearing relationships.” He continued, “It was from him that I learned that the wife of my bosom might be secured to me for time and all eternity; and that the refined sympathies and affections which endeared us to each other emanated from the fountain of divine eternal love. It was from him that I learned that we might cultivate these affections, and grow and increase in the same to all eternity.” He concluded that, “Joseph Smith, had barely touched a single key; had merely lifted a corner of the veil and given me a single glance into eternity.”¹³⁹ The doctrine of sealing which Joseph taught Parley P. Pratt was also known as the law of new marriage, or celestial marriage—the doctrine that a couple and family can be sealed for time and all eternity.

Likewise, Willard Richards had been taught about the significance of the Mount of Transfiguration. He wrote in his pocketbook some time before August 8, 1839, that, “the Savior, Moses, & Elias—gave the Keys to Peter, James & John on the Mount when they were transfigured before him.”¹⁴⁰ He continued, “We cannot be made perfect without them, nor they without us when these things are done the Son of man will descend, the ancient of Days sit.”¹⁴¹

¹³⁸ Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 3:53.

¹³⁹ Parley P. Pratt, *Autobiography of Parley P. Pratt*, edited by his son, Parley P. Pratt (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1985), 259-60.

¹⁴⁰ Smith, *The Words of Joseph Smith: The Contemporary Accounts of the Nauvoo Discourses of the Prophet Joseph*, 9.

¹⁴¹ Smith, *The Words of Joseph Smith: The Contemporary Accounts of the Nauvoo Discourses of the Prophet Joseph*, 9-10.

Willard Richards, who would become the Church Historian and Recorder in December 1842, knew of the importance of the visit of Elijah and the keys he restored.

When the Saints had settled in Nauvoo, Joseph Smith commanded them to build a temple. He promised with the completion of the temple that many would receive an understanding of temple ordinances. On January 6, 1842, Joseph Smith said “the Saints seem to be influenced by a kind and indulgent Providence in their dispositions and [blessed with] means to rear the Temple of the Most High God, anxiously looking forth to the completion thereof as an event of the greatest importance to the Church and the world.” He said this would be a day, long to be remembered because it is, “a day in which the God in heaven has begun to restore the ancient order of His kingdom.” He continued, “a day in which all things are concurring to bring about the completion of the fullness of the Gospel.”¹⁴²

On January 19, 1841, Joseph Smith stated that he received a revelation from the Lord that stated, “For, for this cause I commanded Moses that he should build a tabernacle, that they should bear it with them in the wilderness, and to build a house in the land of promise, that those ordinances might be revealed which had been hid from before the world was (Doctrine and Covenants 124:38). The revelation stated the importance of temples:

Therefore, verily I say unto you, that your anointings, and your washings, and your baptisms for the dead, and your solemn assemblies, and your memorials for your sacrifices by the sons of Levi, and for your oracles in your most holy places wherein you receive conversations, and your statutes and judgments, for the beginning of the revelations and foundation of Zion, and for the glory, honor, and endowment of all her municipalities, are ordained by the ordinance of my holy house, which my people are always commanded to build unto my holy name. And verily I say unto you, let this house be built unto my name, that I may reveal mine ordinances therein unto my people; For I deign to reveal unto my church things which have been kept hid from before the foundation of the world, things that pertain to the dispensation of the [fullness] of times. And I will show unto my

¹⁴² Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 4:492. Cited from, John A. Widtsoe, “The Beginnings of Modern Temple Work,” *Improvement Era*, (Salt Lake City, October, 1927), 1074-75.

servant Joseph all things pertaining to this house, and the priesthood thereof, and the place whereon it shall be built (Doctrine and Covenants 124:39-42).

What Priesthood did Joseph Smith have now that he did not have at the time of the building of the Kirtland Temple? What ordinances would be performed in the Nauvoo Temple that were not performed in the Kirtland Temple? Answers to these questions come as the words of Joseph Smith are studied.

Elder B. H. Roberts reported that Joseph Smith taught the first missionaries who went to England to not teach about the doctrine of gathering.

Before the mission for England under Elders Kimball and Hyde departed, the prophet enjoined them to adhere strictly to the first principles of the Gospel, and say nothing for the present in relation to the gathering; this, doubtless on account of the unsettled condition of the Church at the time. Similar instructions, and for the same reason, were given to the Twelve Apostles in 1839 when they went on their mission to England. But the Saints could not be kept in ignorance of these matters. No sooner were the people baptized than they were seized with a desire to gather with the main body of the Church. "I find it is difficult to keep anything from the Saints," writes Elder Taylor in his journal of this period, "for the Spirit of God reveals it to them."¹⁴³

Joseph Smith established the Relief Society not only to focus on serving those in need but also to prepare the women who followed his faith for higher spiritual blessing that would be given in the temple. He taught them to live by high standards and that they should purge out iniquity from among them. On April 28, 1842, he stated that, "the church is not now organized in its proper order, and cannot be until the Temple is completed."¹⁴⁴ The keys of Moses, Elias, and Elijah were not used outside of the temple, unless specified by Joseph Smith, therefore the Church would not be organized properly until the temple was completed and the keys of Moses, Elias, and Elijah used.

¹⁴³ Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 2:xxvi.

¹⁴⁴ Minutes of the Female Relief Society of Nauvoo, Apr. 28, 1842, Archives of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah, 36.

On May 1, 1842, Joseph Smith gave more insight into what the keys were. “The keys are certain signs and words by which false spirits and personages may be detected from true, which cannot be revealed to the Elders till the Temple is completed.”¹⁴⁵ The keys would only be understood by those who were allowed to enter into the temple. It is interesting to note that three days later on May 4, 1842, Joseph Smith administered the ordinances of the endowment for the first time.¹⁴⁶

As the Saints’ knowledge of Elijah and his importance increased, the doctrine of work for the dead brought peace to those who had loved ones die who were not of the Mormon faith. Joseph Hovey’s young son and mother died on the same day. On December 17, 1842, he recorded in his journal, “She did not belong to the Church of Christ as she did not have the message presented to her only as I wrote it to her. Nevertheless, I have the hope of meeting her again in the first resurrection through provisions that God has made for those who did not have the opportunity to embrace the gospel of Christ. Under those existing circumstances I have the most glorious hope of meeting my dead friends, to clasp hands in eternal felicity.”¹⁴⁷

On January 11, 1843, the Saints celebrated Joseph Smith’s release from prison, and the Twelve Apostles set aside a day for fasting, praise, prayer and thanksgiving before God for the membership of the Church to observe. The Twelve Apostles wrote a proclamation to the Saints of Nauvoo admonishing them to, “seek out and follow the councils given through his servant, and ever be united heart and hand in building up this Stake of Zion and the Temple, where God

¹⁴⁵ Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 4:608.

¹⁴⁶ Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 5:1-2.

¹⁴⁷ *Biography of Joseph Grafton Hovey (1812-1847)*, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, (October 6, 1844), 25.

will reveal himself to this people; that no strife or confusion may ever be found in our midst, but peace and righteousness may be our companions.”¹⁴⁸

The proclamation continued and associated Joseph Smith with the Old Testament: “that his hands may be staid on high, like unto Moses – that our enemies if such we have, may repent, and turning away from their enmity, get forgiveness and salvation, and that they may have no dominion over the servants of God or his Saints; but that Zion may flourish upon the mountains and be exalted on the hills, and that all nations shall flow unto it and be saved.”¹⁴⁹

As the Saints gradually learned more about Elijah and his power, they began to write more about him. By 1844, the spirit of Elijah was a prominent figure in Mormon culture. In January, 1844, Joseph Hovey wrote that “the spirit of Elijah was very comprehensive in some for truly they had the power to seal on earth and seal in heaven. Men were appointed by the Prophet Joseph Smith to go through the city of the Saints and say unto them, ‘set your houses in order, stop all bickerings against each other and your neighbors.’” Hovey continued, “Hence, I, Joseph, and my wife, Martha, covenanted that we would strive to keep all the commandments and be humble and meek and lowly, standing at the head of our family. We would also be likewise with our brethren and sisters. Meetings were held day and night in order to unite our covenants together to do the will of the Lord. Great peace and joy did prevail among us.”¹⁵⁰

Many wrote about purifying their hearts so that they would receive the greater witness of the Savior in His holy temple. William W. Phelps wrote several times to his wife about this before the vision occurred in 1836. In one letter he wrote, “I expect an endowment, and I labor to forgive and be for given I have said so in my letters to you and I think you have for gotten to mention it in your letters. If you and I [tarry] together on earth, and go to the Lord together we

¹⁴⁸ Church Historian’s Office, Jan 11, 1843, Salt Lake City, 92.

¹⁴⁹ Church Historian’s Office, Jan 11, 1843, Salt Lake City, 92-93.

¹⁵⁰ *Biography of Joseph Grafton Hovey (1812-1847)*, 19.

“must be one.”¹⁵¹ One month later he wrote, “How can I receive an endowment if my skirts are not clean from the blood of this generation? My own family are of blood of this generation, and so are my brethren and sisters: Let us be wise, then, and forgive as the Lord forgives us, that we may be clean I forgive all, all their trespasses or hardness towards me.”¹⁵²

On January 28, 1844, although Wilford Woodruff and his wife Phebe were not feeling well, they still went to the temple because Wilford Woodruff had been anticipating this day. He recorded in his journal: “The Subject of Elijah’s coming to seal the hearts of the fathers to the Children &c was spoken of. Seal the hearts of the children to the fathers Malachi IVth Ch. 6 [verse].” He then wrote this succinct, simple declaration, “Wilford & Phebe W Woodruff received our 2nd Anointing & sealings.”¹⁵³ He and his wife participated in the highest ordinance of the temple and because of the sacred nature of the ordinance, he did not expound more upon it. Although he wrote little about the ordinance, it did leave a mighty impression upon him, because in his journal he made an elaborate drawing of a heart made out of keys, which must have taken some time to draw. The drawing may have represented the keys of Elijah having the power to seal hearts together where the keys of Elijah are associated with all the ordinances of the temple.

Sidney Rigdon, who served briefly as first counselor to Joseph Smith, gave a discourse on March 24, 1844, about power. He taught that where there is power there is strength and glory, but he had observed the relaxing of power in his day, the result being no order or rule. He then boldly declared, “One hundred years will not pass away till there would not be a man or woman on the earth, and nothing but the hand of God can save it, & this is why God would send Elijah to do his work, for all the power the nations will soon have is to destroy each other. For soon

¹⁵¹ Phelps, Letter to Sally Phelps, September 11, 1835, 18. (Underlined in original.)

¹⁵² Phelps, Letter to Sally Phelps, October 27, 1835, 70.

¹⁵³ *Wilford Woodruff’s Journal*, vol. 2. 344.

nation will be against nation party against party the rich against the poor & the poor against the rich until they are destroyed from under heaven.”¹⁵⁴

On a Sunday Abraham O. Smoot attended a conference and recorded in his journal on that day, May 26, 1844, that he taught about the resurrection of the dead and eternal judgment, and with giving credit to God for helping him, gave some argument, “on baptisms for the Dead” and was able to impress upon the Saints, “the importance of that ordinance.”¹⁵⁵

Just as it seemed that Joseph Smith was teaching more about the visitors of the vision and their importance to Mormon theology, the teachings from Joseph Smith came to an end. On June 27, 1844, Joseph Smith, Jr. and his brother Hyrum were shot and killed by a mob while they were being held in Carthage Jail. This would bring an end to Joseph Smith expounding more on Moses, Elias, and Elijah. Any further teaching of the vision would be left to the leaders that would continue to move Joseph Smith’s movement forward.

Conclusion

Although Joseph Smith did not teach in a public setting that the 1836 vision occurred to him, there is evidence that he did teach about it to close associates in private settings. Joseph Smith learned with time about the use of the keys, and the Saints would learn about the 1836 vision and the keys over a longer period of time. In public settings, Joseph Smith did not hesitate teaching about the importance and relevance of Jesus Christ, Moses, Elias, and Elijah, while not disclosing the 1836 vision. He declared he held the keys without referencing the 1836 vision. During the latter end of Joseph Smith’s life, the Saints knew about the importance of each visitor and their connection with baptisms for the dead and the temple, without having knowledge of the 1836 vision. Church leaders who were closest to Joseph Smith had enough knowledge of the

¹⁵⁴ *Wilford Woodruff’s Journal*, vol. 2. 368. (Underlined in original.)

¹⁵⁵ Smoot, *Missionary Journal*, May 26, 1844, 198.

doctrines of the 1836 vision that they were comfortable teaching about them in public settings. This is evidence that Joseph Smith must have taught them about the 1836 vision in greater detail than he did to the general body of the Church. He thus initiated the pattern for the vision to become canonized. Joseph Smith taught the doctrines of the 1836 vision which were accepted and lived by the Saints. After his death, Church leaders continued the pattern by teaching the doctrines of the 1836 vision.

Chapter 3

The Teaching of the Doctrine and Covenants 110 Between 1844 and 1872

The doctrines, covenants, and ordinances that originated from the visit of Moses, Elias, and Elijah and initially taught by Joseph Smith, Jr., did not die with him. Joseph Smith did teach about the keys of Moses, Elias, and Elijah avoiding any specific references to the vision, as neither did other leaders of the Church who followed after him such as Brigham Young. Although Brigham Young and the Twelve Apostles did not make specific references to the vision, they did focus on and teach about the ordinances and importance of the temple. The Saints continued performing temple ordinances, some of which were influenced from the revelation and were established by Joseph Smith. Just as he learned line upon line, so to would Joseph's immediate successors, also have to learn. This is because it appears that Joseph Smith did not share with the Saints all he learned from the vision and what he knew about the ordinances. As the Church matured and the Saints were able to comprehend more, Brigham Young, Orson Pratt, John Taylor and other leaders taught about the vision in public settings and taught about the doctrines and ordinances associated with it with greater clarity.

Soon after the death of Joseph Smith, Brigham Young and the remaining Twelve Apostles continued to learn line upon line about the implications and importance of temple ordinances and their connection with the 1836 vision. Their initial focus was on the ordinances of the temple, not how Joseph Smith received the keys. It was not until many years later that Brigham Young and other church leaders spoke publicly about the vision and connected the temple ordinances with the Savior, Moses, Elias, and Elijah and their appearance in the Kirtland

Temple to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery on April 3, 1836.¹⁵⁶ The first time Elijah was mentioned in a public discourse would be a little over seven years from the death of Joseph Smith. This chapter will be a study of the chronology when the 1836 vision began to be taught and what was taught, from the death of Joseph Smith in 1844 through the exodus of Nauvoo and to the time period when Brigham Young announced the building of the St. George Temple in 1871.¹⁵⁷ It will also look at the accompanying factors that could have influenced the leadership of the Church to start focusing on the 1836 vision and referencing it.

Less than two months after the death of Joseph Smith, Brigham Young spoke publicly about the importance of the endowment on Thursday, August 8, 1844. The endowment was a temple ordinance that the Prophet introduced to a selected group of his followers in Nauvoo before his death in Carthage, Illinois. Brigham Young spoke in a conference in Nauvoo where William Hyde recorded, “President Young again arose and spoke concerning the endowments of the Elders. Said that if they did not get them in the Temple they should have them if they had to receive them in the wilderness, for the Devil could not cheat them out of them.”¹⁵⁸ The Nauvoo Temple, at that time, had not yet progressed enough to perform endowments. Brigham Young focused on the importance of receiving the endowment with no emphasis on the temple. He knew of the importance of having the members of the Mormon faith receive the endowment, but it was not important where they received it. If they never completed the temple, they could still receive their endowment in the wilderness. Two weeks later his message had a different emphasis, showing that he was continuing to learn line upon line about the endowment and where it should be received.

¹⁵⁶ Doctrine and Covenants 110; Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 2:435-36.

¹⁵⁷ Bennett, “Line Upon Line, Precept Upon Precept,” 54.

¹⁵⁸ *The Private Journal of William Hyde*, 14.

A little over two weeks later on August 18, 1844, the focus changed from receiving the endowment to completing the Nauvoo Temple. William Hyde recorded that Brigham Young spoke about baptisms for the dead and then, “he also showed the necessity of uniting our [exertions] to finish the Temple that the Elders might receive their endowments, and be prepared to bear off the World.”¹⁵⁹ The endowment remained a necessity because it was considered a saving ordinance, and then the completion of the temple became a necessity as well. From that point on there was an increased effort to complete the Nauvoo Temple. Although Brigham Young focused on and taught about the importance of the temple, it appears that the 1836 vision and teaching of the Savior, Moses, Elias, and Elijah faded with the death of Joseph Smith because it appears there are no records found indicating the 1836 vision or the visitors being referenced in any public settings.

On October 6, 1844, Joseph Hovey recorded in his journal that Brigham Young taught the Saints in the afternoon session of General Conference about the importance of completing the Nauvoo Temple. Brigham Young taught, “that in order for a man to save his dead friends he would have to go through the same ordinances to save himself. Hence, it was a great thing to come up in such a responsible place. In the work for the dead the man would act as proxy for the male friends and his wife for the females, by so doing they became a King and a Queen.”¹⁶⁰

Eighteen months after the death of Joseph Smith, Brigham Young spoke about why the Prophet was silent on certain subjects. The Nauvoo Temple was completed enough that Saints performed the first endowments¹⁶¹ in the temple on December 10, 1845.¹⁶² During this busy period of performing endowments, Brigham Young met with the Twelve Apostles, others and

¹⁵⁹ *The Private Journal of William Hyde*, 15-16.

¹⁶⁰ *Biography of Joseph Grafton Hovey (1812-1847)*. 17.

¹⁶¹ The first endowments for the living occurred in Joseph Smith’s Red Brick Store on May 4, 1842. See Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 5:1-2.

¹⁶² See Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 7:543.

their wives in the attic of the Nauvoo Temple, on Sunday, December 14, 1845. Brigham Young dedicated the attic room less than two weeks previously and it was there that he declared, “There is too much covetousness in the church, and too much disposition amongst the brethren to seek after power and has been from the beginning, but this feeling is diminishing and the brethren begin to know better.”¹⁶³ Covetousness and seekers for power served as stumbling blocks not only for themselves but also for those who were faithful in their obedience to Joseph Smith. Brigham Young continued, “In consequence of such feelings Joseph [Smith, Jr.] left the people in the dark on many subjects of importance and they still remain in the dark. We have got to rid such principles from our hearts.”¹⁶⁴ How can an organization be successful when its leader does not share all of his knowledge? It appeared that even those who were faithful to Joseph Smith were also kept in the dark. It was not until those feelings, steeped in pride, diminished in the hearts of the people that they learned and understood the doctrines that Joseph Smith chose not to expound upon. After Brigham Young was in Utah, he used similar language as to why he was silent about discussing Elijah in public settings for so long.

Joseph Smith learned by sad experience that he had to keep certain spiritual truths hidden from his followers because of the failures of the past, with significant events that occurred in Kirtland, Ohio. One of the Kirtland failures was when Joseph Smith encouraged his followers to prepare themselves to have heavenly manifestations, such as seeing Christ, during the solemn assembly and dedication of the Kirtland Temple. Many of them did witness a variety of spiritual manifestations, with some stating they saw the Savior.¹⁶⁵ Many of those, after they had

¹⁶³ Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 7:545.

¹⁶⁴ Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 7:545.

¹⁶⁵ George A. Smith stated that on the first day of the dedication of the Kirtland Temple, Frederick G. Williams, who was a counselor to Joseph Smith, “bore testimony that the Savior, dressed in his vesture without seam, came into the stand and accepted of the dedication of the house, that he saw him, and gave a description of his clothing and all things pertaining to it” (*Journal of Discourses*, 11:10.)

witnessed great spiritual manifestations, turned away from Joseph Smith and apostatized from the Church. Some became the most bitter enemies to Joseph Smith and the Church he established. Because Joseph Smith felt that the people were not prepared sufficiently enough to bear what he had to teach them, he went to his grave leaving even his close associates with no information on some matters. Some of his closest associates took over the leadership of the Church after his death, but they did not know all that was necessary to continue advancing the Church as Joseph Smith envisioned it. Those leaders had to learn how to penetrate the darkness not illuminated by Joseph Smith and receive revelation as Joseph Smith had in order to give light to the Church regarding the direction the followers of the found faith needed to travel. The Twelve Apostles' mode of knowing what to do and how to receive revelation was from the keys Joseph Smith gave them. It was through these keys that the Twelve claimed to receive revelation from the Lord on how to continue to organize and operate the Church. It was also through revelation that they had to learn about the importance of the vision that occurred in the Kirtland Temple, because Joseph Smith was so silent about it. Once they learned for themselves and then felt the people were spiritually ready learn about the doctrines, they taught the followers of Joseph Smith those things that he, himself, was not able to reveal.

When the Nauvoo Temple was sufficiently completed and dedicated, endowments for the living were administered, and they continued to be ministered until February 7, 1846, when the followers of Brigham Young, the man who claimed to be the next leader of the Church, were forced to leave Nauvoo. In fulfillment of what Joseph Smith said about all Saints being able to receive the endowment as soon as they were prepared to receive it, around 5,600 individuals received their endowments in the Nauvoo Temple. Although it is unclear how much they understood of the connection between the temple ordinances and Moses, Elias, and Elijah, they

did know of the necessity of the temple ordinances and also understood the importance of performing the temple ordinances for those who had died, which can only be done by the sealing keys of Elijah. Daniel D. McArthur recorded, “On the first of February 1846, I and my wife went into the temple and received our washings and annointings, and on the same day after we had gotten our endowments, we went to the sealing room, and I had Matilda Caroline Fuller sealed to me for time and all eternity by President Willard Richards over the altar prepared for that purpose. I also had Cordelia Clark, my first wife who was dead, sealed to me.”¹⁶⁶ It is interesting to note that Daniel D. McArthur wrote about some accounts of Church history in the beginning of his autobiography. He wrote about the restoration of the Aaronic Priesthood by John the Baptist to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery, but he wrote nothing about the restoration of the Melchizedek Priesthood or of the vision of Moses, Elias, and Elijah in the Kirtland Temple which all are vital elements of the temple ordinances he wrote about. From his writing, it appears that he did not connect the Melchizedek Priesthood and the vision of Moses, Elias, and Elijah with ordinances of the temple.

Warren Foote recorded in his journal that his mother was ill and did not want to make the trek west and then die and be buried in a hole. Instead she wanted to remain behind so that she could be buried next to her husband. On March 5, 1846, Warren Foote’s mother died and he recorded in his journal, “I will see that her work in this probation is completed and united with Father through the sealing power, no more to be parted forever.”¹⁶⁷ They understood the importance of the ordinances of baptisms and sealing for the dead, but performing endowments for the dead was not yet seen as a necessity.

¹⁶⁶ *Autobiography of Daniel D. McArthur, 1820-1856*, typescript, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, 36.

¹⁶⁷ *Autobiography of Warren Foote, 1817-1903*, typescript, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, 77.

Even after the death of Joseph Smith, his followers continued to associate the temple with the ancient customs found in the Old Testament. On Tuesday, November 17, 1846, Oliver B. Huntington recorded in his journal that he got up and bore his testimony to the truth, “that the ancient order was restored upon the earth, with the faith and power attending this order, and reasoned with them as well as I could to show them that the order and power went together and that both were for us as well as for the ancients, if we live for them.”¹⁶⁸ By living for them, the Latter-day Saint would know what the ancient Saints knew and feel a connection to them.

The new place of gathering for the Saints was in the west, in the place that would come to be known as Salt Lake City, Utah. Again the people were led by one who most viewed to be a prophet, Brigham Young, who they believed received revelation from the Lord. Brigham Young and those who followed his leadership arrived in the Salt Lake Valley on July 24, 1847. Four days later on July 28, 1847, Brigham Young called a council together with his Twelve Apostles. Wilford Woodruff, one of the Twelve Apostles, wrote that, “We walked from the north camp to about centre between the two creeks, when President Young waved his hand and said: ‘Here is forty acres for the Temple. The city can be laid out perfectly square, north and south, east and west.’ It was then moved and carried that the temple Lot contain forty acres on the ground where we stood.”¹⁶⁹ This was the official announcement of the building of the Salt Lake Temple. Besides preparing the land for their future survival, the temple remained a focus of Brigham Young.

