



Type: Book Chapter

Visions in the Kirtland Temple/"Keys in Kirtland"

Author(s): Sharon Price Anderson

Source: *Praising the Prophet: Joseph Smith and the Restoration in History and Verse*

Published: Orem, UT; Time-Lines Etc., 2005

Pages: 50-54

Visions in the Kirtland Temple



In December 1832 the Lord commanded the Saints to build the first temple of the latter days. The design of the building was revealed to the First Presidency in vision. Construction began on the Kirtland Temple in June of 1833. The Saints were so poor that even obtaining tools was a challenge. Most available men worked on the construction while the women knitted, spun and sewed to provide clothing for them. Those who worked on the temple by day guarded it from threatening mobs at night. Crushed china and glassware was added to stucco for the exterior walls so they would glisten.

The temple was dedicated on Sunday, 27 March 1836. The dedicatory prayer is found in section 109 of the Doctrine and Covenants. This was a day of marvelous spiritual manifestations. Many beheld glorious visions and saw angels. A noise like a mighty wind filled the temple and a bright light, like a pillar of fire, rested upon the temple.³²

The next Sunday an afternoon worship service was held in the lower room of the temple. Following the administration of the sacrament, the canvas partition called the veil was lowered so Joseph and Oliver could pray in private. Joseph recorded that as they rose from prayer, “the veil was taken from our minds, and the eyes of our understanding were opened.”³³ The Lord, even Jehovah, appeared and accepted the temple, promising additional blessings. Other glorious visions followed. Moses appeared and conferred the keys of the gathering of Israel. Then Elias committed the “dispensation of the gospel of Abraham.”

Finally, Elijah stood before them and restored the sealing keys, declaring “the time has fully come... to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the children to the fathers.”³⁴ During Passover, the Jews traditionally set a place for this Old Testament prophet, who is to return as forerunner of the Messiah, and the door is opened to admit him. In 1836 the Passover was celebrated on the weekend of 3 April. Elijah returned, to the Kirtland temple, “on Easter Sunday, the second day of Passover, the day of the presentation of the firstfruits of the harvest.”³⁵

Keys in Kirtland

Glittering with glassware
gathered in poverty and
willingly ground, these walls
define a templed space,
God's dwelling place.
Where lately rushing winds
and flaming pillar
proclaimed His presence,
Saints and angels sang.

In this Sabbath hour
Joseph and Oliver rise
from solemn, private prayer.
Understanding opens and
the Lord appears, standing
on pavement gold as gleaming
mercy seat of Israel's ark.
Eyes burn with knowledge
broad and deep as eternity.
A voice like moving waters
speaks approvingly.

Other visions burst into view,
revealing order and authority
of bringing Israel home,
committing covenants
of Abraham and promised lands.

Prophets teach principles
and words of power
to unlock heaven's treasure—
kingdoms, thrones,
and precious stones.
Hearts will turn to
root and branch, sealed
in never-ending increase.

From this day, with angelic armies
we will sing and shout,
rejoicing in keys received and
blessings of exaltation's way!

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 (D&C 110:16).



I feel like shouting Hallelujah, all the time, when I think that I ever knew Joseph Smith, the Prophet whom the Lord raised up and ordained, and to whom he gave keys and power to build up the Kingdom of God on earth and sustain it. —Brigham Young³⁶