Although no one was directly teaching about the vision, Brigham Young ensured the temple ordinances established by Joseph Smith continued. When teaching about Elijah, he would always be connected with the temple, so it is clear that Brigham Young knew of the connection.

¹⁶⁸ *Diary of Oliver B. Huntington, 1842-1847*, Part 1, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, 1942, 96.

¹⁶⁹ *Journal History of the Church*, (LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah), July 28, 1847, 2.

The building of the Salt Lake Temple was a slow process; therefore, Brigham Young had the Council House built where sealings and endowments for the living could be performed. This structure was completed in the fall of 1851.¹⁷⁰

Initial Teaching of Elijah

At present, this author has not found any documentation of any of the early leaders of the Saints in the Church who discussed or taught any elements of the vision during the departure from Nauvoo and the trek west to the Salt Lake Valley.

It appears the first time Elijah was referred to by a Church leader was by Brigham Young less than one month from entering the Salt Lake Valley. On August 15, 1847, Brigham Young spoke to the Saints and at the request of Brother Crow, Brigham Young said he would address the death of Brother Crow's daughter who had drowned. Brigham Young taught how Joseph Smith did not receive a fullness of the priesthood and keys all at once, but he declared that Joseph Smith was a, "prophet Seer & Revelator before He received the fulness of the Priesthood & keys of the kingdom."¹⁷¹ He then taught that Joseph Smith had first received the Aaronic Priesthood from the hands of John the Baptist and the Melchizedek Priesthood from the hands of Peter, James, and John. In reference to this he stated that, "from those Apostles Joseph Smith received every key power, Blessing, & Privilege of the Highest Authority of the Melchizedek Priesthood ever committed to man on the earth which they held."¹⁷² Perhaps in defense of his current leadership of the Church he proclaimed, "and I want this Church to understand from this day henceforth & forever that an apostle is the Highest office & Authority that there is in the Church & kingdom of God on the earth." He continued, "Joseph Smith gave unto me & my

¹⁷⁰ See Bennett, "Line Upon Line, Precept Upon Precept," 48-49.

¹⁷¹ *Wilford Woodruff's Journal*, vol. 3. 257.

¹⁷² *Wilford Woodruff's Journal*, vol. 3. 257.

brethren the Twelve all the Priesthood keys Power & Authority which he had And those are powers which belong to the Apostleship.”¹⁷³

Brigham Young declared that he and the Twelve held the Apostleship, therefore they held every key that Joseph Smith had. He then stated, “Elijah spoken of in the Bible that He should Come in the last days to turn the hearts of the fathers to the Children & the children to their fathers. The fulfillment of this scripture is manifest in establishing the kingdom of God & Priesthood on the earth in the last days & those who hold the keys of the priesthood & sealing power have the spirit & power of Elijah & it is necessary in order to redeem our dead & save our Children. There is much more importance attached to this than Parents are aware of.”¹⁷⁴ Brigham Young did not reference the vision but subtly stated that Elijah had returned, and the evidence of this was the establishment of the kingdom of God and priesthood upon the earth.

Once Brigham Young taught about Elijah, he then addressed the death of Brother Crow’s child. Brigham Young stated that it was true that children are saved in the Kingdom of God, but in order for parents to claim them as their children and be with them in the eternities, there is more that must be done. He taught that once a person has embraced the gospel, they need to seek someone who has, “the Priesthood & keys & power of Elijah & must attend to ordinances for that Child,”¹⁷⁵ such as having that child sealed to the parents. Right after Brigham Young taught about Elijah, he addressed the need for a temple: “As soon as we get up some [dobby] Houses for our families we shall go to work to build another Temple & as soon as A place is prepared we shall Commence the Endowments long before the Temple is built & we shall take time & each step the Saints take let them take time enough about it to understand it. [Every] thing at Nauvoo went with a rush. We had to build the Temple with the trowel in one hand the sword in the other

¹⁷³ *Wilford Woodruff’s Journal*, vol. 3. 257.

¹⁷⁴ *Wilford Woodruff’s Journal*, vol. 3. 258.

¹⁷⁵ *Wilford Woodruff’s Journal*, vol. 3. 259.

& mobs were upon us all the while and many crying out O the temple [can't] be built.”¹⁷⁶ The Saints commenced receiving their endowments before the temple was completed but there were no endowments for the dead until there was a fully dedicated temple.

Brigham Young next linked proxy work for the dead with the temple. In this declaration there was also a warning to the Saints if they did not complete the temple. In reference to the Nauvoo Temple, Brigham Young told the Saints that the temple would, “be built, this Church should not fall & the Lord Said if we did not build it we should be rejected as a Church with our dead. Why did He say it? Because the Saints were becoming slothful & covetous & would spend their means upon fine Houses for themselves before they would put it into A House for the Lord. But we went at it & finished it & turned it over into the hands of the Lord in spite of earth & Hell & the Brethren was so faithful at it that we [labored] day [and] night to give them their endowments.” If there was not a temple among the Saints then there was no salvation for them nor their dead. For this reason Brigham Young continued to encourage the completion of a temple. He stated that the children do want to be sealed to their parents and that the parents want to be sealed to them.¹⁷⁷

The next known time anyone referred to Elijah was referred to was several years later. In 1851 there was a man by the name of Mr. Bateman who said that Elijah was among them in the city. On Sunday, February 2, 1851, a congregation met at the Bower, on Temple Square, and Mr. Bateman requested the privilege of addressing the congregation concerning the appearance of Elijah. After Brigham Young made some short remarks, Mr. Bateman addressed the congregation for nine minutes and, according to Brigham Young, they had heard all that Mr. Bateman had to say and, “he has brought forth Nothing. Many have arisen in these last days

¹⁷⁶ *Wilford Woodruff's Journal*, vol. 3. 259.

¹⁷⁷ See *Wilford Woodruff's Journal*, vol. 3. 259.

professing to be Elijah the prophet but they have brought forth Nothing of interest to the people.”¹⁷⁸ There must have been some interest in and talk about Elijah, otherwise there would be no interest in the appearance of Elijah.

This gave Brigham Young the opportunity to focus the minds of the Saints on the truth of Elijah. He asked, “Will any one tell me what the office of Elijah the prophet was to be to the Earth when He Come? The Answer is to turn the hearts of the Children to their fathers & the fathers to the children lest I Come & smite the whole Earth with a Curse. The Answer is right.”¹⁷⁹ Brigham Young asked how this could be accomplished. In answering his own question he once again declared that he held the same authority as did Joseph Smith. He answered, “by sealing upon the head of the prophet Joseph those keys to remain in the Church & kingdom of God until the winding up scene. The Elders of this Church know those keys were sealed upon the head of Joseph Smith & still remain in the Church.”¹⁸⁰

Brigham Young then asked what the Saints were to accomplish with the sealing keys of Elijah. He taught, “As the Saints Could not be perfect in former days with out the Latter-day Saints Neither Can we be perfect without our Fathers who have died for many generations & these keys of Elijah Confirmed upon the president of the Church are to seal the fathers to their children the Children to their fathers, & to assist in welding the great link connecting [every] gospel dispensation together.”¹⁸¹

In a General Conference of the Church on April 6, 1852, Brigham Young addressed the Saints making his concerns known about them. Concerning the Saints, he stated, “I see some going to the right some to the left some after gold and the riches of this life. I said I would tell

¹⁷⁸ *Wilford Woodruff's Journal*, vol. 4. 8-9.

¹⁷⁹ *Wilford Woodruff's Journal*, vol. 4. 9.

¹⁸⁰ *Wilford Woodruff's Journal*, vol. 4. 9.

¹⁸¹ *Wilford Woodruff's Journal*, vol. 4. 9.

the Brethren my feelings. I said I would go to work & build a Tabernacle & worship the Lord so that we would not be driven home by a storm.”¹⁸² Brigham Young expressed his concern that the Saints were so busy trying to get wealthy that they did not have time to worship their God. The Saints were turning to the ways of the world, so Brigham Young gave this charge, “Let nothing get between you & God and I will tell you what to do if anything gets between you & God give it to the service of God for you cannot get through the gate of the Celestial City. Why are you not as pure as the Church of Enoch? Because you are not a mind to be. I will make my hands do the will of God & my heart will go with it. The spirit of Envy will not obey. Then unite your interest with this kingdom & this kingdom will Stand forever.”¹⁸³

Next Orson Pratt addressed the congregation and stated that he had been given the topic of the salvation of the living and the dead. He said, “I feel anxious to receive principle & the salvation of the living & dead. What has that to do with the living? It has much to do with it. It is a truth revealed from Heaven that we are to be saviors upon Mount Zion to redeem the living & the dead.”¹⁸⁴ Although this topic had been linked to Elijah before, Orson Pratt made no such connection in this address, but he did link work for the dead with the temple. He also stressed the importance of following the leadership of the Church.

Brigham Young had a Council House built on the south-west corner of Temple Square. The Council House served as a civic building and as a place for temple ordinances such as sealings and endowments for the living. It was dedicated on April 9, 1852. It was during this dedication that Brigham Young stated that this structure was not sufficient. He declared that, “It is Absolutely necessary that we should have a Temple to worship the Most High God in. A Tabernacle is to Assemble the Multitude for meetings but a Temple is to gather the priesthood in

¹⁸² *Wilford Woodruff's Journal*, vol. 4. 105.

¹⁸³ *Wilford Woodruff's Journal*, vol. 4. 106-07.

¹⁸⁴ *Wilford Woodruff's Journal*, vol. 4. 107-08.

that they may do the work of the Lord.” Brigham Young asked, “Are we prepared to go & redeem our dead? Is [there] a place prepared to go & Redeem our dead? No there is not. We give Endowments Here but it is like trying to step on the top round first. If we had the privilege of [stopping] or Building a Temple our works would not be legal but we do these things until we have time to build a Temple”¹⁸⁵ He then gave a warning about not completing the temple: “And I want to say as a Revelation that if you will not help build a Temple & have faith in the work you will be lost.”¹⁸⁶

On August 15, 1852, Brigham Young delivered a lengthy discourse in the tabernacle. In this address he taught the first principles of the gospel, called the people back to the fold, and told them not to associate with those whose language blasphemes any member of the Godhead. Brigham Young was concerned about the time the Saints were spending with people who were against the kingdom and also with the money the Saints were giving merchants who were not of the faith, which money could be used to build up Zion and build temples. He also addressed the Spiritualism movement, which was becoming popular across the country where people, through séances, communicated with dead acquaintances.¹⁸⁷ Brigham Young told the Saints that if they

¹⁸⁵ *Wilford Woodruff's Journal*, vol. 4. 123 cited from Bennett, “Line Upon Line, Precept Upon Precept,” 49.

¹⁸⁶ *Wilford Woodruff's Journal*, vol. 4. 123.

¹⁸⁷ At the beginning of the Spiritualism movement, communicating with the dead occurred through rapping and table tipping. With time, those who embraced Spiritualism developed more means to communicate with the dead. Spiritualism swept through Europe and America, and many were experimenting with planchettes, which were tools used to receive “awkwardly scrawled (and often awkwardly phrased) messages from the world beyond. Other devotees, also attempting to make contact with the spirits, used the professional services of human ‘mediums.’ These singularly gifted people claimed to be conduits between earthly and postmortem life; their séances were said to produce a variety of ethereal voices, lights, and other astonishing effects. And spiritualism had more planchettes and mediums: hardly a ‘spiritualistic’ device or phenomenon escaped being noticed and used by spiritualism’s several million nineteenth-century believers.” (Ron Walker, *Wayward Saints*, (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 2009), 110). For additional sources on Spiritualism see: Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, *The History of Spiritualism*, 2 vols. (New York, 1926); R. Laurence Moore, *In Search of White Crows: Spiritualism, Parapsychology, and American Culture*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977); Loretta Hefner, “Amasa Mason Lyman, the Spiritualist,” *Journal of Mormon History*, 6 (1979): 75-87; Loretta Hefner, “From Apostle to Apostate: The Personal Struggle of Amasa Mason Lyman,” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, 16 (Spring 1983): 90-104; Davis Bitton, “Mormonism’s Encounter with Spiritualism,” *Journal of Mormon History*, 1 (1974): 39-50; Bridget Bennett, *Transatlantic Spiritualism and Nineteenth Century American Literature*, (New York:

live according to the way God dictates for them to live, they would be visited by their ancestors who will expound scriptures to them and help them in identifying ancestors so their temple work could be done.

Brigham Young continued, “Suppose we are ready to go into the Temples of God to officiate for our fathers and our grandfathers—for our ancestors back for hundreds of years, who are all looking to see what their children are doing upon the earth. The Lord says, I have sent the keys of Elijah the Prophet—I have imparted that doctrine to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts [of the] children to the fathers.” Once he testified that the keys of Elijah were present, he asked the members of the Church, “Now, all you children, are you looking to the salvation of your fathers? Are you seeking diligently to redeem them that have died without the Gospel, inasmuch as they sought the Lord Almighty to obtain promises for you?—for our fathers did obtain promises that their seed should not be forgotten.” Brigham Young next gave this charge, even before the Salt Lake Temple ground had been broken. “O ye children of the fathers, look at these things. You are to enter into the Temples of the Lord and officiate for your forefathers.”¹⁸⁸ With those people who were straying from the faith, the focus of the temple and performing saving ordinances for their dead was one way to invite the people to be more faithful.

A little over four years later on September 21, 1856, Brigham Young expressed his continued concern for the spiritual standing of his followers: “We need a reformation in the midst of this people; we need a thorough reform, for I know that very many are in a dozy condition with regard to their religion.” He continued, “You are losing the spirit of the Gospel, is there any cause for it? No, only that which there is in the world. You have the weakness of

Palgrave MacMillian, 2007); and Howard Kerr, *Mediums and Spirit-Rappers, and Roaring Radical: Spiritualism in American Literature, 1850-1900*, (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1972).

¹⁸⁸ *Journal of Discourses*, 6:296.

human nature to contend with, and you suffer that weakness to decoy you away from the truth, to the side of the adversary; but now it is time to awake, before the time of burning.”¹⁸⁹

Orson Pratt’s Declaration of the Keys Joseph Smith Held and that Elijah had Come

Orson Pratt is known as the first leader of the Church to declare that Joseph Smith had committed to him the sealing keys by Elijah in the Kirtland Temple. He is also the first leader to connect the teachings of Elijah, temples, and temple ordinances to the 1836 vision. Orson Pratt gave a lengthy discourse about celestial marriage on August 29, 1852, in the tabernacle in Salt Lake City. The vision would not be published for more than two months, yet Orson Pratt had knowledge of the vision at that time. Celestial marriage, at that time, was defined as plural marriage. Orson Pratt stated that only those who were chosen by the prophet of the Church were permitted to practice polygamy. Orson Pratt taught that this information came from a revelation recorded by Joseph Smith on July 12, 1843, eleven months before his death.

The revelation recorded on July 12, 1843, came to be known as Doctrine and Covenants Section 132 in the 1876 edition of the Doctrine and Covenants. This section is about plural marriage and the eternal nature of the marriage relationship. The heading of this section states that the doctrines and principles involved in this revelation were known to Joseph Smith as early as 1831. This means that Joseph Smith could have known the necessity for the sealing keys of Elijah as early as 1831. This discourse also draws a connection between Elijah and Doctrine and Covenants Section 132. In reference to Doctrine and Covenants 132 and Joseph Smith, Orson Pratt taught:

[Joseph Smith] held the keys of these matters; he had the right to inquire of the Lord; and the Lord has set bounds and restrictions to these things; In that revelation, that only one man can hold these keys upon the earth at the same time;

¹⁸⁹ *Journal of Discourses*, 4:52. For an excellent study on the reformation see Paul Peterson, *The Mormon Reformation*, Dissertation, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

and they belong to that man who stands at the head to preside over all the affairs of the Church and kingdom of God in the last days. They are the sealing keys of power, or in other words, of Elijah, having been committed and restored to the earth by Elijah, the Prophet, who held many keys, among which were the keys of sealing, to bind the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the children to the fathers; together with all the other sealing keys and powers, pertaining to the last dispensation. They were committed by that Angel who administered in the Kirtland Temple, and spoke unto Joseph the Prophet, at the time of the endowments in that house.¹⁹⁰

A little over two weeks later, on Sunday, September 12, 1852, Orson Pratt delivered a message at a funeral of Lorenzo D. Barnes and William Barton and used this opportunity to teach the importance of the temple. The missionaries had died in England and were buried there, but then their bodies were taken up and brought to Salt Lake City and reburied there. Orson Pratt stated that Lorenzo D. Barnes, “was faithful but died before He received the [fullness] of the gospel. He had no Thrones, wives or anything else of that kind Sealed upon [him]. What shall we do for him? Anything that we do for ourselves. When we get a temple built Such men will [lose] nothing for they will be Judged By the same laws that we are and they have a chance either in time or Eternity to Receive all we have. For all that would have received it here will receive it there.”¹⁹¹

In the same funeral address, Orson Pratt taught that, “there cannot be any Baptism Endowments or Ordinances in the Spirit world performed but we shall be called to perform in a Temple of the Lord all the ordinances for the dead the same as for the living.”¹⁹² Again the emphasis was that a temple was needed in order to perform saving ordinances for the dead. This validated that the leadership of the church knew of the importance of temples, but the general membership of the Church may not have.

¹⁹⁰ *Journal of Discourses*, 1:64.

¹⁹¹ *Wilford Woodruff's Journal*, vol. 4. 147.

¹⁹² *Wilford Woodruff's Journal*, vol. 4. 148.

The 1836 Vision Published for the First Time

The *Times and Seasons* paper was printed in Commerce, Illinois, by the Church. It was started November 1, 1839. The explanation for the printing of the paper was given on the first page of the first publication:

As this No. commences the Times and Seasons, it is but proper that we should lay before its readers, the course we intend to pursue, with regard to the editorial department of the same.

We wish to make it a source of light and instruction to all those who may peruse its columns, by laying before them, in plainness, the great plan of salvation which was devised in heaven from before the foundation of the world, as made known to the saints of God, in former, as well as latter days; and is, like its Author, the same in all ages, and changeth not.

In order for this, we may at times, dwell at considerable length, upon the fullness of the everlasting gospel of Jesus Christ, as laid down in the revealed word of God; the necessity of embracing it with full purpose of heart, and living by all its precepts; remembering the words of our Savior, "he that will be my disciple let him take up his cross and follow me."

We shall treat freely upon the gathering of Israel, which is to take place in these last days—of the dispensation of the fullness of times, when the fullness of the Gentiles is to come in, and the outcasts of Jacob be brought back to dwell upon the lands of their inheritance, preparatory to that great day of rest, which is soon to usher in, when Christ will reign with his saints upon earth, a thousand years, according to the testimony of all the holy prophets since the world began.

We shall also endeavor to give a detailed history of the persecution and suffering, which the members of the church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, has had to endure in Missouri, and elsewhere, for their religion. A mere synopsis of which, would swell this address to volumes; therefore we are compelled to let it pass for the present, by touching upon a few of its most prominent features.¹⁹³

The *Times and Seasons* paper was printed for two reasons. One was to teach the doctrine of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints; second, it was a detailed history of the persecution of those who followed after Joseph Smith and how they were driven out of the state of Missouri. Perhaps the continuation of the printing of Joseph Smith's history in the *Deseret News* was to still establish the doctrine as taught by Joseph Smith.

¹⁹³ *Times and Seasons*, vol. 1 (Nov. 1, 1839), 1.

Joseph Smith's history got its start in being published in the *Times and Seasons* when Joseph Smith wrote a letter to Mr. Wentworth. Joseph Smith wrote, "At the request of Mr. John Wentworth, Editor, and Proprietor of the 'Chicago Democrat,' I have written the following sketch of the rise, progress, persecution, and faith of the Latter-Day Saints, of which I have the honor, under God, of being the founder."¹⁹⁴ This letter was published in the *Times and Seasons* on March 1, 1842. In the next issue, which was published on March 15, 1842, Joseph Smith wrote, "In the last number I gave a brief history of the rise and progress of the Church, I now enter more particularly into that history, and extract from my journal."¹⁹⁵ It is from this initial publication of his history that the vision would eventually end up being published in the *Deseret News*, in Salt Lake City, Utah. Because the followers of Joseph Smith were driven out of Nauvoo, the printing of the *Times and Seasons* came to a halt.

The history of Joseph Smith was first published in the *Deseret News* on November 15, 1851, and then continued until September 7, 1852. The *Deseret News* was first printed on June 15, 1850, a little less than three years from the time the Mormon settlers arrived in the Salt Lake Valley. The purpose of printing the paper was explained by Willard Richards, its editor. He wrote in the first publication, "We propose to publish a small weekly sheet, as large as our local circumstances will permit, to be called '*Deseret News*,' designed originally to record the passing events of our State, and in [connection], refer to the arts and sciences, embracing general education, medicine, law, divinity, domestic and political economy, and everything that may fall under our observation, which may tend to promote the best interest, welfare, pleasure and amusement of our fellow citizens."¹⁹⁶ He then stressed the importance he and others felt about the paper. "A paper that is worth printing, is worth preserving; if worth preserving, it is worth

¹⁹⁴ *Times and Seasons*, vol. 3 (March 1, 1842), 706.

¹⁹⁵ *Times and Seasons*, vol. 3 (March 15, 1842), 726.

¹⁹⁶ *Deseret News*, (June 15, 1851), 1.

binding; for this purpose we issue in pamphlet form; and if every subscriber shall preserve each copy of the 'News,' and bind it at the close of the volume, their children's children may read the doings of their fathers. Which otherwise might have been forgotten: ages to come."¹⁹⁷

The publication of the *Deseret News* was a challenge because of the limited timber in the valley. Because of the paper shortage, much of the Church's publications were being printed in England. The railroad was completed in 1869, and this gave access to paper from the East.¹⁹⁸

In the issue where Joseph Smith's history began to be published in the *Deseret News*, Willard Richards wrote that the paper was being continued and it was enlarged. He wrote that they would devote a portion of each paper to the continuation of the life of Joseph Smith and history of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, since it was left by the *Times and Seasons*.¹⁹⁹ Joseph Smith's History was published up to the date of August 1834 in the *Times and Seasons*.²⁰⁰

Thus, the first time the 1836 vision appeared in print, which was accessible to the public, was on November 6, 1852.²⁰¹ The only paper being printed at the time the vision occurred was the *Messenger and Advocate*, and yet there was not ever a slight reference to the 1836 vision being published in the paper. Thus the first time the revelation was published was in the *Deseret News*. It is difficult to tell if the lay member who read Joseph Smith's history in the paper understood the significance of the vision. Publishing this vision may have brought the significance of the vision to the forefront of the minds of the leadership of the Church. It was

¹⁹⁷ *Deseret News*, (June 15, 1851), 1.

¹⁹⁸ For more detailed information see Robert L. Millet and Kent P. Jackson, eds., *Studies in Scripture, Vol. 2: The Pearl of Great Price* (Salt Lake City: Randall Book, 1985), 13.

¹⁹⁹ See *Deseret News*, (November 15, 1851), 1.

²⁰⁰ *Times and Seasons*, vol. 6 (Feb. 23, 1846), 1120-26.

²⁰¹ "Life of Joseph Smith," *Deseret News*, (November 6, 1852), 101.

after the publication of the vision that Brigham Young began focusing efforts on building a place where ordinances for the dead could be performed.

When the revelation was recorded in Joseph Smith's journal by the hand of Warren Cowdery, the journal entry was written in third person.²⁰² When Joseph Smith had the journal entry recorded in the *Manuscript History of the Church*, the 1836 vision was changed to the first person by Willard Richards. Dean Jesse wrote, "A problem that confronted those engaged on the history right from the beginning was the search for a format. The structure finally settled upon by Joseph Smith was a first person, daily narrative based upon diaries kept by himself and his clerks." Jesse continued, "While in the Carthage Jail shortly before his death, the Prophet instructed Willard Richards, who was there with him, to continue the history. This Richards did, and for the next decade he was the custodian of the records and the architect of the history."²⁰³ The following is how the 1836 vision was written in Joseph Smith's journal compared to how it was printed in the *Manuscript History of the Church*. There was no commentary given about this vision in the paper. Changes are indicated in bold or strikethrough.

Joseph Smith's Journal

The vail was taken from their minds and the eyes of their understandings were opened. They saw the Lord standing upon the breast work of the pulpit before them, and under his feet was a paved work of pure gold, in color like amber: his eyes were as a flame of fire; the hair of his head was like the pure snow, his countenance shone above the brightness of the sun, and his voice was as the sound of the rushing of great waters, even the Voice of Jehovah, saying, I am the first and the last, I

Manuscript History of the Church

The vail was taken from ~~their~~ **our** minds, and the eyes of ~~their~~ **our** understanding were opened.; ~~They~~ **we** saw the Lord standing upon the breast work of the **Pulpit**, before ~~them~~ **us**, and under his feet was a paved work of pure gold, in color like amber;. **His** eyes were as a flame of fire; the hair of his head was **white** like the pure snow, his countenance shone above the brightness of the sun, and his voice was as the sound of the rushing of great waters, even the **voice** of Jehovah, saying; I am the

²⁰² Joseph Smith, *The Joseph Smith Papers*, 219, 222.

²⁰³ Dean C. Jessee, "The Reliability of Joseph Smith's History," *Journal of Mormon History* 3(1976), 34-35.

am he who liveth, I am he who was slain. I am your Advocate with the Father. Behold your sins are forgiven you. You are clean before me, therefore, lift up your heads and rejoice, let the hearts of your brethren rejoice and let the hearts of all my brethren <people> rejoice, who have with their might, built this house to my name. For behold I have accepted this house and my name shall be here; and I will manifest myself to my people, in mercy, in this House, yea I will appear unto my servants and speak unto them with mine own voice, if my people will keep my commandments and do not pollute this Holy House. Yea the hearts of thousands and tens of thousands shall greatly rejoice in consequence of the blessings which shall be poured out, and the endowment with which my servants have already been endowed and shall hereafter be endowed in this House. and the fame of this House shall spread to foreign lands, and this is the beginning of the blessing, which shall [p.192] be poured out upon the heads of my people. even so amen. After this vision closed, the Heavens were again opened unto them and Moses appeared before them and committed unto them the keys of the gathering of Israel from the four parts of the Earth and the leading of the ten tribes from the Land of the North. After this Elias appeared and committed the dispensation of the gospel of Abraham, saying, that in them and their seed all generations after them should be blessed. After this vision had closed, another great and glorious vision burst [bursts] upon them, for Elijah, the Prophet, who was taken to Heaven without tasting death, also stood before them, and said, behold the time has fully come which was spoken of by the mouth of Malachi, testifying, that he should be sent before the great and dreadful day of the Lord come, to turn the hearts of the Fathers to the children, and the children to the fathers, lest the whole earth be smitten with a curse.

first and the last: I am he who liveth; I am he who was slain; I am your Advocate with the Father. Behold your sins are forgiven you: you are clean before me therefore; lift up your heads and rejoice; let the hearts of your brethren rejoice, and let the hearts of all my people rejoice; who have, with their might, built this house to my name. For behold I have accepted this house, and my name shall be here, and I will manifest myself to my people, in mercy; in this House; yea, I will appear unto my servants, and speak unto them with mine own voice, if my people will keep my commandments, and do not pollute this Holy House holy house, yea the heart of thousands and tens of thousands shall greatly rejoice in consequence of the blessings which shall be poured out, and the endowment with which my servants have already been endowed and shall hereafter be endowed in this House:; and the fame of this house shall spread to foreign lands, and this is the beginning of the blessing; which shall be poured out upon the heads of my people: even so amen. After this vision closed; the Heavens were again opened unto them us, and Moses appeared before us and committed unto them us the keys of the gathering of Israel from the four parts of the Earth and the leading of the Ten Tribes from the Land of the North. After this Elias appeared and committed the dispensation of the gospel of - - Abraham, saying, that in them us, and their our seed, all generations after them us should be blessed.

After this vision had closed; another great and glorious vision burst upon them us, for Elijah; the Prophet, who was taken to heaven without tasting death; also stood before them us, and said, behold the time has fully come, which was spoken of by the mouth of Malachi, testifying; that he should be sent before the great and dreadful day of the Lord come, to turn the hearts of the Fathers to the

Therefore, the Keys of this dispensation are committed into your hands, and by this ye may know that the great and the dreadful day of the Lord is near, even at the doors [12 lines blank] [p. 193]²⁰⁴

children, and the children to the fathers, lest the whole earth be smitten with a curse. Therefore, the ~~keys~~ keys of this dispensation are committed into your hands; and by this ye may know that the great and dreadful day of the Lord is near, even at the doors.²⁰⁵

The following is how the revelation appeared in the *Deseret News* compared to what was recorded in the Manuscript History of the Church. There was no specific title given in the paper other than, “Life of Joseph Smith.” There was also no commentary given with the printing of Joseph Smith’s history on this day. The vision was not printed by itself or anything specifically done to draw attention to it. It was simply printed along with the rest of the history of Joseph Smith. The changes are indicated by bold or strikethrough.

Manuscript History of the Church

The vail was taken from our minds, and the eyes of our understanding were opened; we saw the Lord standing upon the breast work of the Pulpit, before us, and under his feet was a paved work of pure gold, in color like amber. His eyes were as a flame of fire; the hair of his head was white like the pure snow, his countenance shone above the brightness of the sun, and his voice was as the sound of the rushing of great waters, even the voice of Jehovah, saying I am the first and the last: I am he who liveth; I am he who was slain; I am your advocate with the Father. Behold your sins are forgiven you: you are clean before me therefore lift up your heads and rejoice; let the hearts of your brethren rejoice, and let the hearts of all my people rejoice who have, with their might, built this house to my name. For behold I have accepted this house, and my

The Deseret News

The vail was taken from our minds, and the eyes of our understanding were opened; we saw the Lord standing upon the breast work of the Pulpit, before us, and under his feet was a paved work of pure gold, in color like amber. His eyes were as a flame of fire; the hair of his head was white like the pure snow, his countenance shone above the brightness of the sun, and his voice was as the sound of the rushing of great waters, even the voice of Jehovah, saying I am the first and the last: I am he who liveth; I am he who was slain; I am your advocate with the Father. Behold your sins are forgiven you; you are clean before me, therefore lift up your heads and rejoice; let the hearts of your brethren rejoice, and let the hearts of all my people rejoice, who have, with their might, built this house to my name; ~~F~~for behold I have accepted this house, and my

²⁰⁴ Joseph Smith, *The Joseph Smith Papers*, 219, 222.

²⁰⁵ Joseph Smith, *Manuscript History of the Church*, Book B-1, 727-28, April 3, 1836, Church Archives.

name shall be here, and I will manifest myself to my people, in mercy in this House; yea, I will appear unto my servants, and speak unto them with mine own voice, if my people will keep my commandments, and do not pollute this holy house, yea the heart of thousands and tens of thousands shall greatly rejoice in consequence of the blessings which shall be poured out, and the endowment with which my servants have been endowed in this house: and the fame of this house shall spread to foreign lands, and this is the beginning of the blessing which shall be poured out upon the heads of my people even so amen. After this vision closed the heavens were again opened unto us, and Moses appeared before us and committed unto us the keys of the gathering of Israel from the four parts of the earth and the leading of the Ten Tribes from the land of the north. After this Elias appeared and committed the dispensation of the gospel of - - Abraham, saying, that in us, and our seed, all generations after us should be blessed.

After this vision had closed another great and glorious vision burst upon us, for Elijah the Prophet, who was taken to heaven without tasting death stood before us, and said, behold the time has fully come, which was spoken of by the mouth of Malachi, testifying that he should be sent before the great and dreadful day of the Lord come, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the children to the fathers, lest the whole earth be smitten with a curse. Therefore the keys of this dispensation are committed into your hands and by this ye may know that the great and dreadful day of the Lord is near, even at the doors.²⁰⁶

name shall be here; ~~and~~ & I will manifest myself to my people; in mercy in this House; yea, I will appear unto my servants, and speak unto them with mine own voice, if my people will keep my commandments, and do not pollute this ~~holy house~~ **holy house**, yea the hearts of thousands and tens of thousands shall greatly rejoice in consequence of the blessings which shall be poured out, and the endowment with which my servants have been endowed in this house;; and the fame of this house shall spread to foreign lands, and this is the beginning of the blessing, which shall be poured out upon the heads of my people even so amen. After this vision closed the heavens were again opened unto us, and Moses appeared before us and committed unto us, the keys of the gathering of Israel, from the four parts of the earth, and the leading of the Ten Tribes from the land of the north. After this Elias appeared and committed the dispensation of the gospel of Abraham, saying, that in us, and our seed, all generations after us should be blessed.

After this vision had closed, another great and glorious vision burst upon us, for Elijah the Prophet, who was taken to heaven without tasting death stood before us, and said, behold the time has fully come, which was spoken of by the mouth of Malachi, testifying that he should be sent before the great and dreadful day of the Lord come, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the children to the fathers, lest the whole earth be smitten with a curses. Therefore the keys of this dispensation are committed into your hands, and by this ye may know that the great and dreadful day of the Lord is near, even at the doors.²⁰⁷

²⁰⁶ Smith, *Manuscript History of the Church*, 727-28.

²⁰⁷ *Deseret News*, (November 6, 1852). 101.

Almost one year to the day the vision was published in the *Millennial Star*. Part of the vision was published on November 5, 1853, and then the rest was published November 15, 1853. Changes are indicated by strikethrough and bold.

Deseret News

The vail was taken from our minds, and the eyes of our understanding were opened, we saw the Lord standing upon the breast work of the Pulpit, before us, and under his feet was a paved work of pure gold, in color like amber. His eyes were as a flame of fire; the hair of his head was white like the pure snow, his countenance shone above the brightness of the sun, and his voice was as the sound of the rushing of great waters, even the voice of Jehovah, saying I am the first and the last: I am he who liveth; I am he who was slain; I am your advocate with the Father. Behold your sins are forgiven you, you are clean before me, therefore lift up your heads and rejoice, let the hearts of your brethren rejoice, and let the hearts of all my people rejoice, who have with their might, built this house to my name; for behold I have accepted this house, and my name shall be here; & I will manifest myself to my people in mercy in this House; yea, I will appear unto my servants, and speak unto them with mine own voice, if my people will keep my commandments, and do not pollute this holy house, yea the hearts of thousands and tens of thousands shall greatly rejoice in consequence of the blessings which shall be poured out, and the endowment with which my servants have been endowed in this house; and the fame of this house shall spread to foreign lands, and this is the beginning of the blessing, which shall be poured out upon the heads of my people even so amen. After this vision closed the heavens were again opened unto us, and Moses appeared before us and committed unto us, the keys of the gathering of Israel, from the four parts of the earth, and the leading of the Ten Tribes from the land of the north.

Millennial Star

The vail was taken from our minds, and the eyes of our understanding were opened. **We** saw the Lord standing upon the breast work of the **pulpit**, before us, and under his feet was a paved work of pure gold; in ~~color~~ **colour** like amber. His eyes were as a flame of fire; the hair of his head was white like the pure snow, his countenance shone above the brightness of the sun, and his voice was as the sound of the rushing of great waters, even the voice of Jehovah, saying; –

I am the first and the last; I am he who liveth; I am he who was slain; I am your advocate with the Father. Behold, your sins are forgiven you, you are clean before me, therefore lift up your heads and rejoice, let the hearts of your brethren rejoice, and let the hearts of all my people rejoice, who have, with their might, built this house to my name; for behold, I have accepted this house, and my name shall be here; **& and** I will manifest myself to my people in mercy in this House; yea, I will appear unto my servants, and speak unto them with mine own voice, if my people will keep my commandments, and do not pollute this ~~holy house~~ **holy house**, yea the hearts of thousands and tens of thousands shall greatly rejoice in consequence of the blessings which shall be poured out, and the endowment with which my servants have been endowed in this house; and the fame of this house shall spread to foreign lands, and this is the beginning of the blessing; which shall be poured out upon the heads of my people. **Even** so Amen.

(To be continued.)

After this vision closed, the heavens were again opened unto us, and Moses appeared

After this Elias appeared and committed the dispensation of the gospel of Abraham, saying, that in us, and our seed, all generations after us should be blessed.

After this vision had closed, another great and glorious vision burst upon us, for Elijah the Prophet, who was taken to heaven without tasting death stood before us, and said, behold the time has fully come, which was spoken of by the mouth of Malachi, testifying that he should be sent before the great and dreadful day of the Lord come, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the children to the fathers, lest the whole earth be smitten with a curse. Therefore the keys of this dispensation are committed into your hands, and by this ye may know that the great and dreadful day of the Lord is near, even at the doors.

before us, and committed unto us; the keys of the gathering of Israel; from the four parts of the earth, and the leading of the Ten Tribes from the land of the north.

After this, Elias appeared, and committed the dispensation of the Gospel of Abraham, saying, that in us, and our seed, all generations after us should be blessed.

After this vision had closed, another great and glorious vision burst upon us, for Elijah the Prophet, who was taken to heaven without tasting death, stood before us, and said,—

Behold, the time has fully come, which was spoken of by the mouth of Malachi, testifying that he **[Elijah]** should be sent before the great and dreadful day of the Lord come, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the children to the fathers, lest the whole earth be smitten with a curse. Therefore the keys of this dispensation are committed into your hands, and by this ye may know that the great and dreadful day of the Lord is near, even at the doors.

In the *Millennial Star*, emphasis was placed again on “holy house” by having it italicized. It was emphasized in the *Manuscript History of the Church* by having “holy house” underlined, but “holy house” was not underlined in the *Deseret News*. Also in the *Millennial Star* more emphasis was given to Elijah by having the prophecy of Elijah as a new paragraph and the name of Elijah inserted. Even after the publication of the vision, leaders of the Church still would not connect the vision to Elijah and temple work for several years.

Ground Breaking and Cornerstone Laying of the Salt Lake Temple

The ground breaking of the Salt Lake Temple, and the other events occurring during the same time period are some of the events and causes which served as the initial steps towards the reclamation of the 1836 vision. The Saints did not break ground for the Salt Lake Temple until six years after Brigham Young announced that the temple would be built. This delay was

because they needed to first establish a way to survive and live on the desert floor of the Salt Lake Valley. Another reason for the delay was, as Brigham Young declared in regards to the local railroad and not the transcontinental railroad, that “the Rail Road must be completed before we can do much towards laying the foundation of this Temple, which we will so do on the 6th of April next.”²⁰⁸ The date of the groundbreaking was February 14, 1853. It was a clear day with three inches of snow in some places, bare in others, and six inches of frost in the ground.

Brigham Young, with the aid of surveyors, marked where the outside walls of the temple would stand. Once the exterior walls were marked, the large crowd of people moved up to the indicated markings of the walls of the temple, making a solid, rectangular line along all four exterior walls. Brigham Young then addressed the people. Franklin D. Richards recorded his remarks and said it was a “most thrilling speech.”²⁰⁹

Brigham Young recounted their travel to the west and stated that, “seven years to-morrow he left Nauvoo not knowing which track he should go, only as he had learned by dreams, and visions, and revelations, that there was a good place for the Saints in the mountains; and that when he arrived on the spot where he then was, he declared that the place for a Temple, though the Valley had not then been explored.”²¹⁰ Brigham Young had been somewhat silent about being led by revelation in the beginning of his leadership, as Joseph Smith had been when he led his followers. Now he began to let the people know of the spiritual manifestations he had received.²¹¹

²⁰⁸ *Journal History of the Church*, February 14, 1853, 1.

²⁰⁹ *Journal History of the Church*, February 14, 1853, 1.

²¹⁰ *Journal History of the Church*, February 14, 1853, 1.

²¹¹ Brigham Young could have been expressing his spiritual experiences because of the spiritualist movement that was occurring. Many were seeking for ways to communicate with the dead, which ways were opposed by the leaders of the Church.

The increased emphasis to build the Salt Lake Temple was not for himself, nor anyone who had already received all of the temple ordinances, which included receiving the fullness of the priesthood. Brigham Young declared that, “he wanted no endowments himself and many of his brethren needed no endowments, they had received all the endowments they could have from the hands of the Prophet Joseph, before the Temple in Nauvoo was completed, even all the keys and tokens necessary to admit them into the celestial kingdom; that the blessings for them to gain by paying tithing, and helping to build a House unto the Lord, was their own endowments, and that of their friends, living and dead²¹², and for all upright.”²¹³ Brigham Young did not share this motivation at this time with his followers, but would explain it at a future date.

The dedicatory prayer for the land, offered by Heber C. Kimball, clearly demonstrated that the leaders of the Church were trying to root the members of the faith to ancient practices found in the Old Testament and keep the ancient practices a part of what they called the restored gospel. He prayed for, “the gathering of the saints; the return of ancient Israel; the upbuilding of Jerusalem, the restoration of the Lamanites; the redemption of Zion; and that the gospel might speedily go to all nations, the sick be healed, the mourners comforted, the saints rejoice, and be prospered in all their labors, and that the way might be opened for the coming of the Son of Man.”²¹⁴ One of the purposes of establishing the ancient order was to prepare for the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

Brigham Young also linked current temple building with ancient practices including the proper use of revelation. On April 6, 1853, Brigham Young and his followers set the cornerstones in place for the temple. Church leaders offered a speech and a prayer over each of

²¹² The practice of only needing to participate in temple ordinances once changed shortly after the dedication of the St. George Temple. Church members later were encouraged to participate in temple ordinances multiple times by attending the ordinance for their dead ancestors. See Bennett, “Line Upon Line, Precept Upon Precept,” 57-62.

²¹³ See *Journal History of the Church*, February 14, 1853, 1.

²¹⁴ See *Journal History of the Church*, February 14, 1853, 1.

the four cornerstones. Brigham Young gave an oration at the south-east cornerstone. In the process of building the Salt Lake Temple, Brigham Young was careful to follow the same pattern initiated by Joseph Smith when building temples. Brigham Young taught that, “Joseph not only received revelation and commandment to build a Temple, but he received a pattern also, as did Moses for the Tabernacle, and Solomon for his Temple; for without a pattern he could not know what was wanting, having never seen one, and not having experienced its use.”²¹⁵ Although Brigham Young taught much about receiving revelation, he did give a warning at an earlier time period about receiving revelation for every matter when he stated, “Some might query whether a revelation had been given to build a house to the Lord; but he is a wicked and slothful servant who doeth nothing but what his Lord commandeth, when he knoweth his masters will. I know a Temple is needed, and so do you, and when we know a thing, why do we need a revelation to compel us to do that thing?”²¹⁶

Brigham Young next gave the members of the Church a new way to define the “endowment.” He compared the ordinances that occurred in the Kirtland Temple to the ordinances that occurred in Nauvoo, under the direction and guidance of Joseph Smith. Brigham Young taught that the ordinances in the Kirtland Temple were, “the preparatory ordinances there administered, though accompanied by the ministration of angels, and the presence of the Lord Jesus, were but a faint similitude of the ordinances of the House of the Lord in their fullness.”²¹⁷ Although he did not specify who the ministering angels were, he did state that Jesus Christ was present, which could be referencing the vision. Angels were seen by many in the Kirtland Temple, but the only angels who ministered that Joseph Smith had recorded in his journal during that time period were Moses, Elias and Elijah. They ministered by committing keys to Joseph

²¹⁵ See *Journal History of the Church*, April 6, 1853, 2.

²¹⁶ See *Journal History of the Church*, February 14, 1853, 1.

²¹⁷ *Journal of Discourses*, 2:31.

Smith and Oliver Cowdery. Brigham Young stated that the ordinances in the Kirtland Temple that they participated in, such as washings, were a faint similitude compared to the fullness that occurred in the House of the Lord. The fullness of ordinances occurred in the temples that followed the Kirtland Temple.

In relation to the temple ordinances that were performed in Nauvoo, it appeared that by 1853 many members of the Church began to forget the meaning of the endowment. Brigham Young stated, “But be assured, brethren, there are but few, *very few* of the Elders of Israel, now on earth, who know the *meaning* of the word *endowment*. To know, they must experience; and to experience, a Temple must be built.”²¹⁸ The necessity of a temple was becoming more apparent to Brigham Young because of the growing number of people who had not participated in all of the ordinances performed in the temple. The temple became the only place, in the Mormon faith, where certain spiritual truths could be learned and essential saving ordinances performed.

Brigham Young stressed again how few there were who had experienced the endowment. Over 5,600 people received their endowment before leaving Nauvoo, and a little over two thousand endowments were performed between 1851 and 1854 in the Council House, yet the membership of the Church in 1853 was 64,154 so there was a need to have more people endowed.²¹⁹ Still without referencing the vision, Brigham Young testified that the keys for the endowment were among the people. He asked, “who has received and understands such an endowment, in this assembly? You need not answer. Your voices would be few and far between, yet the *keys* to these endowments are among you, and thousands have received them.”²²⁰ Perhaps Brigham Young was speaking to those who had experienced the endowment, yet they still did not understand all there was to understand about the endowment, that it was a preparatory

²¹⁸ *Journal of Discourses*, 2:31. (Words italicized in the original text.)

²¹⁹ *Deseret News 2003 Church Almanac* (Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret News), 630.

²²⁰ *Journal of Discourses*, 2:31-32. (Words italicized in the original text.)

ordinance. Brigham Young hinted that Joseph Smith had the keys to perform all of the temple ordinances while he still resided in Kirtland when he declared, “Before these endowments could be given at Kirtland the saints had to flee before mobocracy, and by toil, and daily labor, they found places in Missouri, where they laid the corner stones of Temples in Zion, and her stakes, and then had to retreat to Illinois to save the lives of those who could get away from Missouri alive.”²²¹ The endowment would not be given until the Saints found a resting place in Nauvoo, for a season.

In this discourse Brigham Young also addressed the purpose of revelation in regard to temples. The leadership of the Church taught the Saints that Kirtland was the second temple built, on record, with Solomon’s Temple being first. Brigham Young stated, “At Nauvoo Joseph dedicated another Temple, the third on record, he knew what was wanting, for he had previously given most of the prominent individuals then before him, their endowment. He needed no revelation then, of a thing he had long experienced, any more than those now do, who have experienced the same things. It is only where experience fails, that revelation is needed.”²²² Joseph Smith claimed to lead his found church by revelation and Brigham Young would also lead the church by revelation and add upon it.

Just as the ordinances in the Kirtland Temple served as preparatory ordinances to greater ordinances in the Nauvoo Temple, the Nauvoo Temple ordinances served as precursors to greater ordinances performed in temples that would be built after Nauvoo. Brigham Young stated, in reference to the completion of the Nauvoo Temple, “By the aid of sword in one hand, and trowel and hammer in the other, with firearms at hand, and a strong band of police, and the blessings of heaven, the Saints, through hunger, and thirst, and weariness, and watchings, and prayings, so far

²²¹ *Journal History of the Church*, April 6, 1853, 2.

²²² *Journal History of the Church*, April 6, 1853, 2.

completed the Temple, despite the devices of the mob, that many received a small portion of their endowment, but we know of no one who received it in its [fullness].”²²³ To receive the fullness of the endowment was to receive, as Joseph Smith taught, the fullness of the priesthood. The endowment the Saints received before leaving Nauvoo was a preparation for the fullness of priesthood.

Salvation for the dead, through temple ordinances, was on the mind of Brigham Young. Brigham Young called to all those present to help build the temple. He declared that those who could not commence to build the temple cheerfully should move to California. He then added, “If your care for the ordinances of salvation, for yourselves, your living, and dead, are not first, and foremost in your hearts, in your actions, and in every thing you possess, Go!”²²⁴ The temple ordinances for the living and the dead should be the focal point for all the members of the Church.

During the dedicatory prayer offered by Heber C. Kimball, he also made reference to keys. Heber C. Kimball prayed that Brigham Young would be able to, “administer the keys of salvation and eternal life unto his brethren therein.”²²⁵ Heber C. Kimball’s declaration witnessed that Brigham Young had the keys necessary to perform the saving ordinances of the temple for the living and the dead. These keys were what he received from Joseph Smith.

After Brigham Young spoke, Heber C. Kimball dedicated the cornerstone. Then, at each of the cornerstones of the temple, Church leaders gave an oration and prayer over each one. Out of all of the orations and prayers given, only Parley P. Pratt referenced work for the dead. Parley P. Pratt addressed the issue of Spiritualism that was gaining acceptance by members of the Church and used the keys and ordinances of the temple to give direction regarding this concern.

²²³ *Journal of Discourses*, 2:32.

²²⁴ *Journal History of the Church*, April 6, 1853, 2.

²²⁵ *Journal of Discourses*, 2:34.

Spiritualism began in 1848, “at Hydesville, Wayne County, New York, only a generation later and a few miles away from the origin of Mormonism.”²²⁶ It began when, “Mr. and Mrs. J. D. Fox and two daughters, Kate and Margaret, heard strange snapping sounds that seemed to occur in response to their questions. When Kate and Margaret later moved to their sister’s home in Rochester, the three fox sisters used these mysterious sounds to contact deceased relatives and prominent historical figures. They learned that one knock or ‘rap’ meant ‘no’ and that three raps meant ‘yes.’ Their claims electrified Americans and Europeans alike, who assumed that the spirits were attempting to communicate with the mortal sphere.”²²⁷ Walker stated that “spiritualism touched the Utah landscape with more than a light caress.”²²⁸ By 1853 “enough spiritualism existed in Utah to excite several rebukes from Temple Square.”²²⁹ These early rebukes to Spiritualism were not successful and some Saints were not willing to cease this practice and continued to participate in séances and to attempt using devices to communicate with spirits on the other side of the veil.

The title given to his address in the *Journal of Discourses* was “Spiritual Communication.” Heber C. Kimball stated, “For the last few years the world has been disturbed very much by alleged communications from the world of spirits. ‘Mesmerism,’ ‘Clairvoyance,’ ‘Spiritual Knockings,’ ‘Writing Mediums,’ &c., are said to be channels of communication between the living and the dead. How often one meets with an invitation to seek to some ‘medium’—to some one ‘familiar with spirits,’ in order to hear from a deceased father, mother, husband, wife, or other relative or friend.”²³⁰ This was concerning to the leadership of the Church and perhaps was one of the outside influences that urged more teaching about the vision

²²⁶ Walker, 110.

²²⁷ Walker, 110.

²²⁸ Walker, 251.

²²⁹ Walker, 111.

²³⁰ *Journal of Discourses*, 2:43. (Italicized in the original.)

to combat the Spiritualism movement that was beginning to be accepted as a legitimate means of receiving revelation by some in the Church.

In relation to Spiritualism, Parley P. Pratt stated that if the membership of the Church readily accepted this type of communication, then they would be in danger of being led about by every form of spirit, good or evil. He continued, “If, on the other hand, we deny the philosophy or the fact of spiritual communication between the living and those who have died, we deny the very fountain from which emanated the great truths or principles which were the foundation of both the ancient and modern Church. Who communicated with Jesus and his disciples on the holy mount? Moses and Elias, from the invisible world.”²³¹ In relation to Joseph Smith, Parley P. Pratt asked, “Who ordained our first founders to the Apostleship, to hold the keys of the kingdom of God, in these the times of restoration? Peter, James, and John, from the eternal world. Who instructed him in the mysteries of the kingdom, and in all things pertaining to Priesthood, law, philosophy, sacred architecture, ordinances, sealings, anointings, baptisms for the dead, and in the mysteries of the first, second, and third heavens, many of which are unlawful to utter? Angels and spirits from the eternal worlds.”²³² These angels of course included Moses, Elias, and Elijah, yet for some reason he was silent in mentioning them by name. He did, however, mention the temple ordinances that were a result of the vision and the keys received.

Parley P. Pratt continued and gave additional insight to the keys Joseph Smith held. He continued to teach by asking a question in reference to performing work for the dead:

Again—How do the Saints expect the necessary information by which to complete the ministrations for the salvation and exaltation of their friends who have died?

By one holding the keys of the oracles of God, as a medium through which the living can hear from the dead.

²³¹ *Journal of Discourses*, 2:43.

²³² *Journal of Discourses*, 2:43.

Shall *we*, then, deny the principle, the philosophy, the fact of communication between worlds? No! verily no!

The spiritual philosophy of the present age was introduced to the modern world by Joseph Smith. The people of the United States abandoned him to martyrdom, and his followers to fire, and sword, and plunder, and imprisonment, and final banishment to these far-off mountains and deserts, simply because a medium of communication with the invisible world had been found, whereby the living could hear from the dead.²³³

Now that Parley P. Pratt had established the keys of the priesthood as the proper medium for communicating with the invisible world, he counseled the people to learn to follow the lawful mediums of communication, which are the keys of the priesthood, from the unlawful. He stated, “The words of the holy Prophet in our text, while they admit the principle of the living hearing from the dead, openly rebuke, and sharply reprove, persons for seeking to those who have familiar spirits, and to wizards that peep and mutter, and remind us that a people should seek unto their God for the living to hear from the dead!”²³⁴ He then directed the members of the Church to the keys that are directly related to the temple:

And moreover, the Lord has appointed a Holy Priesthood on the earth, and in the heavens, and also in the world of spirits; which Priesthood is after the order or similitude of His Son; and has committed to this Priesthood the keys of holy and divine revelation, and of correspondence, or communication between angels, spirits, and men, and between all the holy departments, principalities, and powers of His government in all worlds.

And again—The Lord has ordained that all the most holy things pertaining to the salvation of the dead, and all the most holy conversations and correspondence with God, angels, and spirits, shall be had only in the sanctuary of His holy Temple on the earth, when prepared for that purpose by His Saints; and shall be received and administered by those who are ordained and sealed unto this power, to hold the keys of the sacred oracles of God.²³⁵

Parley P. Pratt called the members of the Church away from participating in the distracting influences of the world and focused them on the keys related to the temple. The place for salvation and potential communication with the other side of the veil is in the holy temple. He

²³³ *Journal of Discourses*, 2:44.

²³⁴ *Journal of Discourses*, 2:45.

²³⁵ *Journal of Discourses*, 2:45-46.

linked the modern Church with the ancient when he declared, “Ye Latter-day Saint! Ye thousands of the hosts of Israel! Ye are assembled here to-day, and have laid these Corner Stones, for the express purpose that the living might hear from the dead, and that we may prepare a holy sanctuary, where *‘the people may seek unto their God, for the living to hear from the dead,’* and that heaven and earth, and the world of spirits may commune together.”²³⁶ To combat the trend of Spiritualism, he brought the importance of the keys associated with the temple to the minds of the members of the Church to turn them from Spiritualism, yet through the process he still did not reference the vision.

After laying the cornerstone, the members attended the General Conference of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, held in the tabernacle, which was directly west of the ground where the temple would be built. With Parley P. Pratt’s message fresh in their minds, Brigham Young addressed the members of the Church. Brigham Young had previously taught that there was no need for revelation for items already known. The building of temples in his day would be different even from the one they built in Nauvoo; therefore, he needed to proclaim to have received revelation in building them. This followed the pattern established by Joseph Smith where he received revelation regarding how to build temples. For the first time, Brigham Young shared with the members of the Church that he had received a vision concerning the building of the Salt Lake Temple. When the vision of the temple first occurred, he did not share it with anyone.

Perhaps the reason why he was sharing more of his spiritual experiences was out of necessity. Some of the Saints were turning to or experimenting with Spiritualism. The attractions of Spiritualism to Mormons were the several similarities to the movement such as, “each believed that revelation (communication with the immortal sphere) not only was possible but

²³⁶ *Journal of Discourses*, 2:46. (Italicized in the original.)

was taking place.”²³⁷ Spiritualism had a particular attraction to the British converts because, “spiritualism had a rakish, revolutionary quality that especially suited British converts. It questioned and challenged staid thought, just as their brand British Mormonism had done. In short, spiritualism had many enticing parallels to Mormonism: it had intellectual appeal; it had phenomena; and it carried the banner of revolution.”²³⁸ Some of the British converts felt that the Mormon faith under Brigham Young had lost the spiritual manifestations that they witnessed in England that validated their faith. Perhaps to combat the Spiritualism movement, Brigham Young shared with the congregation:

I scarcely ever say much about revelations, or visions, but suffice it to say, five years ago last July I was here, and saw in the Spirit the Temple not ten feet from where we have laid the Chief Corner Stone. I have not inquired what kind of a Temple we should build. Why? Because it was represented before me. I have never looked upon that ground, but the vision of it was there. I see it as plainly as if it was in reality before me. Wait until it is done. I will say, however, that it will have six towers, to begin with, instead of one. Now do not any of you apostatize because it will have six towers, and Joseph only built one. It is easier for us to build sixteen, than it was for him to build one. The time will come when there will be one in the centre of Temples we shall build, and, on the top, groves and fish ponds. But we shall not see them here, at present.²³⁹

Not only did Brigham Young see in a vision the Salt Lake Temple, but also another temple that would be built in the future. The start of the temple building era during Brigham Young’s administration would be directed, as he declared, by revelation and visions. He claimed reception of revelation was a necessity, because the future temples would have different purposes than the Nauvoo and Kirtland Temples.

Several external influences threatened to destroy the Saints’ loyalty to the Mormon faith. Leonard Arrington wrote in reference to Brigham Young: “The lure of California, the approach of the Utah Expedition in 1857, the advent of the railroad in 1869, all can be seen to have had

²³⁷ Walker, 111-12.

²³⁸ Walker, *Wayward Saints*, 112.

²³⁹ *Journal of Discourses*, 1:133.

specific effects upon his economic and social policies.”²⁴⁰ The lure of California was gold and better living conditions. The Utah Expedition was later referred to as Johnston’s Army that was sent to put down the rebelling Saints. The railroad would bring influences the Saints feared would corrupt their faith.

One effort Brigham Young initiated to combat the destructive influences was the Mormon reformation. At its height, home missionaries asked a series of questions that had to deal with how well individuals were living the gospel. Although Church leaders placed a great emphasis on the Mormon reformation in the early 1850s, the beginnings of reformation began as soon as the Saints entered the Salt Lake Valley. This was a place away from worldly influence where Brigham Young could establish Zion, where previous attempts to establish Zion under Joseph Smith had failed. Brigham Young was very concerned about his people accepting the ways of the world and turning away from the way of the Lord, which end result would be disunity among the people.²⁴¹

By 1854, according to one scholar, “reform became a recurrent theme. The continued influx of Gentile merchants, the difficulty of assimilating increasing numbers of immigrants to Zion, and the surfacing of apostates were among the factors contributing to the increase in reform sentiment.”²⁴²

The year when the reformation was officially recognized was 1856. This was a great time for spiritual renewal among the Saints. Church attendance increased dramatically, payment of tithing and free will offerings also increased. One of the positive fruits of the reformation was

²⁴⁰ Leonard J. Arrington, *Great Basin Kingdom*, (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1993), 7.

²⁴¹ See Paul Peterson, *The Mormon Reformation*, Dissertation, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

²⁴² Peterson, 13.

that the Saints focused on marriage and the temple to the point that “Brigham’s time was almost totally taken up with administering endowments and marrying couples.”²⁴³

Endowment House

A little over one year after the cornerstone laying ceremony of the Salt Lake Temple, the Saints broke ground for an additional building to perform sacred ordinances in that would be known as the Endowment House. The Endowment House was built on the Temple Square grounds. The Saints used the Endowment House for temple ordinances for the living and the dead. Ordinances for the dead included baptisms, confirmations and sealings. Ordinances performed for the living were endowments and sealings. The Saints only used the Endowment House to perform sealings for the dead, however, and not endowments for the dead.²⁴⁴

On August 2, 1857, with the threat of Johnston’s Army coming to the valley, Heber C. Kimball addressed the members of the Church in the Bowery, to give them confidence that they would not be defeated. Although he still did not reference the vision, he did reference the keys placed upon the leaders of the church. He also emphasized how the Church was organized after the ancient one in Christ’s day and operated by the same keys. Heber C. Kimball explained that the Church of the First Born, “is the first Church that ever was raised up upon this earth; that is, the first born Church.” He continued, “and that same order is organized here in the City of Great Salt Lake; and it is that order that Joseph Smith the Prophet of God organized in the beginning in Kirtland, Ohio. Brother Brigham Young, myself, and others were present when that was done; and when those officers received their endowments, they were together in one place. They were organized, and received their endowments and blessings, and those keys were placed upon them,

²⁴³ Peterson, 45.

²⁴⁴ For more information on the Endowment House see, Bennett, “Line Upon Line, Precept Upon Precept,” 50-53 and Lisle G. Brown, “Temple Pro Tempore: The Salt Lake City Endowment House,” *Journal of Mormon History* (Fall 2008), 1-68.

and that kingdom will stand for ever.”²⁴⁵ Heber C. Kimball’s words reassured the membership of the Church when he stressed that the current Church was operating by the order Joseph Smith established. The leadership had not varied from what he taught, and they held the keys that Joseph Smith gave them. Heber C. Kimball’s claim was that they were of the Church of the First Born and there was no need to worry about Johnston’s army, because the Lord would protect them as He did with ancient Israel. He claimed that the kingdom would not fall because when Johnston’s army fought against them they would also be fighting against God.

Heber C. Kimball stressed the importance of keys when he declared: “And as President Buchanan, the President of the United States of America, holds the keys of the government of this whole nation, so Brigham Young holds the keys pertaining to this Church and people.” He next declared that, “Joseph, the Prophet of the living God, placed those keys on brother Brigham.”²⁴⁶

Heber C. Kimball promised members of the Church that they did not have to be afraid of the coming army if they were obedient to what they were told. He stated that the people claimed they were willing to be subject to God and Jesus Christ, and that if Peter was there, they would listen to him. For the first time he mentioned three of the visitors of the vision when he boldly announced, “Well, Peter is here, John is here, Elias is here, Elijah is here, Jesus is here, and the Father is here. What! in person? If not in person, their authority is here, with all the power that ever was or ever will be to seal men and women.” Heber C. Kimball further emphasized that to seal means to, “seal them on earth and in heaven, by the power of Elijah, which is upon brother Brigham; and it is on every man he authorizes. Joseph had those keys and powers directly from those men, and we received them from Joseph; so you see we are legal heirs to the kingdom of

²⁴⁵ *Journal of Discourses*, 5:129.

²⁴⁶ *Journal of Discourses*, 5:130.

heaven.”²⁴⁷ Not only did he testify that Joseph Smith received keys from each of the men he listed, but they also now held the keys testifying that they were the legal holders of the keys. This also shows that the keys of Elias and Elijah were on the minds of the leaders of the Church.

Franklin D. Richard’s Compendium, 1857

Franklin D. Richards, a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, wrote a book titled “*A Compendium of the Faith and Doctrines of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.*” It was printed in 1857 and was, “compiled from the Bible; and also from the Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, and other publications of the Church.”²⁴⁸ His book serves as an indicator of the understanding of baptisms for the dead and its connection to Elijah by leaders of the Church and the Saints. In the book he has a section titled “Baptisms for the Dead.”²⁴⁹ He quoted references from the Bible and the Doctrine and Covenants. From the Bible he referenced Malachi 4:5-6 about the prophecy of the coming of Elijah before the great and dreadful day of the Lord. He also referenced 1 Corinthians 15:29, “Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? Why are they then baptized for the dead?” The references he used from the Doctrine and Covenants dealt with building a temple where baptisms could be performed, general instructions on baptisms for the dead such as having a recorder present and whatever is recorded or sealed on earth is recorded or sealed in heaven.

When he wrote this book, he knew of the 1836 vision. Under the section on the Melchizedek Priesthood he wrote, “The keys of the Holy Priesthood committed to the earth by Peter, James, John, *Elijah*, and John the Baptist.”²⁵⁰ He also gave highlights from Church history in chronological order. For the year 1836 he wrote, “*January 21*; The authorities of the Church in

²⁴⁷ *Journal of Discourses*, 5:130-31.

²⁴⁸ Franklin D. Richards, *A Compendium of the Faith and Doctrines of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, (London: Latter-day Saints’ Book Depot, 1857), title page.

²⁴⁹ Richards, 75.

²⁵⁰ Richards, 169. (Emphasis added.)

Kirtland met in the school-room of the Temple, and anointed and blessed each other, when the visions of heaven were opened to many.—*March 27*; The House of the Lord in Kirtland was dedicated.—*April 3*; In the House of the Lord in Kirtland, the *Savior, Moses, Elias, and Elijah* appeared to J. Smith, jun. and O. Cowdery.”²⁵¹

Teaching of Elijah and the 1836 Vision by Orson Pratt in 1859

Orson Pratt was born in Hartford, Washington County, New York on September 19, 1811. Orson Pratt remembered attending church services only a few times, but he was taught to read the Bible. It was not until the fall of 1829 that he had a desire to seek the Lord. He began to pray fervently and repent of sin. He stated: “I continued to pray in this fervent manner until September 1830, at which time two Elders of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints came into the neighborhood, one of which was my brother Parley.”²⁵² Orson Pratt was baptized on his nineteenth birthday by his brother. In 1835, Orson Pratt was ordained a member of the Quorum of the Twelve on Apr. 26, 1835.²⁵³ Pratt was an Apostle from the beginning of the Quorum of the Twelve and therefore was well acquainted with Joseph Smith and his teachings to the Quorum of the Twelve. Remarkably he “participated in almost every phase of the Church's history from 1830 until his death in 1881. As a missionary, editor, pioneer, and pamphleteer, he was one of the most influential leaders of the Church in the nineteenth century.”²⁵⁴

Orson Pratt gave an entire discourse on the latter-day mission of Elijah in the Tabernacle in Salt Lake City, on August 28, 1859. A little over a year before this discourse was given, Johnston's army had passed through Salt Lake City on June 26, 1858. As a precaution, Brigham Young had the Saints evacuate Salt Lake City and relocate in Utah County, 30 miles south of

²⁵¹ Richards, 224. (Emphasis added.)

²⁵² Orson Pratt, *Orson Pratt's Works*, (The Deseret News Press, Salt Lake City, Utah, 1945), xi.

²⁵³ Smith, *The Joseph Smith Papers*, 431.

²⁵⁴ *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, 3:1114.

Salt Lake City. By July of the same year, Brigham Young gave permission for the Saints to move back to Salt Lake City. By 1859, Brigham Young began to call missionaries and slowly started to establish settlements again.

Orson Pratt started his discourse by quoting from Malachi and the prophecy of the coming of Elijah. Orson Pratt expressed his concern with the lack of acquiring spiritual knowledge by the Saints because they were letting their understandings and “judgment to be spent in idleness, without treasuring up the things of the kingdom of God, and storing up useful knowledge.”²⁵⁵ While he had been on missions abroad, he had heard missionaries who were not prepared with an understanding of the doctrine, lament that they wish they would have spent more time studying and gaining an understanding of the doctrine. He then said they were, “to treasure up the words of eternal life continually, and make ourselves acquainted not only with ancient revelation, but with modern.”²⁵⁶ After he called to the Saints to seek greater knowledge he turned to the text in Malachi.

This discourse was the most detailed about Elijah since the discourse Joseph Smith gave on Elijah while in Nauvoo, shortly before his death. Orson Pratt was the first leader to reference the vision of Moses, Elias and Elijah as it was recorded in the journal of Joseph Smith and linked Elijah to the temple. By the time Orson Pratt gave this discourse, Saints were already performing temple ordinances in the Council House and then in the Endowment House. Temple ordinance work began in the Council House as early as April 16, 1851.²⁵⁷ The Endowment House was in operation at the time of this discourse, and three ordinances for the dead were performed in it: baptisms, confirmations and sealings. In this discourse, Orson Pratt taught about additional doctrines that are associated with the keys of Elijah, which linked Elijah to the temple

²⁵⁵ *Journal of Discourses*, 7:75.

²⁵⁶ *Journal of Discourses*, 7:75.

²⁵⁷ Bennett, “Line Upon Line, Precept Upon Precept,” 48-49.

ordinances. Orson Pratt began his discourse by quoting from Malachi about the coming of Elijah before the great and dreadful day of the Lord. Orson Pratt said the great question was whether Elijah has been sent. He stated that all of the followers of Joseph Smith believed as a fact that he was a prophet of the great and last dispensation, so what was his testimony of the subject? In reference to Joseph Smith he declared, “What did he testify in the Kirtland Temple, after it was built and consecrated and dedicated unto the Lord of hosts? He testified that he, in connection with others, had the ministration of Elijah the Prophet, who appeared to them in great glory. You can read this in the History of Joseph Smith, the Prophet: we can read all the instructions that were given in relation to his particular mission.”²⁵⁸ He was referencing the history of Joseph Smith that was published in *The Deseret News* on November 6, 1852.

After the declaration that Elijah had been sent, Orson Pratt explained that the Lord would send angels to bestow the same authority that was upon them to some other chosen individuals on the earth, “that they may go forth holding the same authority that Elijah himself held, having the same keys, receiving the same instructions, in regard to the Latter-day dispensation.”²⁵⁹ Not only were keys restored, but there were also instructions that came with them so they would know how the keys operated in their current dispensation. He continued, “This is the way the Lord commits dispensations: instead of sending angels to wander on the earth, he sends them to ordain others, to restore the authority, and set the work going.”²⁶⁰ Orson Pratt continued to teach that the Church had been organized with certain officers and authority restored, yet Elijah had not come. He stated that even though, “Peter, James and John, had also been sent as Apostles to restore the Apostleship to the earth. . . . But no Elijah had yet come.”²⁶¹ Orson Pratt spoke about

²⁵⁸ *Journal of Discourses*, 7:78.

²⁵⁹ *Journal of Discourses*, 7:78.

²⁶⁰ *Journal of Discourses*, 7:78.

²⁶¹ *Journal of Discourses*, 7:78-79.

how many years had passed away since the organization of the Church, and then the Kirtland Temple was built and dedicated to the Lord. Orson Pratt added his belief: “The time had now arrived for other ordinances to be made manifest, for other things to be revealed, for greater light to shine forth, for other keys, powers, and authorities to be bestowed upon chosen vessels of the Lord.”²⁶² The Saints, as a whole, had matured sufficiently enough to receive greater things.

The keys of Elijah, which are to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the children to the fathers (Doctrine and Covenants 110:15) are also known by the sealing keys. Orson Pratt taught what it meant to have the hearts of the fathers turn to the children and the hearts of the children turn to their fathers. He taught that it was more than the hearts of the living turning toward each other in greater affection. He did this when he turned his remarks to those not of the Mormon faith who were listening. He said that they had, “oftentimes heard from this stand that the dispensation in which we live was intended to benefit not only the generation living, but also past generations that have lain in their graves for ages.”²⁶³ Turning the hearts of the children to their fathers is the living turning their hearts to those who have died. He made reference to how little this subject had been discussed in public meetings and in the process defined the mission of Elijah:

You have heard this often hinted at; but perhaps no one, since you have attended our meeting, has taken up the subject to any great length, but merely a few words thrown out and there it was left. A sufficient, however was said to give you an understanding that we believe God will have something to do with the generations of the dead; that the children that are living here on the earth would be required to feel after their fathers that are in the graves; in other words, that the hearts and minds of the children should be turned, by the mission of Elijah, to the fathers, to search after them, to redeem and save them, though they have lain in their graves for generations.²⁶⁴

²⁶² *Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. 7:79.

²⁶³ *Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. 7:79.

²⁶⁴ *Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. 7:79.

Orson Pratt taught that one of the doctrines of the Mormon faith was that the gospel was ordained before the foundation of the world, meaning before the creation of the earth, and that there was a plan of salvation instituted that all of the people who have lived on this earth could be judged and saved by. Yet he stated that there were many people who had died without hearing anything about Christ and His gospel; they died in the greatest ignorance. He asked, “Will it be consistent with the great attributes of Jehovah to judge them by a law they had no knowledge of? It would be inconsistent, if they were always to remain without that knowledge. But if they are to be judged by that law—that great plan of salvation ordained before the foundation of the earth, they must be made acquainted with it, either in time or in eternity.”²⁶⁵ He next linked Elijah with the salvation of those who had died in ignorance of the knowledge of Jesus Christ when he said, “but, that they may be left without excuse before the bar of God in the last dispensation of the [fullness] of times, God will send a holy messenger from heaven, called Elijah, the Prophet, to give power to chosen vessels on the earth to officiate in the ordinances of that Gospel in their behalf.” One of the purposes of Elijah was to provide a way to perform essential saving ordinances for those who had died who did not participate in the saving ordinances when they were mortal. Orson Pratt continued to expound on the result of Elijah’s coming and gave a warning, “Thus the hearts of the children will be turned towards their fathers; otherwise the children must also perish with their fathers, and all flesh would be smitten with a curse. Why? Because we have the power given unto us from heaven to feel after our fathers, and yet we will not do it; consequently, we would be cursed and we could not escape from it.”²⁶⁶ Orson Pratt taught that those of the Mormon faith have a responsibility to seek after their dead because of the return of Elijah, otherwise a curse ensues. He proclaimed, “unless they exercise their agency in

²⁶⁵ *Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. 7:80.

²⁶⁶ *Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. 7:80.

trying to benefit the fathers, they will, as Malachi predicts, be smitten with a curse: they will not be profited themselves by the Gospel which they have received. Why? Because they do not reach forward and try to reclaim others whose bodies are sleeping in the grave.”²⁶⁷

Orson Pratt stated, “Let me here say that before this last dispensation ends there will be a perfect unbroken chain from the first of the fathers to the time of the close of the dispensation; and all will be saved who can be saved: all who are placed within the power of redemption will be redeemed.”²⁶⁸ According to Mormon doctrine, this plan of salvation will save all that can be saved of Heavenly Father’s children. This is only possible because of the Atonement of Jesus Christ and the keys of Elijah. Through this power, one can stand as proxy for someone who has died and have the saving ordinances performed. This is why Elijah plays such a key role in Mormon doctrine.

Orson Pratt defined the significance of keys and the last dispensation and in the process linked the modern-found faith with the ancient faith. He taught that the last dispensation is, “a dispensation in which all the keys and powers held by all the ancient Prophets will be delivered—a dispensation that will reach back unto the days of Moses, and that will take hold of patriarchal keys, and the righteous institutions of those that lived in the days of the flood, and back to the days of our father Adam; and there will be keys and powers restored once revealed to him.”²⁶⁹ He next expounded on the power and importance of the keys of Elijah in relation to the last dispensation; “All these dispensations could not be perfected without the grand dispensation of the fulness of times that will encompass all the inhabitants of the earth, of all ages and generations, in one vast general assembly. All things in heaven, recollect, and all things on the

²⁶⁷ *Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. 7:83.

²⁶⁸ *Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. 7:89.

²⁶⁹ *Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. 7:81.

earth that are in Christ are to be gathered in one.”²⁷⁰ Orson Pratt believed that all other dispensations are perfected because the keys of Elijah are being used in temples. He taught that the children are benefited by their fathers through the restoration of priesthood keys. The fathers are benefited by their children because saving ordinances are performed for them in temples.

Orson Pratt taught a bold doctrine associated with Elijah concerning those who have died and repentance. He taught:

Those spirits of our fathers whose bodies are in their graves can repent, for they have not lost their agency; they can believe in Jesus Christ, for that is an act of the mind: they can reform from every evil, because they are agents; for it is the spirit that can do good or evil. That same being, called the spirit, can repent in the eternal worlds as well as here; it can believe in Jesus Christ and in this atonement in the eternal worlds as well as here: and if the Gospel is preached to them there, they can receive it there, so far as the acts of the mind are concerned; but they could not receive baptism there, for that is an ordinance pertaining to the body: it is an outward ordinance—an ordinance instituted particularly for those that are in the flesh.²⁷¹

Outward ordinances, such as baptisms and endowments would need to be performed in the temple for those who have died. Baptisms for the dead had been performed but as of yet no endowments for the dead had been performed.

In reference to Moroni, Orson Pratt stated that the members of the Church were aware that the angel who gave power and authority to Joseph Smith to translate the ancient record also, “has spoken to the same man, revealing to him the keys of Elijah, and power to seal on earth that which shall be sealed in the heavens: therefore, when by that authority the servants and handmaids of the Lord go forth and are baptized for those that are dead, it is recorded and sealed on the earth.”²⁷² He then asked, “What benefit would it be for you and me to go forth and be baptized for our fathers, or for our grandfathers, or for any of our ancestors who are dead, if no

²⁷⁰ *Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. 7:81-82.

²⁷¹ *Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. 7:83.

²⁷² *Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. 7:83.

message is to be sent to them in the spirit world? A message must be sent to them.”²⁷³ Orson Pratt took time to discuss how the gospel was being preached to those who reside in the spirit world.

Orson Pratt, in his discourse, also linked Elijah with genealogy. He taught that they would learn about their fathers, “by the spirit of revelation whom to be baptized for, and whom to officiate for in the holy ordinances of the Gospel. Herein is the necessity of revelation. Take away revelation from this great dispensation of the [fullness] of times, and I would not give you much for the mission of Elijah, or for the dispensation itself.”²⁷⁴ Revelation also played an important part in the work of Elijah, but Orson Pratt was careful not to open the door for the people to seek revelation from sources outside of priesthood channels, because there was plenty of that currently happening with the Spiritualism movement. Pratt focused the people on the leadership of the Church in matters of revelation when he declared to the people, “If they are to feel after their fathers that are dead, and redeem them by the holy ordinance of baptism, they will not go to work in the dark, nor by the prophecies and revelations of every person who may offer himself as a revelator or prophet. There will be an order in the house of God; there will be a Moses there, or, in other words, a man holding the keys and authority of these things.”²⁷⁵ The prophet will serve as the one who holds the keys and keep things in order in the House of God, or the temple.

One of the items to be kept in order was where the ordinances were to be performed. Orson Pratt taught that the saving ordinances for the living and the dead, “cannot be attended to in all places on the earth. There are certain appointed places for the ministrations of these holy ordinances. Temples must be built, by the commandment of the Almighty, unto his holy name,

²⁷³ *Journal of Discourses*, 7:84.

²⁷⁴ *Journal of Discourses*, 7:86.

²⁷⁵ *Journal of Discourses*, 7:86.

that shall be sanctified and made holy from the foundation stone unto the top thereof, consecrated to the living God for the administration of holy ordinances, not only for the benefit of the living, but for the benefit of the fathers who are dead.”²⁷⁶ The keys of Elijah require a temple, or a holy place set apart as such, to perform the saving ordinances.²⁷⁷

Orson Pratt gave his reason as to why the Lord allowed the Apostasy, when it is believed that there was no priesthood authority on the earth to perform saving ordinances, and why the Lord waited so long to restore the priesthood authority to the earth through Joseph Smith. Pratt said the Lord might have reasoned thus, that, “when governments are established so liberal that there will be some prospect of establishing my kingdom on the earth, then I will send Elijah the Prophet, and he shall give authority to the children to search after their fathers who died in ignorance of the Gospel.”²⁷⁸ Then he summed up what the work of Elijah meant to those of the Mormon faith, “We are willing to go the earth over to save the living; we are willing to build temples and administer in ordinances to save the dead; we are willing to enter the eternal worlds and preach to every creature who has not placed himself beyond the reach of mercy. We are willing to [labor] both in this world and in the next to save men.”²⁷⁹

Continued Teaching of Elijah by Others

No one would give another public address about Elijah until three years later. In a General Conference for the Church held in the tabernacle in Salt Lake City on April 6, 1862, Heber C. Kimball addressed the need to complete the Salt Lake Temple. Brigham Young then spoke and gave one reason why he did not discuss Elijah more in the past. His explanation

²⁷⁶ *Journal of Discourses*, 7:86.

²⁷⁷ Although baptisms and sealings for the dead were performed in the Council House and Endowment House, there were no endowments for the dead performed. The first endowments for the dead by proxy were performed in the St. George Temple in 1877. For greater research about endowments for the dead see Bennett, “Line Upon Line, Precept Upon Precept,” 48-49.

²⁷⁸ *Journal of Discourses*, 7:91.

²⁷⁹ *Journal of Discourses*, 7:91.

correlated well with the reasons Joseph Smith gave for why he did not teach more about Elijah, because the hearts of the members of the Church were not prepared. Brigham Young stated:

I will here refer to a principle that has not been named by me for years. With the introduction of the Priesthood upon the earth was also introduced the sealing ordinance, that the chain of the Priesthood from Adam to the latest generation might be united in one unbroken continuance. It is the same power and the same keys that Elijah held, and was to exercise in the last days. ‘Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: and he shall turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.’ By this power men will be sealed to men back to Adam, completing and making perfect the chain of the Priesthood from his day to the winding up scene. I have known men that I positively think would fellowship the Devil, if he would agree to be sealed to them. ‘Oh, be sealed to me, brother; I care not what you do, you may lie and steal, or anything else, I can put up with all your meanness, if you will only be sealed to me.’ Now this is not so much weakness as it is selfishness. It is a great and glorious doctrine, but the reason I have not preached it in the midst of this people, is, I could not do it without turning so many of them to the Devil. Some would go to hell for the sake of getting the Devil sealed to them.”²⁸⁰

Joseph Smith lamented after teaching about Elijah that, “I have tried for a number of years to get the minds of the Saints prepared to receive the things of God; but we frequently see some of them, after suffering all they have for the work of God, will fly to pieces like glass as soon as anything comes that is contrary to their traditions: they cannot stand the fire at all.”²⁸¹ Not only did the spiritual roots of the people need to be deep, but the fruit of Christ-like behavior needed to be manifest in their lives before the doctrine and ordinances of Elijah could be taught and additional revelations revealed. Brigham expressed this further when he stated in a discourse given on April 6, 1862:

I have had visions and revelations instructing me how to organize this people so that they can live like the family of heaven, but I cannot do it while so much selfishness and wickedness reign in the Elders of Israel. Many would make of the greatest blessings a curse to them, as they do now the plurality of wives—the abuse of that principle will send thousands to hell. There are many great and glorious privileges for the people, which they are not prepared to receive. How

²⁸⁰ *Journal of Discourses*, 9:269.

²⁸¹ Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 6:185.

long it will be before they are prepared to enjoy the blessings God has in store for them, I know not—it has not been revealed to me. I know the Lord wants to pour blessings upon this people, but where he to do so in their present ignorance, they would not know what to do with them. They can receive only a very little and that must be administered to them with great care.²⁸²

The Saints had to go through a maturing process in order to understand other doctrines and ordinances such as those associated with the 1836 vision. As Brigham Young stated, if the Lord revealed greater things to them, “in their present ignorance, they would not know what to do with them.”²⁸³

Conclusion

After the death of Joseph Smith, although Church leaders still did not teach the 1836 vision openly to the body of the Church, the ordinances for the living and dead that came from the vision were taught and the movement to build temples continued. As the Church continued to grow and mature through the Saints living according to the knowledge they had received line upon line, their hearts were prepared to receive more; therefore, more elements of the 1836 vision were taught. As the Saints continued to work on the temple and perform temple ordinances that could be performed in the Council House and later the Endowment House, they learned more about the 1836 vision and Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery’s witnessing of it. Outside influences, some of which were the Spiritualism movement, Johnston’s Army, and the coming of the railroad contributed to the teaching expounding upon the 1836 vision.

²⁸² *Journal of Discourses*, 9:269.

²⁸³ *Journal of Discourses*, 9:269.

Chapter 4

The 1836 Vision Taught During the St. George Temple Building Era (1872-77) and the Canonization of Doctrine and Covenants 110

The 1860s were a time of testing for the membership of the Mormon faith because of several destructive influences, but from the adversity, strong support structures of the Mormon faith were built that would serve to be a continued strength to the generations that were to follow. Some of the ongoing difficulties of this time period were the effects of the Utah War, some of them being the Mountain Meadows Massacre and the worldliness and sin that Johnston's Army brought with them in their wake. Another difficult trial was the Civil War, April 1861-65, and the struggle with how much the Latter-day Saints should get involved and whether they should join the conflict. Another hardship to endure was the beginnings of the Godbeites,²⁸⁴ which also involved the merchants and intellectuals of the city. The stress they put upon the Church and its followers would last over a decade. By late 1869 they had established themselves as separate from the Church and by May 1870, former apostle Amasa Lyman not only joined with them, but became the leader of the Godbeites. On May 12, 1870, the leaders of the LDS Church excommunicated Lyman.²⁸⁵ The Godbeites made anti-Mormon statements in print in the paper they started, the *Salt Lake Tribune*. They also held open forums which not only allowed, but also

²⁸⁴ The Godbeites was a Spiritualism movement named after William Godbe, one of its founders. He started the movement with a close friend Elias Harrison. Godbe was a successful merchant who was troubled with Brigham Young's desire for cooperative merchandising, which was a plan of joint purchasing and community wide wholesaling among the merchants. Elias Harrison was a member of the Mormon faith, but was known for his skepticism. The Godbeite movement ended in the late 1870s because it did not have the organizational structure to survive. Information taken from Walker, *Wayward Saints*.

²⁸⁵ Walker, 206-07.

encouraged participation from those who were most opposed to the Mormon faith and Brigham Young's leadership, to openly speak out against his leadership and the Mormon Church.

The leadership of the Church responded boldly to these destructive influences. Many of the things implemented that added to the spiritual strength of the Saints during this time still currently stand in place in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and continue to serve as pillars of strength to the followers of the movement. Brigham Young desired to protect his followers from embracing the ways of the world. To do this, he established a Sunday school for the youth which was held every Sunday. From this the Young Men's and Young Women's meetings were established. For the women the Relief Society was reestablished, and for the men, the Salt Lake City School of the Prophets was founded. The School of the Prophets was founded in response to the coming of the railroad and the threat it posed to them economically due to inexpensive imports. The Mormon leaders, "were determined that it should not destroy the essential character of their society."²⁸⁶ Leonard Arrington argued that the School of the Prophets and the women's Relief Society, "were competent to translate church policy into an effective economic action program."²⁸⁷ Admission to the School of the Prophets was by card only and the meetings, "resembled an economic planning conference"²⁸⁸ instead of the spiritual and secular instruction of the School of the Prophets in Kirtland. The School of the Prophets established in Salt Lake City was, "loosely based on a similarly named institution that Joseph Smith had established in Kirtland, Ohio, the school was a Mormon version of a Saturday night New England town meeting, only, in Deseret religious and civil matters merged."²⁸⁹

²⁸⁶ Arrington, 240.

²⁸⁷ Arrington, 245.

²⁸⁸ Arrington, 245.

²⁸⁹ Walker, 96.

The other two focus points of Brigham Young in response to this threat were the strongly urged boycott of gentile merchants and the establishment of cooperative merchandising.²⁹⁰ This was meant to keep money inside the Utah Territory so it could be used to build the kingdom, including the building of temples. George Q. Cannon provided an excellent example of the effectiveness of Brigham Young's responses when he wrote on June 9, 1869:

Many wicked men [Cannon was writing for children] thought that the building of this railroad would help to destroy The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. They would like to see us driven from these valleys, so that they might get our homes and rule this land. They have been delighted, therefore, at the idea that the railroad would soon be completed. But though it is done, we are not destroyed, and what is the better, we shall not be. Such people have always been disappointed about us, and the reason of this is: They always leave God out of the question. Now this is God's work, and when they leave Him out, they deceived themselves and are always disappointed.

The railroad will not injure us; it will benefit us. If it brings in bad men, is also carries them away again; and it can very easily carry off apostates and all those who will not obey the laws of God. And then how quickly the Elders can go to and return from distant lands to preach the gospel, and how easily the Saints can be brought from Babylon to dwell in Zion!²⁹¹

Out of these trying times came the building, completion, and dedication of temples, and a new edition of the scriptures published, which contained the 1836 vision for the first time. The 1836 vision is now known as Doctrine and Covenants 110. This chapter will first look at the events that influenced the vision of Jesus Christ, Moses, Elias, and Elijah being put into the Doctrine and Covenants and then the process of having it canonized.

Brigham Young felt the Saints would be going back to Jackson County, Missouri, within seven years and building the temple that Joseph Smith prophesied would be built there. On August 23, 1862, Brigham Young proclaimed, "I do not want to quite finish this Temple for there will not be any Temple finished until the One is finished in Jackson County Missouri

²⁹⁰ For greater detail in the three specific focuses Brigham Young used to counter the Godbeite movement see, Walker, 95.

²⁹¹ As cited in Davis Bitton, *George Q. Cannon: a Biography*, (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1999), 157-58.

pointed out by Joseph Smith.”²⁹² Once the Civil War was over and it did not look possible for the Saints to return to Jackson County, Brigham Young focused his energy into completing the Salt Lake Temple and building additional temples in Utah.

Building the Salt Lake Temple was a very slow process, and Brigham Young had felt strongly that they needed to have a temple to perform ordinances that could not be performed in the Endowment House.²⁹³ The announcement of the building of the St. George Temple was not a public affair, but announced in a private meeting in the home of Erastus Snow on January 31, 1871.²⁹⁴ Erastus Snow was the resident Apostle and President of the Southern Mission. The ground breaking for the St. George Temple was held on November 9, 1871.

Because of the greater emphasis placed on temple building, the public addresses from Church leaders about temples also increased. In the semi-annual General Conference of the Church on October 7, 1873, Orson Pratt gave an entire discourse on the purpose of the temple. Orson Pratt was a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles and heavily involved with the history of the Church. Although he had previously linked the ordinances of the temple to the vision,²⁹⁵ he did not do so here. While meeting in the new tabernacle in Salt Lake City, he taught, “we meet here to sing praises, and to be instructed in our duties as Saints, but this is not a house of ordinances; it is not a house for the baptism of the dead, or in which the Saints receive their washings and anointings; it is not a house in which you will receive statutes, and judgments,

²⁹² *Wilford Woodruff's Journal*, vol. 6:71. Cited from Bennett, “Line Upon Line, Precept Upon Precept,” 52.

²⁹³ As cited in Bennett, “Line Upon Line, Precept Upon Precept,” 53. Brigham Young stated, “We can, at the present time receive washings and anointing, ect. . . . We also have the privilege of sealing women to men, without a Temple . . . but when we come to other sealing ordinances . . . they cannot be done without a Temple” Brigham Young, in *Journal of Discourses*, 16:186, September 4, 1873.

²⁹⁴ Bennett, “Line Upon Line, Precept Upon Precept,” 54.

²⁹⁵ On August 29, 1852, Orson Pratt, for what appears for the first time in a public address, declared that Joseph Smith had the sealing keys of power committed to him in the Kirtland Temple by the hand of Elijah. A little over two weeks later on Sept. 12, 1852, at a funeral address, Orson Pratt stated that ordinances for the dead needed to be performed in a temple. Orson Pratt linked the sealing keys used in the temple to Elijah and his appearance in the Kirtland Temple. See *Journal of Discourses*, 1:64 and for the funeral sermon see *Wilford Woodruff's Journal*, 4:147.

and laws pertaining to the kingdom of God,”²⁹⁶ but he taught that a temple is such a place. The ordinances he focused on were marriage sealings, baptisms for the dead, and confirmations. His reason for teaching about the ordinances of the temple was to show “the use or necessity of a Temple.”²⁹⁷ Concerning baptisms for the dead he stated it is, “thoroughly understood by the Latter-day Saints, and has been long preached to them, and they know that this, as well as the ordinance of marriage, pertains to the house of God.”²⁹⁸

Orson Pratt then taught that one of the main purposes of the temple was to link, or seal, everyone together back to Adam. Without mentioning Elijah, Orson Pratt quoted from Malachi of turning the hearts of the fathers to the children, “and the hearts of all those ancient fathers, who lived thousands of years ago, will be ‘turned to their children, lest the Lord should come and smite the earth with a curse.’”²⁹⁹ He explained that the curse would come if the Saints did not seek after their ancestors and perform the necessary ordinances for them in the temple which were necessary for redemption. At the conclusion of his discourse he cried out: “Wake up, then, Latter-day Saints, and prepare yourselves Temples in the places that shall be designated, by the oracles of the Most High God.”³⁰⁰ He then pleaded that, “the work is becoming continually greater and greater, and the Latter-day Saints must wake up to these principles, and not have their minds absorbed with the things of this world, forgetting the great plan of salvation revealed from heaven.”³⁰¹

²⁹⁶ *Journal of Discourses*, 16:256.

²⁹⁷ *Journal of Discourses*, 16:259.

²⁹⁸ *Journal of Discourses*, 16:259.

²⁹⁹ *Journal of Discourses*, 16:261.

³⁰⁰ *Journal of Discourses*, 16:262.

³⁰¹ *Journal of Discourses*, 16:262.

Concerns of the Rising Generation

In 1874 Orson Pratt made an observation about the rising generation in the Church that was a reflection of concern to the leadership of the Church. In 1874 the Church leaders called for all to live according to the Order of Enoch, or the law of consecration. Two years prior to its establishment, George Q. Cannon, in a conference talk on October 8, 1872, stated that because people get carried away in wealth, “The time must come when we must obey that which has been revealed to us as the Order of Enoch, when there shall be no rich and no poor among the Latter-day Saints; when wealth will not be a temptation; when every man will love his neighbor as he does himself; when every man and woman will labor for the good of all as much as for self.”³⁰²

Many of the rising generation questioned if the Order of Enoch was a new revelation or something new they were required to practice. On a Sunday afternoon, June 14, 1874, from the pulpit at the tabernacle, Orson Pratt declared, “We have been required, in the year 1874, to come back again to an old order, as taught in ancient Mormonism.” The ancient Mormonism he referred to was established by Joseph Smith over forty years previously. He continued, “There is a generation now living on the earth who seem to be comparatively ignorant of the doctrines which were taught some forty years ago to men who are now old and have grey heads and gray beards. Since that time a new generation has arisen; and they begin to think that something new, something that will turn things upside down, is being introduced into Mormonism.” The problem was the rising generation had not experienced living all of the doctrines of the Church, therefore they struggled living by things they considered new or not part of the faith they were raised in. He declared that their efforts were not directed to the rising generation only, but to all the saints: “we are trying to get the people to come back again to the old principles of Mormonism, to that

³⁰² *Journal of Discourses*, 15:207.

which God revealed in the early rise of this Church.”³⁰³ Orson Pratt quoted the revelations recorded in the Doctrine and Covenants and also the “History of Joseph Smith,” which was recorded in the periodicals, to ground the Order of Enoch to the revelations that were given over forty years prior and the history of the Church. This would serve as a pattern for Doctrine and Covenants 110; the commandments from Church leaders were grounded to revelation and history.

A little over one week later, in June 1874, while Brigham Young delivered an address in the third ward meeting house in relation to living the Order of Enoch, he lamented that, “these children who were born in this city or Territory, know what they can remember, and many of them are old enough to have many reflections and can see and understand a great many things; but the older ones know that this people have drifted just as far as they can without a reformation. Every spiritual mind knows this.”³⁰⁴ Brigham Young recollected that he heard Joseph Smith say in Far West, in relation to the Saints not being able to live by the law of consecration where their surplus was to be given to help build the Temple, that, “the people cannot bear the revelations that the Lord has for them. There were a great many revelations if the people could bear them.”³⁰⁵ The lack of understanding of the rising generation was also a contributing factor for an increased emphasis in grounding the doctrines of the Church to the revelations of the past. If its foundation was weak, Mormon doctrine would crumble with the weight of the rising generation and their lack of bedrock knowledge of their faith.

One of the reasons for living the Order of Enoch was to prepare the people to return to Jackson County, Missouri, and build the temple that Joseph Smith prophesied would be built. In the early period of the Civil War, Brigham Young believed in the return to Jackson County,

³⁰³ *Journal of Discourses*, 17:103.

³⁰⁴ *Journal of Discourses*, 18:243-44.

³⁰⁵ *Journal of Discourses*, 18:242.

Missouri, and “sounded a call of warning and preparation,”³⁰⁶ on July 28, 1861. Brigham Young asked if the Saints were preparing their hearts and lives to take possession of the city of Jackson County, Missouri. He stated, “we must be pure to be prepared to build up Zion. To all appearance the Lord is preparing that end of the route faster than we are preparing ourselves to go.”³⁰⁷ Just over a year later on August 22, 1862, Brigham Young spoke in reference to the slow process of building the Salt Lake Temple: “I am afraid we shall not get it up until we have to go back to Jackson County which I expect will be in seven years. I do not want to quite finish this Temple for there will not be any temple finished until the one is finished in Jackson Co. [as] pointed out by Joseph Smith. Keep this as a secret to yourselves, lest some may be discouraged.”³⁰⁸

The focus of living by a higher standard was the temple. The Church leaders knew the return to Jackson County, Missouri, would not be soon, but unless the membership of the Church lived by a higher standard it would never happen. Orson Pratt taught that the only way they could return was if they “comply with the celestial law, the law of consecration, the law of oneness, which the Lord has spoken of from the beginning. Except you are one you are not mine.”³⁰⁹ Orson Pratt taught that by living after the Order of Enoch, the Saints would be sanctified, and he declared that we believe “in the sanctification that comes by continued obedience to the law of heaven.”³¹⁰ Orson Pratt then asked, “When shall we begin, Latter-day Saints, to carry out the law of God, and enter upon the process necessary to our sanctification?”³¹¹ The emphasis of living a

³⁰⁶ Richard E. Bennett, “We Know No North, No South, No East, No West,” *Mormon Historical Studies*, 10:3 (Spring 2009), 61.

³⁰⁷ Brigham Young, in *Journal History*, July 28, 1861 as cited in Bennett, “We Know No North, No South, No East, No West,” 61.

³⁰⁸ Brigham Young, in *Journal History*, August 22, 1862 as cited in Bennett, “We Know No North, No South, No East, No West,” 61.

³⁰⁹ *Journal of Discourses*, 17:112.

³¹⁰ *Journal of Discourses*, 17:112.

³¹¹ *Journal of Discourses*, 17:112

higher way, such as the Order of Enoch, was to prepare the people to build the temple in Jackson County, Missouri, and would put the temple in the center of the Saint's minds.

In a conference in Ogden on May 18, 1873, Brigham Young taught about how the learning the ways of God was a process. He taught that, "when Joseph Smith first learned from God the principle of baptism for the remission of sins, he undoubtedly thought that he had learned something great and wonderful; so, also, when he received his ordination to the Aaronic Priesthood under the hands of John the Baptist. But he did not fly off at a tangent, and think he had it all, but was willing and anxious to be taught further."³¹² In reference to Joseph Smith, he stated, "He received his knowledge of the things of God by degrees, until he obtained the last blessing needful to bestow on his brethren."³¹³

Teaching of the Keys of Temples in St. George

In a Christmas assembly in St. George, Utah, on Christmas day in 1874, George Albert Smith spoke to the gathered congregation about building temples and the important work done within them. He said that, "the Prophet and the Patriarch Hyrum, in one of those meetings with the Twelve, had administered to Brigham Young what is known as the Second Anointing and instructed him to administer in like manner to his brethren of the Twelve, which he did to the nine of the Twelve then at home. The Twelve were then instructed to administer in the Ordinances of the Gospel for the dead, beginning with baptism and the laying on of hands."³¹⁴

George Albert Smith also taught the importance of the temple in association with keys. He exhorted the Saints to complete the St. George Temple "so that President Young and the Twelve may have the opportunity of going therein to communicate the Keys of Knowledge and

³¹² *Journal of Discourses*, 16:41-42.

³¹³ *Journal of Discourses*, 16:42.

³¹⁴ St. George Utah Stake, General Minutes, LDS Church Archives, Salt Lake City, Utah, (December 25, 1874), 3.

power which the Prophet Joseph had conferred upon them; and which can only be conferred on others in a Temple.”³¹⁵

John Taylor reviewed with the Saints in St. George the life of Joseph Smith. He stated that “until our day, there was no living man on the earth to give the words: ‘Thus saith the Lord,’ and this continued until God spoke to Joseph Smith. This same Joseph, in the first revelation, saw God the Father, and Jesus Christ, and was, so far as we have any knowledge, the only man on all the earth who knew that God lived as also Jesus Christ, whom He had sent; for he had seen Him.”³¹⁶ It is interesting to note that John Taylor viewed the First Vision as the first revelation. After the First Vision “came John, who before time had come as the forerunner of Jesus of Judea; then came Peter, James and John; afterwards came Elijah.”³¹⁷ He then declared, “All these gave keys of knowledge, authority and power to this same Joseph Smith, the head of this dispensation of the fullness of times; Joseph, in his turn, imparting these keys of power, blessing and glory to others.”³¹⁸

1876 Edition of the Doctrine and Covenants

The events of the 1850s and the 1860s had to be on the mind of Orson Pratt who was heavily engaged in working on the history of the Church and preparing a new edition of the Doctrine and Covenants. The new edition of the Doctrine and Covenants and Pearl of Great Price had a completely different look and became available to the public in 1876. The differences were given in the Church Historian’s Office Journal. The following entry was made on January 15, 1875: “Orson Pratt has been engaged, at times, for several days, in recopying and arranging the order in which the revelations are to be inserted in the edition of the Book of Doctrine and

³¹⁵ St. George Utah Stake, General Minutes, 3.

³¹⁶ St. George Utah Stake, General Minutes, 637.

³¹⁷ St. George Utah Stake, General Minutes, 637.

³¹⁸ St. George Utah Stake, General Minutes, 638.

Covenants, now in the hands of the printer. Following the counsel of President Young, Elder Pratt has divided the various revelations into verses, and arranged them for printing, according to the order of date in which they were revealed.”³¹⁹ The revelations would not be in paragraph form, but instead, divided into verses and arranged chronologically as to the date they were received. In Section 107 code names were used originally and the real names were inserted in the new edition. When persecution increased and people whose names appeared in the Doctrine and Covenants were ridiculed, “Joseph Smith began to identify certain persons in the revelations by code names, such as "Enoch" for Joseph Smith, ‘Ahashdah’ for Newel K. Whitney, and ‘Pelegoram’ for Sidney Rigdon. The code names were probably used so members of the Church might avoid public ridicule.”³²⁰ Orson Pratt also wrote introductions to many revelations.³²¹

There is very little information available about the formation of this new edition of the Doctrine and Covenants. Working under the direction of Brigham Young, Orson Pratt was the primary one making the changes to the Doctrine and Covenants, yet it is difficult to determine how involved Brigham Young was in the process. Not only would the Doctrine and Covenants have a new look, but it also included additional revelations. Orson Pratt’s involvement with the written history of the Church must have been a contributing factor in the selecting of additional revelations to put in the new edition of the Doctrine and Covenants. Twenty-six new revelations were included in the new edition. Each one of these revelations were recorded in the *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, except for Section 136. The revelations included in the new edition were Sections 2, 13, 77, 85, 87, 108-11, 113-18, 120-23, 125, 126,

³¹⁹ *Church Historian’s Office Journal*, January 15, 1875, 70.

³²⁰ Backman, 58.

³²¹ See Robert J. Woodford, “The Story of the Doctrine and Covenants,” *Ensign*, Dec. 1984, 32.

129-32, and 136.³²² One section in the Doctrine and Covenants, which was written by Oliver Cowdery, was taken out and replaced with Section 132, which was about the eternal covenant of marriage. There was no reason given why the particular revelations selected to be included in the new edition of the Doctrine and Covenants were chosen. The Church Historian's Office Journal stated simply that Orson Pratt was in the office working on Church history, but no more detail was given. This new edition was published by the *Deseret News* in Salt Lake City, Utah, and would be the first one published in the United States since the 1846 Nauvoo edition.³²³

Out of the new revelations that were included in the new edition, Section 2 was directly related to Section 110. Section 2³²⁴ contains the visit of Moroni to Joseph Smith and his quoting of Malachi and the coming of Elijah. Orson Pratt labeled Doctrine and Covenants Section 2 as the first revelation received by Joseph Smith in the Doctrine and Covenants. Joseph Smith received Section 1 on November 1, 1831, and although it was received after several other revelations, it would remain as the first Section because it is known as the Lord's Preface. Orson Pratt took Section 2 from the account Joseph Smith gave when the angel Moroni first visited him. With the inclusion of Section 2, Section 110 now had historical context. Section 2 is written as follows:

- 1 Behold, I will reveal unto you the Priesthood, by the hand of Elijah the prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.
- 2 And he shall plant in the hearts of the children the promises made to the fathers, and the hearts of the children shall turn to their fathers.
- 3 If it were not so, the whole earth would be utterly wasted at his coming.

³²² For a detailed history see the chapter titled, "The Doctrine and Covenants: A Historical Overview," written by Robert J. Woodford in Robert L. Millet and Kent P. Jackson, eds., *Studies in Scripture, Vol. 1: The Doctrine and Covenants* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1989), 14-15.

³²³ Woodford, "The Doctrine and Covenants: A Historical Overview," 15.

³²⁴ Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 1:12.

Knowing that the leaders were trying to establish the “ancient order of Mormonism,”³²⁵ this sheds some light upon the revelations chosen to be included in the Doctrine and Covenants. For example, Section 13 is about John the Baptist restoring the Aaronic Priesthood to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery, and Section 115 states that Joseph Smith held the keys of the kingdom which established priesthood authority. Section 85 is living the law of consecration in Zion and Section 111, 117, 120 deal with the temporal affairs of the Church and individuals, proving the United Order was not a new concept. The United Order in Brigham Young’s day, as explained by Leonard J. Arrington, “may be seen as an afterclap of the social idealism of Joseph Smith. The Prophet’s experiments took place during the heyday of communal experimentation in America.” He further stated that the, “Mormons, like the moderns, were not afraid to launch radical experiments in family and community relationships, departing deliberately and dramatically from the norms and values of the main society in their effort to counter the excesses of individualism and pluralism that they saw about them.” Brigham Young’s efforts to have the people live by the United Order were essentially, “to create unity out of diversity and to maintain order in the face of threatening chaos.”³²⁶

Section 109 is the dedicatory prayer of the Kirtland Temple, and Section 115 is about the naming of the Church and building a temple in Far West which helped establish the doctrine of building temples. Section 115 also declares that Joseph Smith holds the keys of the kingdom, or the governing authority. Section 110, of course, is about the visitation of Jesus Christ, Moses, Elias, and Elijah in the Kirtland Temple to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery. Sections 121, 122, 123 were taken from a letter written by Joseph Smith while he was in Liberty Jail, in Liberty,

³²⁵ *Journal of Discourses*, 17:103.

³²⁶ Arrington, 12-13.

Missouri, which was penned as a “prison temple,”³²⁷ because of the spiritual significance and the revelations Joseph Smith received while imprisoned there. In Section 126 the Lord commends Brigham Young for his faithful service. Section 131 is about celestial marriage, and Section 132 is about how exaltation is gained through the new and everlasting covenants and that Joseph Smith had the sealing power to bind and seal on earth and in heaven.

Most of the revelations included in the new edition were temple centered. Even Section 77 and 113, which are questions and answers from the book of Revelation and Isaiah, have a temple theme contained in them. Section 77 contains information of the sealing of the 144,000 out of all the tribes of Israel and about the gathering of the tribes of Israel of which Elias is named as one involved. Section 113 also contains the theme of gathering through priesthood keys.

With Orson Pratt’s involvement with the history of the Church and the nearing completion of the St. George Temple, he saw the importance of connecting the doctrine of temple to the scriptures of the Church. Orson Pratt also put in Section 136, which is the revelation given to Brigham Young to organize the trek west from Nauvoo. This established the fact that the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles had the keys to direct the Church. This included the building of temples and the ordinances work performed in them. Brigham Young “said to a body of the priesthood ‘that the Church had been led by Revelation just as much since the death of Joseph Smith as before.’ It was a theme he never relinquished in public or private. Some may have interpreted it as aspiration, but the majority apparently viewed it with comfort and reassurance.”³²⁸

³²⁷ Roberts, *A Comprehensive History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 6 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1930), 1:523.

³²⁸ Richard E. Bennett, *Mormons at the Missouri Winter Quarters, 1844-1852*. (University of Oklahoma Press : Norman, 1987), 211. Brigham Young quote contained in *Journal History*, Jan. 17, 1847.

By 1877, Church leaders were readily using and quoting from the new edition of the Doctrine and Covenants in their public addresses. Although the 1876 edition was being used, it was not canonized until 1880, after it went through additional changes. Orson Pratt made the requested changes by adding footnotes and end notes.

The following is a comparison of the progressive changes from the *Manuscript History of the Church* to the 1876 edition of the Doctrine and Covenants. Each document is compared to the *Manuscript History of the Church*.

<i>Manuscript History of the Church</i>	<i>Deseret News</i>	<i>Millennial Star</i>	Doctrine and Covenants 1876 Edition
The vail was taken from our minds, and the eyes of our understanding were opened; we saw the Lord standing upon the breast work of the Pulpit, before us, and under his feet was a paved work of pure gold, in color like amber. His eyes were as a flame of fire; the hair of his head was white like the pure snow, his countenance shone above the brightness of the sun, and his voice was as the sound of the rushing of great waters, even the voice of Jehovah, saying I am the first and the last: I am he who liveth; I am he who	The vail was taken from our minds, and the eyes of our understanding were opened; we saw the Lord standing upon the breast work of the Pulpit, before us, and under his feet was a paved work of pure gold, in color like amber. His eyes were as a flame of fire; the hair of his head was white like the pure snow, his countenance shone above the brightness of the sun, and his voice was as the sound of the rushing of great waters, even the voice of Jehovah, saying I am the first and the last: I am he who liveth; I am he who	The vail was taken from our minds, and the eyes of our understanding were opened; w We saw the Lord standing upon the breast work of the P pulpit, before us, and under his feet was a paved work of pure gold; in color colour like amber. His eyes were as a flame of fire; the hair of his head was white like the pure snow, his countenance shone above the brightness of the sun, and his voice was as the sound of the rushing of great waters, even the voice of Jehovah, saying – I am the first and the last; I am he	1. The vail was taken from our minds, and the eyes of our understanding were opened;. 2. w We saw the Lord standing upon the breast work of the P pulpit, before us, and under his feet was a paved work of pure gold; in color like amber. 3. His eyes were as a flame of fire; the hair of his head was white like the pure snow, his countenance shone above the brightness of the sun, and his voice was as the sound of the rushing of great waters, even the voice of Jehovah, saying— 4. I am the first and

was slain; I am your advocate with the Father. Behold your sins are forgiven you: you are clean before me therefore lift up your heads and rejoice; let the hearts of your brethren rejoice, and let the hearts of all my people rejoice who have, with their might, built this house to my name. For behold I have accepted this house, and my name shall be here, and I will manifest myself to my people, in mercy in this House; yea, I will appear unto my servants, and speak unto them with mine own voice, if my people will keep my commandments, and do not pollute this holy house, yea the heart of thousands and tens of thousands shall greatly rejoice in consequence of the blessings which shall be poured out, and the endowment with which my servants have been endowed in this house: and the fame of this house shall spread to foreign lands, and this is the beginning of the blessing which shall be poured out upon

was slain; I am your advocate with the Father. Behold your sins are forgiven you:, you are clean before me, therefore lift up your heads and rejoice:, let the hearts of your brethren rejoice, and let the hearts of all my people rejoice, who have, with their might, built this house to my name-; Ffor behold I have accepted this house, and my name shall be here-; and & I will manifest myself to my people; in mercy in this House; yea, I will appear unto my servants, and speak unto them with mine own voice, if my people will keep my commandments, and do not pollute this holy house holy house, yea the hearts of thousands and tens of thousands shall greatly rejoice in consequence of the blessings which shall be poured out, and the endowment with which my servants have been endowed in this house;; and the fame of this house shall spread to foreign lands, and this is the beginning of the blessing, which shall

who liveth;, I am he who was slain;, I am your advocate with the Father. Behold, your sins are forgiven you:, you are clean before me, therefore lift up your heads and rejoice:, let the hearts of your brethren rejoice, and let the hearts of all my people rejoice, who have, with their might, built this house to my name-, Ffor behold, I have accepted this house, and my name shall be here, and I will manifest myself to my people; in mercy in this House, yea;, I will appear unto my servants, and speak unto them with mine own voice, if my people will keep my commandments, and do not pollute this holy house holy house, yea the hearts of thousands and tens of thousands shall greatly rejoice in consequence of the blessings which shall be poured out, and the endowment with which my servants have been endowed in this house;; and the fame of this house shall spread to foreign lands, and this is the beginning of the blessing which shall

the last;, I am he who liveth;, I am he who was slain;, I am your advocate with the Father.
5. Behold, your sins are forgiven you:, you are clean before me, therefore lift up your heads and rejoice:,
6. ¶Let the hearts of your brethren rejoice, and let the hearts of all my people rejoice, who have, with their might, built this house to my name-,
7. For behold, I have accepted this house, and my name shall be here, and I will manifest myself to my people; in mercy in this Hhouse;,
8. ¶Yea, I will appear unto my servants, and speak unto them with mine own voice, if my people will keep my commandments, and do not pollute this holy house holy house,
9. ¶Yea the hearts of thousands and tens of thousands shall greatly rejoice in consequence of the blessings which shall be poured out, and the endowment with which my servants have been endowed in this house;;
10. ¶And the fame of this house shall spread

the heads of my people even so amen. After this vision closed the heavens were again opened unto us, and Moses appeared before us and committed unto us the keys of the gathering of Israel from the four parts of the earth and the leading of the Ten Tribes from the land of the north. After this Elias appeared and committed the dispensation of the gospel of - - Abraham, saying, that in us, and our seed, all generations after us should be blessed.

After this vision had closed another great and glorious vision burst upon us, for Elijah the Prophet, who was taken to heaven without tasting death stood before us, and said, behold the time has fully come, which was spoken of by the mouth of Malachi, testifying that he should be sent before the great and dreadful day of the Lord come, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the children to the fathers, lest the whole earth be smitten with a curse.

be poured out upon the heads of my people even so amen. After this vision closed the heavens were again opened unto us, and Moses appeared before us and committed unto us, the keys of the gathering of Israel, from the four parts of the earth, and the leading of the Ten Tribes from the land of the north. After this Elias appeared and committed the dispensation of the gospel of Abraham, saying, that in us, and our seed, all generations after us should be blessed.

After this vision had closed, another great and glorious vision burst upon us, for Elijah the Prophet, who was taken to heaven without tasting death stood before us, and said, behold the time has fully come, which was spoken of by the mouth of Malachi, testifying that he should be sent before the great and dreadful day of the Lord come, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the children to the fathers, lest the whole earth be

be poured out upon the heads of my people. eEven so aAmen.

After this vision closed, the heavens were again opened unto us, and Moses appeared before us, and committed unto us the keys of the gathering of Israel from the four parts of the earth, and the leading of the Ten Tribes from the land of the north.

After this, Elias appeared, and committed the dispensation of the Gospel of Abraham, saying, that in us, and our seed, all generations after us should be blessed.

After this vision had closed, another great and glorious vision burst upon us, for Elijah the Prophet, who was taken to heaven without tasting death, stood before us, and said,—

hBehold, the time has fully come, which was spoken of by the mouth of Malachi, testifying that he [Elijah] should be sent before the great and dreadful day of the Lord come, to turn the hearts of

to foreign lands, and this is the beginning of the blessing which shall be poured out upon the heads of my people. eEven so. aAmen.

11. After this vision closed, the heavens were again opened unto us, and Moses appeared before us, and committed unto us the keys of the gathering of Israel from the four parts of the earth, and the leading of the Ten Tribes from the land of the north.

12. After this, Elias appeared, and committed the dispensation of the Gospel of Abraham, saying, that in us, and our seed, all generations after us should be blessed.

13. After this vision had closed, another great and glorious vision burst upon us, for Elijah the Prophet, who was taken to heaven without tasting death, stood before us, and said,—

14. hBehold, the time has fully come, which was spoken of by the mouth of Malachi, testifying that he (Elijah) should be sent before the great and dreadful day of

Therefore the keys of this dispensation are committed into your hands and by this ye may know that the great and dreadful day of the Lord is near, even at the doors.³²⁹

smitten with a curse. Therefore the keys of this dispensation are committed into your hands, and by this ye may know that the great and dreadful day of the Lord is near, even at the doors.³³⁰

the fathers to the children, and the children to the fathers, lest the whole earth be smitten with a curse. Therefore the keys of this dispensation are committed into your hands, and by this ye may know that the great and dreadful day of the Lord is near, even at the doors.³³¹

the Lord come, 15. ¶To turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the children to the fathers, lest the whole earth be smitten with a curse. 16. Therefore the keys of this dispensation are committed into your hands, and by this ye may know that the great and dreadful day of the Lord is near, even at the doors.³³²

The Focus on the Temple and Temple Ordinances

On October 25, 1876, the First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints sent out a letter addressed to the bishops and members of the Church. In the letter they explained that they had used the endowment house for many years, “and many ordinances have been administered therein; but there are other important ordinances which have not been, and cannot be, administered, except in a Temple built and dedicated to the Most High for that purpose. Such a Temple we now have so far completed at St. George that we can commence attending to these ordinances there.”³³³ They also wrote that they hoped soon to be performing ordinances for the living and the dead in the temple and then they announced two additional temples to be built— Manti and Logan, Utah.

³²⁹ Smith, *Manuscript History of the Church*, Book B-1, 727-28,

³³⁰ *Deseret News*, (November 6, 1852), 101

³³¹ *Millennial Star*, (November 5, 1853 and November 15, 1853), 729, 739 respectively.

³³² Doctrine and Covenants, 1876 version, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. 369-70

³³³ James R. Clark, comp., *Messages of the First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 6 vols. (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1965-75), 2:278.

One day before part of the St. George Temple was dedicated, John Taylor, in Salt Lake City, spoke at the funeral of Mary Ann, the wife of Elder George E. Bourne. On December 31, 1876, John Taylor spoke of the sealing power and how it binds couples together, but he did not link the sealing with Elijah, the vision, or Doctrine and Covenants 110. He also spoke of the necessity of performing sealings for those who have passed on, but there was no mention of endowments for the dead.³³⁴

John Taylor spoke at another funeral on the same day, December 31, 1876. This was a funeral for two individuals, Ann Tenora Waddell and George, the son of Edward Callister. In this funeral address he reviewed many significant visions Joseph Smith had. John Taylor started at the vision of the Father and the Son to the Prophet Joseph Smith. Next he spoke about the visit of Moroni. The next visitor was John the Baptist who restored the keys of the Aaronic Priesthood and then the appearance of Peter, James, and John, who restored the keys of the Melchizedek Priesthood. “Then we read again of Elias or Elijah, who was to act as a restorer, and who committed to him the powers and authority associated with his position.”³³⁵ He then asked why was it that all of these people who are associated with different dispensations have communication with Joseph Smith. He answered it was because Joseph Smith stood at the head of the dispensation of the fullness of times and all other dispensations, “all combined together to impart to him the keys of their several missions, that he might be fully competent, through the intelligence and aid afforded him through these several parties, to introduce the Gospel in all its fullness, namely, the dispensation of the fullness of times.”³³⁶

Continuing, John Taylor taught that the purpose of man being placed on the earth was to live the first commandment given to man, which was to multiply and replenish the earth. Near

³³⁴ See *Journal of Discourses*, 18:306.

³³⁵ See *Journal of Discourses*, 18:326.

³³⁶ See *Journal of Discourses*, 18:326.

the conclusion of his address, he said, “we now come to the sealing power.”³³⁷ He taught that if the husband of the sister who died remained faithful, he would have claim on her in eternity. They young man would be given the opportunity to marry in the temple with someone acting as proxy for him at an altar in the temple. He then declared, “The first commandment of Jehovah was for man to multiply and replenish the earth. Now the command is to build Temples.”³³⁸

On January 1, 1877, part of the St. George Temple was dedicated. Elder Wilford Woodruff gave a detailed account of that very important day. He wrote that they were gathered together at the St. George Temple, “for the purpose of Dedicating Certain Portions of it unto God that we might be prepared to Commence giving Endowments and Blessings and sealings unto the Saints.”³³⁹ Elder Brigham Young Jr. offered part of the dedicatory prayer. From an upper room in the temple he prayed, “we anticipate performing the ordinances of sealing women to Men Children to their Parents and man to his fellow man that the bond may reach unto heaven thy dwelling place” and that after the resurrection, “we may legally Claim the Relationship of Husbands and wives parents and Children and be Crowned Sons and Daughters of God and joint heirs with Jesus our Elder Brother.” Although he did not reference the vision or Elijah, he did reference sealings and linked this to the turning of hearts of the fathers to their children which later the leaders of the Church would state is possible because of the coming of Elijah. His prayer continued, “We ask thy Blessing upon the Alter which stands within this room, which we dedicate and Consecrate unto thee the Lord our God for the performance of the Cealing ordinance that the hearts of the fathers may be turned to the Children and the hearts of the Children to the fathers.”³⁴⁰ This served as the beginning when other leaders of the Church,

³³⁷ See *Journal of Discourses*, 18:334.

³³⁸ See *Journal of Discourses*, 18:334.

³³⁹ *Wilford Woodruff's Journal*, vol. 7:303.

³⁴⁰ *Wilford Woodruff's Journal*, vol. 7:315.

besides Brigham Young and Orson Pratt, began to preach from the pulpits the vision of Jesus Christ, Moses, Elias, and Elijah to Joseph Smith.

Teaching of Doctrine and Covenants 110 and Temple Ordinances

The St. George Temple differed from the other temples the Saints had previously built, in that it allowed the keys of Elijah to be fully used, which led to Doctrine and Covenants 110 being discussed more. At the St. George Temple dedication, Brigham Young was not feeling well because of rheumatism in his feet, so he had to be carried about the temple in a chair. At the conclusion of the dedicatory prayers, he rose to address the people gathered at the temple. He made reference to the uniqueness of the temple when he declared, “We that are here are enjoying a privilege that we have no knowledge of any other people Enjoying since the days of Adam. Brethren and Sisters do you understand this? It seems a great many of the people know nothing about it.”³⁴¹ The lack of understanding among the Saints could be the reason why there will be an increased teaching about the vision of Jesus Christ, Moses, Elias, and Elijah and how it related to the ordinances of the temple. There was something that set the St. George Temple apart from all previous temples since Adam. Ordinances that had never been performed before, that are associated with the 1836 vision, were performed in the St. George Temple.

In the same address, Brigham Young stated the purpose of the initial revelations given to Joseph Smith: “We as Latter Day Saints have been laboring for over forty years and the revelations given us in the first were to establish the kingdom of gathering the Saints, Building Temples, and organizing the people as the family of heaven here on the Earth.” He then stated what made the Kirtland Temple different, which was the first temple built by the Latter-day Saints, from the St. George Temple. Brigham Young said they built a “Temple in Kirtland but

³⁴¹ *Wilford Woodruff's Journal*, vol. 7:316.

we had no basement in it nor a font or preparations to give Endowments for the living or the dead. It was left by the Saints they going to Missouri.”³⁴² Everything about the vision, from its purpose to its involvement with temple ordinances, was learned gradually. At this point, Brigham Young knew there needed to be endowments for the dead performed, which had never been done since the beginnings of the Church. Perhaps it was the endowment for the dead that many knew nothing about. Brigham Young declared, “Now we have a Temple which will all be finished in a few days and of which there is enough Completed to Commence work therein which has not been done since the days of Adam that we have any knowledge of.”³⁴³ Brigham Young did not specify what that work was.

Without referencing the 1836 vision, Brigham Young used phraseology that was similar to Doctrine and Covenants 110. He declared his desire for the temple when he said, where “are the Eyes and hearts of this people? [Where] is their interest for their own salvation and that of their fore fathers? We Enjoy privileges that are Enjoyed by no one [Else] on the face of the Earth. Supposing we were awake to this thing [namely] the salvation of the human family this house would be [Crowded] as we hope it will be from Monday morning until Saturday night.”³⁴⁴ He asked the assembly what the dead would say if they could communicate with them. He answered, “Why if they had the power the vary thunders of heaven would be in our Ears if we could but realize the importance of the work we are [engaged] in.”³⁴⁵ Brigham Young then made this poignant statement, “Can the Fathers be saved without us? No. Can we be saved without them? No.”³⁴⁶

³⁴² *Wilford Woodruff's Journal*, vol. 7:316-17.

³⁴³ *Wilford Woodruff's Journal*, vol. 7:317.

³⁴⁴ *Wilford Woodruff's Journal*, vol. 7:317.

³⁴⁵ *Wilford Woodruff's Journal*, vol. 7:317.

³⁴⁶ *Wilford Woodruff's Journal*, vol. 7:317.

On January 9, 1877, the first baptisms for the dead were performed in the St. George Temple. Two days later on January 11, 1877, Wilford Woodruff recorded in his journal, “today was the first day in which Endowments were given in the Temple at St. George. We gave Endowments for 63 for the living and 10 for the dead Total 73.”³⁴⁷ This would be the first time endowments for the dead had ever been performed in the Church.³⁴⁸ Wilford Woodruff spent almost every day in the temple after its dedication participating in ordinance work for the dead.

Orson Pratt spoke at a meeting at Parowan and Cedar City on Wednesday, March 27, 1877. In his discourse he spoke about the Saints receiving blessings and knowledge from the Lord line upon line. He also spoke about the uniqueness of the temple in their present time. This is an example of how Doctrine and Covenants 110 was being referenced and taught as leaders linked Section 110 to temple ordinances. As reported in the *Deseret News*, Orson Pratt “said there were certain blessings which could not be received, except during the poverty of the Saints, unless it was in a temple. The Endowment House in which we had officiated in the ordinances was only temporary; but now it was no longer acceptable for that purpose, for our condition was such as to make it imperative on our part to build temples.”³⁴⁹ Again the emphasis was on the importance of their current temples and the blessings received in them; blessings that only could be received in a temple. Elder Pratt stated that greater blessing were received in the Nauvoo Temple than were received in the Kirtland Temple. The Saints were to look forward to receiving greater blessings in the St. George Temple.

After discussing the temple, Orson Pratt referred to the 1836 vision. The editor of the *Deseret News* wrote, “Bro. Pratt here referred to page 369 of the new edition of the Doctrine and

³⁴⁷ *Wilford Woodruff's Journal*, vol. 7:321.

³⁴⁸ Bennett, “Line Upon Line, Precept upon Precept,” 39. At a conference in Logan, Utah, in reference to the St. George Temple, Orson Pratt declared, “blessings have been administered in that Temple, that were totally unknown in the two former Temples, namely, endowments for the dead” (*Journal of Discourses*, 19:19).

³⁴⁹ *Deseret News*, (April 18, 1877), 170.

Covenants, which contained a record of what was seen and heard at that time. Referred to the vision that Joseph had, in which prophet Moses appeared to him, revealing and bestowing on him the keys of the gathering, this being the dispensation when scattered Israel would be gathered together from the four quarters of the earth, which had never before been done.” He continued, “After this Elias appeared to him, committing the gospel of the dispensation of Abraham, saying that in us and our seed all the generations after us should be blessed. After this vision had closed, another glorious vision burst upon them, when Elijah stood before them, saying, ‘Behold the time has fully come,’ &c.”³⁵⁰

Orson Pratt gave another meaning for the priesthood and temple ordinances and the purpose of Section 110. He taught, “The Lord has given us the high priesthood and the ordinances pertaining to it, and without which no man could look on the face of God and live; that meant to converse with him face to face. Moses sought to sanctify the children of Israel in order that they might be prepared to behold the face of the Lord. But because they had not prepared themselves, they could not endure his presence.”³⁵¹ He also taught about the purpose of the keys and dispensations when he declared, “The dispensation of the fullness of times brought in all the keys and authorities and glories and promises made in all the former dispensations, concentrating them, as it were, in one, to bring about the union of all the former and [Latter-day] Saints, both of heaven and earth.” The union occurs because of the sealing keys of Elijah. Orson Pratt taught that as they had been faithful in building temples, God had increased blessing towards the Saints in number and magnitude. He asked the Saints if they should not now hope that the Lord would accept their present Temple and “also hope that in this house ordinances never before revealed might be administered?” As the leaders of the Mormon faith taught more

³⁵⁰ *Deseret News*, (April 18, 1877), 170.

³⁵¹ *Deseret News*, (April 18, 1877), 170.

about Section 110, the Saints gained a greater understanding of it, thus additional ordinances would for the first time be performed in the St. George Temple, namely endowments for the dead.

Orson Pratt taught about a pattern that was established in the early days of the Church regarding how truths were learned from the Lord and then how these truths were implemented in the Church. Orson Pratt's words gave light as to the pattern Doctrine and Covenants 110 followed in order to become canonized. On May 20, 1877, Orson Pratt spoke in a special conference in Logan. He opened his remarks by reading a passage from the Book of Mormon and then said the reason he read that passage was to, "Show the people more fully, or to impress upon their minds the way and manner in which the Lord deals with his people." He then declared that the Lord, "intends to instruct them little by little, here a little when it is needed and there a little when it is needed; giving them line upon line upon this subject when necessary, and there a line upon another subject, leading them along, step by step, just as a wise, careful parent would his little children, until they become instructed in every principle that would be for their good."³⁵² The scripture he quoted was from page 484 of the European edition of the Book of Mormon and was written by Mormon. Part of the scripture read, "And when they shall have received this, which is expedient that they should have first, to try their faith, and if it so be that they shall believe these things, then shall the greater things be manifest unto them" (3 Nephi 26:9).

Orson Pratt addressed the concern that "a great many have supposed that there must be a great lack on the part of the Latter-day Saints, because spiritual knowledge is not all the time being poured down from heaven, like a flood in their midst."³⁵³ The people had been murmuring

³⁵² *Journal of Discourses*, 19:9.

³⁵³ *Journal of Discourses*, 19:10.

that God had forsaken Zion, “saying, ‘Where are the revelations such as were given in the days of Joseph? The Lord then poured out upon us of his spirit continually; we then received record after record, book after book, etc.’”³⁵⁴ In response to this, Orson Pratt taught that the Lord will do things according to His time. At the beginning of the Restoration, the Bible and Book of Mormon were sufficient. Then the Lord “determined, still further, that there should be a sufficiency given from year to year, during the life-time of the Prophet Joseph, to know how to properly organize the Church.”³⁵⁵ These revelations are what were recorded in the Doctrine and Covenants. Orson Pratt continued, “these having been given as a pattern, for the commencement of the organization, the Lord has seen proper to withhold, for the time being, the giving of additional sacred records, that the Saints might show their faith.”³⁵⁶ He then taught the Saints that as they were obedient to what the Lord had given them, they would be given more.

Orson Pratt continued teaching the principle of this pattern of line upon line with the Saints living in the west. After living “in these mountains, that the Lord is about to ‘right up’ the people; and he has inspired him who presides over us, to organize us more fully.”³⁵⁷ This is because the Saints were willing to live by a higher way of life, such as living by the United Order. The more the Saints were obedient in living it, the more they would learn about and understand it. He then made this statement, “the organization is only perfect as far as the people are prepared to receive it, and no further.”³⁵⁸ The organization will progress a step at a time.

He explained that the future organization of the Church would “be a more perfect organization between the living and the dead of all former dispensations.”³⁵⁹ He taught that,

³⁵⁴ *Journal of Discourses*, 19:10.

³⁵⁵ *Journal of Discourses*, 19:10.

³⁵⁶ *Journal of Discourses*, 19:10.

³⁵⁷ *Journal of Discourses*, 19:12.

³⁵⁸ *Journal of Discourses*, 19:12.

³⁵⁹ *Journal of Discourses*, 19:13.

“every dispensation will be connected; and the last dispensation of the fullness of times will have given to them the keys and power, knowledge, and understanding, and revelations to know how to weld every link, in order that the entire chain may be completed and made perfect.”³⁶⁰ After this explanation he asked the question of why were they to build temples. He answered that it was for accomplishing this organization, where every dispensation would be connected. This could only be accomplished by the keys and knowledge gained from the revelation now contained in Doctrine and Covenants 110.

The teaching about the pattern of line upon line continued to be taught by Orson Pratt regarding the temple. The Saints, he said, were told by the Lord to move from New York to Ohio where He would “bestow upon his servants and people a great endowment,”³⁶¹ one that had not been known up to that time. At Kirtland the Saints built a temple and even at that time, “the Lord did not see proper to reveal all the ordinances of the Endowments, such as we now understand. He revealed little by little.” In the Kirtland Temple, “no rooms were prepared for washings; no special place prepared for the anointing, such you understand, and such as you comprehend at the period of the history of the Church!”³⁶² The administration of the ordinances in the Kirtland Temple, “were revealed, little by little, corresponding with what I have already been saying, that the Lord does not give the fullness at once.”³⁶³

Without mentioning Doctrine and Covenants 110, Orson Pratt taught that the object of the temples was, “to connect the children to the fathers: it is to bring about an organization between the living and the dead.”³⁶⁴ Near the conclusion of his talk he declared to the people that with time they will have temples, “with a great many things contained in them which we now

³⁶⁰ *Journal of Discourses*, 19:13.

³⁶¹ *Journal of Discourses*, 19:16.

³⁶² *Journal of Discourses*, 19:16.

³⁶³ *Journal of Discourses*, 19:16.

³⁶⁴ *Journal of Discourses*, 19:18-19.

have not; for with them, as with all other things, the Lord begins little by little; he does not reveal everything all at once.” He continued, “He gave the pattern of these things in Kirtland, Ohio, as the beginning.”³⁶⁵ Why was there progression of ordinances in each temple, such as rooms for washing in the Nauvoo Temple when there were none in Kirtland? Orson Pratt declared, “because we had greater experience, and were prepared for greater things.”³⁶⁶

Orson Pratt gave a final insight into this pattern of progression. The Kirtland Temple did not have a baptismal font where baptisms for the dead were performed, yet every temple after the Kirtland Temple would have one. Why not? “Because that principle was not revealed.” The Nauvoo Temple was more advanced than the Kirtland Temple, and the St. George Temple was more advanced than the Nauvoo Temple. In relation to the St. George Temple, Orson Pratt proclaimed, “Blessings have been administered in that Temple, that were totally unknown in the two former Temples, namely, endowments for the dead.”³⁶⁷

John Taylor also taught about the pattern that was followed in relation to temples and Elijah. On July 29, 1877, he taught in the new Tabernacle that they have been organizing Stakes of Zion and “placing things in order under the direction of President Young and Council.” He then asked, “What order is that? The order given by the revelations of God for the guidance of his people, not of man nor by men, but by the will of God: a pattern of things in the heavenly world. That is the thing that is now being introduced here among the Saints. Why are we building Temples here? Because it is part of our mission.”³⁶⁸ He went on to explain that the mission was to be saviors on mount Zion, or in other words to go to the temple and perform temple ordinances for those who have died, who cannot perform them for themselves. He stated

³⁶⁵ *Journal of Discourses*, 19:19.

³⁶⁶ *Journal of Discourses*, 19:19.

³⁶⁷ *Journal of Discourses*, 19:19.

³⁶⁸ *Journal of Discourses*, 19:81.

that when a person receives the Gospel, is baptized and received the reception of the Holy Ghost, “the first thing that exists among the people is the feeling to go to Zion. A feeling of that kind universally prevails. Where did it come from? It comes through the administering of Elijah to Joseph Smith, and through the things that he imparted to him, and is one of the dispensations which is embodied in the dispensation of the fullness of times.”³⁶⁹

The Death of Brigham Young and the Continued Teaching of Doctrine and Covenants 110

Brigham Young passed away in Salt Lake City on August 29, 1877. Before his death he saw the completion of the St. George Temple and witnessed and participated in proxy temple ordinances for the dead, including endowments for the dead. After his death more light continued to be shed upon Doctrine and Covenants 110 and its connection with saving ordinances for the dead performed in temples. In October 1880, John Taylor was sustained as the third President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

After the death of Brigham Young, Church leaders continued to teach from Doctrine and Covenants 110 and the focus on performing temple ordinances continued. Wilford Woodruff spoke in the new tabernacle in Salt Lake City on September 16, 1877, about the importance of performing temple ordinances for those who have died. He shared a witness of the importance of temple ordinances for the dead:

I will here say, before closing, that two weeks before I left St. George, the spirits of the dead gathered around me, wanting to know why we did not redeem them. Said they, “You have had the use of the Endowment House for a number of years, and yet nothing has ever been done for us. We laid the foundation of the government you now enjoy, and we never apostatized from it, but we remained true to it and were faithful to God.” These were the signers of the Declaration of Independence, and they waited on me for two days and two nights. I thought it very singular, that notwithstanding so much work had been done, and yet nothing had been done for them. The thought never entered my heart, from the fact, I suppose, that heretofore our minds were reaching after our more immediate

³⁶⁹ *Journal of Discourses*, 19:82.

friends and relatives. I straightway went into the baptismal font and called upon brother McCallister to baptize me for the signers of the Declaration of Independence, and fifty other eminent men, making one hundred in all, including John Wesley, Columbus, and others.³⁷⁰

Before John Taylor was sustained as president, he gave an address where he directly connected Section 110 with the temple. This discourse was also evidence of what the current understanding of Section 110 was by the Church leaders and what they were teaching about it in public settings. On October 21, 1877, he spoke in the Ogden Tabernacle about the organization of the Church and the organization of the priesthood. He asked who knew of the different offices and the rights and privileges of the priesthood before God revealed them. He answered that no one did because, “these are things that were not originated by man, they came to us through revelation from God, and hence we are indebted to the Lord for them, and also for all the knowledge we possess in relation to them, and also for all the knowledge we possess in relation to them.”³⁷¹ He emphasized the way of learning and gaining knowledge in the Mormon faith is by revelation.

John Taylor next asked, “Who taught us anything about the Gathering, and why are we here to-day? What brought us here, and under what influence did we come, and by what principle were we united as we find ourselves at the present time?”³⁷² John Taylor then connected the gathering with Section 110 by stating that those who were familiar with Church history knew that the Saints had built a temple in Kirtland and that while Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery were in their proper places in the Temple, “there were several important personages appeared to them, and gave unto them several keys, powers and privileges, and that among these heavenly beings was Moses, who represented what is termed the Gathering

³⁷⁰ *Journal of Discourses*, 19:229.

³⁷¹ *Journal of Discourses*, 19:238-39.

³⁷² *Journal of Discourses*, 19:239-40.

dispensation. His mission to earth was to restore the keys of the Gathering dispensation, which should gather Israel from the four quarters of the earth, and also restore the ten tribes.”³⁷³ He said that those who have not read this account can read it for themselves in the new edition of the Doctrine and Covenants, meaning the 1876 edition, and he said, “I refer you to it and recommend you to read it.”³⁷⁴ John Taylor stated that Moses conferred these keys and authority upon Joseph Smith and Joseph Smith conferred these keys upon the Twelve Apostles and others.

John Taylor then spent some time giving evidence for the spirit of gathering in the Church. He taught that as soon as people were baptized and confirmed members of the Church, they wished “to gather to Zion; and no one that remains faithful to the cause ever remained satisfied until he did gather with the Saints.”³⁷⁵ He said that, “the spirit of Temple-building comes in the very same way as that of gathering together, and this accounts for our desire to assist in erecting Temples.”³⁷⁶ John Taylor quoted from the prophecy of Malachi concerning the coming of Elijah (Malachi 4:5-6). After reading the reference he asked, “Did Elijah hold these particular keys of the priesthood? He did. And did he confer them upon Joseph Smith? Yes, he did. An account of this too will be found in the reference I have already given you. Did the Latter-day Saints generally manifest any particular desire to build Temples before the prophet Elijah came? No; but ever since this desire and feeling has existed in the minds of the Latter-day Saints.”³⁷⁷

The process of understanding Section 110 and implementing its doctrines into the Church was line upon line. After connecting the temple ordinances to Section 110, John Taylor stated that they could administer ordinances the Lord had revealed to them. The Lord commanded that

³⁷³ *Journal of Discourses*, 19:239.

³⁷⁴ *Journal of Discourses*, 19:239.

³⁷⁵ *Journal of Discourses*, 19:239.

³⁷⁶ *Journal of Discourses*, 19:239.

³⁷⁷ *Journal of Discourses*, 19:240.

the revealed ordinances “must be done in Temples built to his name. If we were to turn over today these buildings to the religious world, they would know no more how to use them legitimately, than a baby would know what to do with algebra; neither would we had not the Lord taught us by revelation from heaven.” He continued, “The Gospel brings life and immortality to light; it places us in communion with the heavens, the Priesthood there and the Priesthood here working harmoniously together, we being taught of them are enabled to accomplish what the Lord required of us.”

Because of the public teaching of Doctrine and Covenants 110, by 1880 it appears that the Saints were well acquainted with Section 110 and its relation to temple ordinances. In the *Deseret News*, a reporter was able to view in the evening by gaslight, the almost completed Salt Lake Assembly Hall. What impressed the reporter the most were the frescoes painted on the ceiling. The painter was William C. Morris. “They were done under the direction of Supt. Grow and with the approval of President Taylor.”³⁷⁸ The ceiling was divided into sixteen panels. In one of the panels was a painting of Joseph Smith receiving the Melchizedek Priesthood from Peter, James, and John. In another panel was a painting of John the Baptist giving the Aaronic Priesthood to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery. “The next and largest panels are in the main central division, and contain on the north side the Salt Lake and Logan Temples, and on the south side those at the St. George and Manti. Over the temple are representations of the Savior, Moses, Elijah and Elias.”³⁷⁹ Section 110 and its connection to temple ordinances were so well accepted and understood by the Saints, that now their art reflected it.

³⁷⁸ *Deseret News*, (April 7, 1880), 152.

³⁷⁹ *Deseret News*, (April 7, 1880), 152.

1880 Edition of the Doctrine and Covenants Becomes Canonized

In 1878, Orson Pratt went to England to print a new edition of the Book of Mormon on electrotype plates. While there, he proposed to the leadership of the Church to print the new version of the Doctrine and Covenants from electrotype plates as well. President John Taylor, president of the Quorum of the Twelve, agreed to the proposal, but asked Orson Pratt to include cross references and explanatory notes.³⁸⁰ The new version was first printed in England and available by mid 1879. It was later printed in Utah in 1880 and in October, of that same year, it was canonized.

The new edition of the Doctrine of Covenants was voted upon in a General Conference of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints on October 10, 1880.

President GEO. Q. CANNON said: I hold in my hand the Book of Doctrine and Covenants and also the book The Pearl of Great Price, which books contain revelations of God. In Kirtland, the Doctrine and Covenants in its original form, as first printed, was submitted to the officers of the Church and the members of the Church to vote upon. As there have been additions made to it by the publishing of revelations which were not contained in the original edition, it has been deemed wise to submit these books with their contents to the Conference, to see whether the Conference will vote to accept the books and their contents as from God, and binding upon us as a people and as a Church.

President JOSEPH F. SMITH said, I move that we receive and accept the revelations contained in these books, as revelations from God to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and to all the world.

The motion was seconded and sustained by unanimous vote of the whole Conference.

The motion was seconded and sustained by unanimous vote of the whole Conference.³⁸¹

What does it mean to have the new revelations canonized? Elder James E. Talmage explained the importance of the canon this way, “The term canon, now generally current, suggests not books that are merely credible, authentic or even inspired, but such books as are

³⁸⁰ See the writings of Woodford, *Studies in Scripture, Vol. 1: The Doctrine and Covenants*, 15. (Capitalization of names retained.)

³⁸¹ *Journal History of the Church*, October 10, 1880, 4.

recognized as authoritative guides in profession and practice. The term is instructive in its derivation. Its Greek original, *kanon*, signified a straight measuring rod, and hence it came to mean a standard of comparison, a rule, a test, as applied to moral subjects as well as to material objects.”³⁸² In reference to the canon of scripture as seen by the Saints, Elder Talmage stated, “Current revelation is equally plain with that of former days in predicting the yet future manifestations of God through this appointed channel. The canon of scripture is still open; many lines, many precepts, are yet to be added; revelation, surpassing in importance and glorious [fullness] any that has been recorded, is yet to be given to the Church and declared to the world.”³⁸³ As has been shown, although the canon of scripture is considered open by the Mormon faith, it is still a process for a revelation or vision to achieve the status of canon.

In relation to the canonization of Section 137 and 138, Robert L. Millett explained that these revelations, “changed in status: they moved from *scripture*—that which is given by the power of the Spirit and represents the will, mind, word, and voice of the Almighty (D&C 68:4)—to *canonized scripture*. They thereby became binding upon the Saints. Wise teachers and gospel students had read and taught from them before, but now *all* Saints were expected to conform their study, teachings, and their lives with the doctrine set forth within them.”³⁸⁴ This explanation also stands for the new revelations that were canonized in the 1880 edition of the Doctrine and Covenants. The doctrines were taught and the revelations were true and powerful, but after they were canonized, the revelations did become binding on the Saints. Now they were expected to live by the truths taught by them.

³⁸² James E. Talmage, *Articles of Faith* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1981), 216.

³⁸³ Talmage, 281.

³⁸⁴ Unpublished Paper, Robert L. Millett, “The Closed Canon: Blessings, Challenges, and Prospects,” October 28, 2006.

In the text for Doctrine and Covenants 110, there essentially were no changes from the 1876 edition except for a few minor grammatical corrections. The major change in the 1880 edition was that Orson Pratt added cross references as directed by John Taylor. The minor grammatical corrections were as follows. Orson Pratt pluralized one word in the heading of the section. In the chapter heading Orson Pratt changed the word “vision” to “visions” so that the heading read, “*Visions manifested to Joseph, the Seer, and Oliver Cowdery in the Kirtland Temple, April 3rd, 1836.*”³⁸⁵ In verse eight, “holy temple” was italicized in the 1876 edition and he change it to a normal font. In verse eleven, “Ten Tribes” was changed to, “ten tribes.”

The cross references to Section 110 were a significant addition to the 1880 edition. The many cross references Orson Pratt connected to Section 110 demonstrated his understanding of the significance of the 1836 vision and his knowledge of the scriptures. It also demonstrated that Section 110 was an anticipated and necessary piece to the doctrinal canon of the Doctrine and Covenants. Although it was inserted over forty years after the 1836 vision occurred, it was already woven into the fabric of the restored gospel; it came with a history. The footnotes also give greater insight to perhaps how it was viewed and taught in that time period among the Saints. Section 110 was cross referenced to other revelations canonized at the same time, in the new edition, and also to sections that were previously in place, showing that Section 110 had become an integrated part of doctrines and practices of the Church. This work of Orson Pratt grounded Section 110 to the history and doctrine of the Church.

Doctrine and Covenants 110 began on page 404 in the 1880 edition. The following is how it appeared in the 1880 edition and the corresponding footnotes with their references are given as found in the 1880 edition.

³⁸⁵ Doctrine and Covenants, 1880 edition, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo Utah, 404.

1. The ^avail was taken from our minds, and the eyes of our understanding were opened.

Footnote “a” cross referenced to Isa. 25:7 which reads, “And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations.” The veil over the nations of the earth will be lifted by the ordinances of the temple, meaning they will be able to see the Lord. Being able to see the Lord was emphasized by Orson Pratt with the next verse and its corresponding cross references.

2. We ^bsaw the Lord standing upon the breastwork of the pulpit, before us, and under his feet was a paved work of pure gold in color like amber.

Footnote, “b” stated, “see o, sec. - 50.” Footnote “o” was found with Doctrine and Covenants 50:45 which reads, “And the day cometh that you shall hear my voice and see me, and know that I am.” Footnote “o” cross referenced with Doctrine and Covenants 35:21 which reads, “For they will hear my voice, and shall see me, and shall not be asleep, and shall abide the day of my coming, for they shall be purified, even as I am pure.” One of the purposes of the temple was to hear the voice of the Lord, feel of His presence, and to some, see Him.

3. His eyes were as a flame of fire, the hair of his head was white like the pure snow, his countenance shone above the brightness of the sun, and his voice was as the sound of rushing of great waters, even the voice of Jehovah, saying—
4. I am the first and the last, I am he who liveth, I am he who was slain, I am your ^cadvocate with the Father.

Footnote “c” stated “see c, Sec. 45.” Footnote “c” was found in verse 3 of Section 45. In verse three there was also a footnote on the word advocate that cross referenced to verse 4 and 5 of the same section so those verses are also included. “3. Listen to him who is the advocate with the Father, who is pleading your cause before him, 4. Saying, Father, behold the sufferings and death of him who did no sin, in whom thou wast well pleased; behold the blood of thy Son which was shed—the blood of him whom thou gavest that thyself might be glorified; 5. Wherefore,

Father, spare these my brethren that believe on my name, that they may come unto me and have everlasting life.”

5. Behold, your sins are forgiven you, you are clean before me, therefore lift up your heads and rejoice,
6. Let the hearts of your brethren rejoice, and let the hearts of all my people rejoice, who have, with their might, built this house to my name,
7. For behold, I have accepted this house, and my name shall be here, and I will manifest myself to my people in mercy in this house,
8. Yea, I will ^dappear unto my servants, and speak unto them with mine own voice, if my people will keep my commandments, and do not pollute this holy house,

Footnote, “d” stated, “see o, Sec. 50.” This was previously discussed with footnote “b” found above.

9. Yea the hearts of thousands and tens of thousands shall greatly rejoice in consequence of the blessings which shall be poured out, and the ^eendowment with which my servants have been endowed in this house;

Footnote “e” stated, “see x, Sec 38.” In Section 38, “x” was associated with verse 32 which reads, “Wherefore, for this cause I gave unto you the commandment that ye should go to the Ohio; and there I will give unto you my law; and there you shall be ^xendowed with power from on high;” Footnote “x” stated, “39:15.” Doctrine and Covenants 39:15 reads, “And inasmuch as my people shall assemble themselves to the Ohio, I have kept in store a blessing such as is not known among the children of men, and it shall be poured forth upon their heads. And from thence men shall go forth into all nations.”

10. And the fame of this house shall spread to foreign lands, and this is the beginning of the blessing which shall be poured out upon the heads of my people. Even so. Amen.
11. After this vision closed, the heavens were again opened unto us, and Moses appeared before us, and committed unto us the ^fkeys of the gathering of Israel from the four parts of the earth, and the leading of the ^gten tribes from the land of the north.

Footnote “f” stated, “45:43, 133:13.” Doctrine and Covenants 45:43 reads, “And the remnant shall be gathered unto this place. . . .” Doctrine and Covenants 133:13 reads, “And let them who be of Judah flee unto Jerusalem, unto the mountains of the Lord’s house.” Joseph Smith taught that the gathering place was the temple. Footnote “g” stated, “Keys given to this kingdom, through the Prophet, to lead the ten tribes.”

12. After this, ^hElias appeared, and committed the dispensation of the gospel of Abraham, saying, that in us, and ⁱour seed, all generations after us should be blessed.

Footnote “h” stated, “see g, Sec. 27.” Footnote “g” was associated with verse 6 of Sections 27 which reads, “And also with ^sElias, to whom I have committed the keys of bringing to pass the restoration of all things, spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began, concerning the last days:” Footnote “g” stated, “Ver7. 76:100. 77:9, 14. 110:12.” Doctrine and Covenants 27:7 reads, “And also John the son of Zacharias, which Zacharias he (Elias) visited and gave promise that he should have a son, and his name should be John, and he should be filled with the spirit of Elias.” Doctrine and Covenants 76:100 reads, “These are they who say they are some of one and some of another—some of Christ and some of John, and some of Moses, and some of Elias, and some of Esaias, and some of Isaiah, and some of Enoch. . . .” Doctrine and Covenants 77:9 reads, “Q.—What are we to understand by the angel ascending from the east, Revelation 7th chap. And 2nd verse? A.—We are to understand that the angel ascending from the east, is he to whom is given the seal of the living God, over the twelve tribes of Israel; wherefore he crieth unto the four angels having the everlasting gospel, saying, hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads; and if you will receive it, this is Elias which was to come to gather together the tribes of Israel and restore all things.” Doctrine and Covenants 77:14 reads, “Q.—What are we to

understand by the little book which was eaten by John, as mentioned in the 10th chapter of Revelations? A.—We are to understand that it was a mission, and an ordinance, for him to gather the tribes of Israel; behold, this is Elias; who, as it is written, must come and restore all things.”

Footnote “I” stated, “124: 57,58.” Doctrine and Covenants 124:57 reads, “For this anointing have I put upon his head, that his blessing shall also be put upon the head of his posterity after him. . . .” Doctrine and Covenants 124:58 reads, “And as I said unto Abraham concerning the kindreds of the earth, even so I say unto my servant Joseph, in thee and in thy [footnote D&C 110:12.] seed shall the kindred of the earth be blessed.” This verse is actually cross referenced back to Doctrine and Covenants 110:12.

13. After this vision had closed, another great and glorious vision burst upon us, for ^JElijah the prophet, who was taken to heaven without tasting death, stood before us, and said—

14. Behold, the time has fully come, which was spoken by the mouth of Malachi, testifying that he (Elijah) should be sent before the great and dreadful day of the Lord come,

15. To turn the hearts of the ^kfathers to the children, and the children to the fathers, lest the whole earth be smitten with a curse.

Footnote “j” stated, “see a, Sec. 2.” Footnote “a” was in verse one which states: “Behold I will reveal unto you the Priesthood, by the hand of ^aElijah the prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord;” (Doctrine and Covenants 2:1). Footnote “a” in verse 2 stated: “27:9. 35:4. 98:16, 17. 110:13, 14. 128:17. 133:55.” Doctrine and Covenants 27:9 was as follows: “And also Elijah, unto whom I have committed the keys of the power of turning the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to the fathers, that the whole earth may not be smitten with a curse. . . .” Doctrine and Covenants 35:4 is written as follows: “Thou art blessed, for thou shalt do great things. Behold thou wast sent forth, even as John, to prepare the way before me, and before Elijah which should come, and thou knewest it not.” Doctrine and Covenants 98:16-17 was as follows: “Therefore renounce war and proclaim peace,

and seek diligently to turn the hearts of the children to their fathers, and the hearts of the fathers to the children; 17. And again, the hearts of the Jews unto the prophets, and the prophets unto the Jews, lest I come and smite the whole earth with a curse, and all flesh be consumed before me.” Doctrine and Covenants 128:17 was as follows: “And again, in connection with this quotation, I will give you a quotation from one of the prophets, who had his eye fixed on the restoration of the Priesthood, the glories to be revealed in the last days, and in an especial manner this most glorious of all subjects belonging to the everlasting gospel, viz, the baptism for the dead; for Malachi says, last chapter, verses 5th and 6th, ‘Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord; and he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.’” Doctrine and Covenants 133:55 was as follows: “And from Moses to Elijah; and from Elijah to John, who were with Christ in his resurrection, and the holy apostles, with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, shall be in the presence of the Lamb.”

Footnote “k” stated, “see c, Sec 2.” Footnote “c” is found in verse 2 which was written as follows, “And he shall plant in the hearts of the children the promise made to the fathers, and the hearts of the children shall turn to their fathers;” (Doctrine and Covenants 2:2). Footnote “c” stated, “27:9. 110:15. 128:17.” Section 27:9 was written as follows, “And also Elijah, unto whom I have committed the keys of the power of turning the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to the fathers, that the whole earth may not be smitten with a curse:” Section 128:17 reads, “And again, in connection with this quotation, I will give you a quotation from one of the prophets, who had his eye fixed on the restoration of the Priesthood, the glories to be revealed in the last days, and in an especial manner this most glorious of all subjects belonging to the everlasting gospel, viz., the baptism for the dead; for Malachi says, last chapter,

verses 5th and 6th: Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord; and he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.

16. Therefore the keys of this dispensation are committed into your hands, and by this ye may know that the great and dreadful day of the Lord is ¹near, even at the doors.

Footnote “1” stated, “see e, Sec. 1.” Footnote “e” was associated with verse 12. Doctrine and Covenants 1:12 was written as follows: “Prepare ye, prepare ye for that which is to come, for the Lord is ^enigh;” Footnote “e” stated, “1:35-36. 29:9-11. 33: 3, 17, 18. 34:6-9, 12. 35:15, 16, 26, 27. 36:8. 38:8. 39:20, 21, 23, 24. 41:4. 43:17-19, 28-31. 45:36-50, 56-61. 49:6, 7, 23-25, 28. 51:20. 54:10. 61:38, 39. 63:32-35, 53, 54. 64:23, 24. 65:5, 6. 68:11, 35. 77:12. 78:20-22. 84:118, 119. 87:8. 88:86-110. 97:22-26. 99:5. 101:3, 22-37, 64-66. 104: 59. 110:16. 112:24, 34. 124: 8, 124. 130:14-17. 133:2, 3, 10, 11, 17-25, 36-56.”

Due to the amount of cross references given to this verse all of the cross references will not be printed out in this thesis. Most of the cross references are about the Saints preparing for the Lord’s Second Coming. There are a few to make note of which mention temples specifically. All of the cross references that mention the temple were received before the building of the Kirtland Temple. Doctrine and Covenants 36:8 states, “I am Jesus Christ, the Son of God; wherefore, gird up your loins and I will suddenly come to my temple, Even so. Amen.” This revelation was given on January 2, 1831. Doctrine and Covenants 101:22-23, which was received on December 16, 1833 states, “Behold, it is my will, that all they who call on my name, and worship me according to mine everlasting gospel, should gather together, and stand in holy places; [v. 23] And prepare for the revelation which is to come, when the veil of the covering of

my temple, in my tabernacle, which hideth the earth, shall be taken off, and all flesh shall see me together.”

Doctrine and Covenants Section 104 is of interest because it deals with the United Order, which was being lived before the building of the temple. This is the same pattern the Church was involved in Brigham Young’s day; living the United Order before the completion of temples. This Section was received on April 23, 1834. The verse Orson Pratt cross referenced in Doctrine and Covenants Section was verse 59: “For the purpose of building up my church and kingdom on the earth, and to prepare my people for the time when I shall dwell with them, which is nigh at hand.” Doctrine and Covenants Section 133 was received on November 3, 1831. The verse that mentions the temple specifically is verse 2, “The Lord who shall suddenly come to his temple; the Lord who shall come down upon the world with a curse to judgment; yea, upon all the nations that forget God, and upon all the ungodly among you.” The Saints not only looked forward to the Savior’s Second Coming, but to His coming to His temples as well.

Continued Teaching of Doctrine and Covenants 110

After the revelation was canonized, it did not take long for Section 110 to be taught and connected with Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery in the Kirtland Temple. On January 16, 1881, Wilford Woodruff recorded in his journal, “W Woodruff [spoke] one hour. Showed By Revelation that Joseph Smith had received all the Keys of the Aaronic & [Melchizedek] Priesthood for the last dispensation from John the Baptist & Peter James and John *Moses, Elias, & Elijah*, And had sealed all these Keys upon the Heads of the Twelve Apostles And that the Prophet had laid all these Responsibilities upon the Shoulders of the Twelve Apostles to bear off this Kingdom in all the world.”³⁸⁶

³⁸⁶ *Wilford Woodruff’s Journal*, vol. 8:5-6, emphasis added.

On May 18, 1884, at the time of the dedication of the Logan Temple, John Taylor spoke. In this address John Taylor linked Doctrine and Covenants 110 with the temple and the ordinances performed in the temples. This address was also an example of how Section 110 was being integrated among the people and the work in the temple. It also is an example of how the leadership of the Church was continuing to learn more about Section 110 and its relation with the temple. John Taylor stated:

In the Kirtland Temple Jesus appeared, and Moses, Elias and Elijah appeared also, and all these things that I have read to you and spoken about, transpired on that occasion. Communication was opened between the heavens and the earth, between the Priesthood in the heavens and the Priesthood on the earth, and the Keys of that Priesthood imparted to Joseph and others on the earth. It was left to those in this world to keep open those communications, to see that the road was clear, and that there was no barrier interposed between earth and the heavens, and to lead forward and progress in other principles yet to be developed; we operating, in our part here in their behalf, and in behalf of their children who are our fathers; while they, in their exalted position, are operating for them and us in the heavens; thus forming a connecting link between the Priesthood on the earth and the Priesthood in the heavens.³⁸⁷

John Taylor discussed the pattern of learning line upon line and related it to learning about the priesthood and the work in the temple. This also serves as an example of the learning about and teaching of Section 110. In relation to Joseph Smith administering the endowment to a select few, John Taylor stated, “At first these things were only partially made known to him, and as they partially developed he called upon the Twelve”³⁸⁸ and they began practicing the ordinance of baptism for the dead. Why are things learned little by little? John Taylor perhaps gave insight to the push of the leadership of the Church to have the Saints live on a higher spiritual level, such as the reformation movement and living the Order of Enoch when he stated, “The Priesthood has been restored, with which is connected all the blessings that ever were associated with any people among the face of the earth; and if we know to-day so little in regard

³⁸⁷ *Journal of Discourses*, 25:184-85.

³⁸⁸ *Journal of Discourses*, 25:183.

to the things of God, and the principles associated with eternity, with the heavens and with the angels, it is because we have not improved our privileges as we might, nor lived up to those principles which God has revealed unto us, and because we are not yet prepared for further advancement.”³⁸⁹

In reference to discussing the events of the Kirtland Temple, John Taylor stated, “Jesus appeared in that Temple, of which appearance you will find a description in the Book of Doctrine and Covenants. (Section 110).³⁹⁰ The leadership of the Church grounded the purpose of the temple to the scriptures, the revealed word of God, and pointed the Saints to the source of direction of the work; the priesthood.

John Taylor then taught that Moses appeared he, “held the keys and authority of the gathering of the children of Israel, from the land of Egypt, in a former dispensation, so he was now sent to confer these said keys upon Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery.”³⁹¹ He asked the congregation why they were there in attendance at the dedication of the Logan Temple. He stated that it was because, “the keys of the gathering of Israel from the four quarters of the earth have been committed to Joseph Smith, and he has conferred those keys upon others that the gathering of Israel may be accomplished.”³⁹²

After the next visitor, Elias, John Taylor taught, “that the Priesthood began to be organized”³⁹³ and that, “things as they existed in the heavens again began to be introduced upon the earth.”³⁹⁴ John Taylor taught that the Lord “sent those several messengers holding those various keys that they might unlock the doors and place His servants in communication with the

³⁸⁹ *Journal of Discourses*, 25:178.

³⁹⁰ *Journal of Discourses*, 25:179.

³⁹¹ *Journal of Discourses*, 25:179.

³⁹² *Journal of Discourses*, 25:179.

³⁹³ *Journal of Discourses*, 25:180.

³⁹⁴ *Journal of Discourses*, 25:181.

heavenly Priesthood in the eternal worlds.”³⁹⁵ The delivered keys would be the means of the leadership of the Church and the saints to learn continue to learn, line upon line, about Section 110 and the temple.

With the final visitor, Elijah, John Taylor read the account of Elijah from Doctrine and Covenants 110. He asked what it meant and what was the purpose of the temple they had built? He answered, “It is because those keys were turned of which I have just read in your hearing.”³⁹⁶ What was the purpose to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the children to the fathers? He answered that God the Father, “is interested in their [the human family] welfare, in their prosperity, in their happiness, and in all that pertains to their exaltation in time and throughout the eternities that are to come.”³⁹⁷ In regards to those who have died without the gospel, John Taylor stated, “We are here to do a work connected with the redemption of the dead.”³⁹⁸ John Taylor stated that they all have not been obedient to the principles God has revealed and they all have not submitted their will to God, “yet God is introducing Temples and ordinances and blessings, and light, revelations and intelligence, to lift us up, to exalt us, that we may be a city set upon a hill that cannot be hid; that we may progress from intelligence to intelligence, from knowledge to knowledge, until we shall see as we are seen and know as we are known.”³⁹⁹ Doctrine and Covenants 110 and temples are interrelated and both are focused on salvation for the dead. Section 110 not only served as the precursor to other revelations becoming canonized, but a major part of the Church doctrine and practice in regard to salvation for the dead, is grounded to and rests upon this revelation. This was established because of what the leadership of the Church taught about Section 110.

³⁹⁵ *Journal of Discourses*, 25:181.

³⁹⁶ *Journal of Discourses*, 25:181.

³⁹⁷ *Journal of Discourses*, 25:181.

³⁹⁸ *Journal of Discourses*, 25:182.

³⁹⁹ *Journal of Discourses*, 25:185.

In December of 1898 the *New Improvement Era* ran an article on Oliver Cowdery. It was a letter written from his good friend Elder Samuel W. Richards. He wrote:

On April 3rd, 1836, he was favored, with the Prophet Joseph, to witness the marvelous manifestations which occurred in the Kirtland Temple, when they saw the Lord standing upon the breastwork of the pulpit, and received from Him the declaration that their sins were forgiven them, and that they were clean in His sight. Immediately after this, also appeared in succession Moses, Elias, and Elijah, each delivering up the keys and powers of their several missions and dispensations to Joseph and Oliver, and while standing in their presence declared the time had come for the turning of the hearts of the fathers to the children and the children to the fathers, lest the whole earth be smitten with a curse; and the keys of this dispensation were committed to them by the several administrators who had held them in former dispensations.⁴⁰⁰

Conclusion

The process the 1836 vision went through to become Doctrine and Covenants 110 and accepted as canonized scripture served as the example, if not a precedent, for how additional revelations in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints would become canonized. Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery both witnessed the 1836 vision. Although Joseph Smith did not publicly state that the vision occurred, as far as this author has researched, he taught about the importance of each visitor, the associated keys, and the associated doctrines of each. In the process of time, leaders of the Church taught more about the significance of Section 110, and the Saints began to learn and live by its doctrines in stages. The doctrines of Section 110 were practiced and lived by the Saints such as building temples and performing the necessary saving ordinances for themselves and for those who had died. This process demonstrated that the revelation and doctrines associated with it were first considered authority by the leadership and members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. After the revelation had been accepted, taught, and lived by, then it became canonized scripture. In the early twentieth century, Doctrine and Covenants 110 was referred to often in General Conference talks. By the end of the

⁴⁰⁰ Elder Samuel W. Richards, "Oliver Cowdery," *Improvement Era* (Salt Lake City, December 1898), 92-93.

twentieth century, temple work and the spirit of Elijah were a common association and the members of the Mormon faith regarded the section as canonized scripture from its reception on April 3, 1836. Yet as this thesis has demonstrated it took over forty years for the 1836 vision to become canonized as Section 110.

Latter-day Saints view the words of the Prophet and Apostles as the words of God, yet canonized scripture still stands on a higher plane. Canonization of a revelation or vision validates its authority, prominence, and doctrinal power. Where would The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints be today if the 1836 vision remained in an obscure corner of Church history? The 1836 vision, by being canonized, was elevated from obscure Church history to a central, core doctrine. By Doctrine and Covenants 110 becoming canonized, it paved the way for other visions and revelations, such as Sections 137 and 138, to journey through the same process.

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