

# “Come, Let Us Go Up to the Mountain of the Lord”: The Salt Lake Temple Dedication

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THE SALT LAKE TEMPLE, SOME FORTY YEARS under construction, represented to the Saints in 1893 a literal fulfillment of Isaiah’s prophesy (2:2-3) regarding the temple in the mountains,<sup>1</sup> and many believed its dedication signaled the imminent commencement of the Millennial Era, an era which would witness the church’s return to Jackson County, Missouri, and the advent of the Savior. Thus, for the members present, the dedication of the Salt Lake temple constituted one of the most important events in the history of the world.

Due to the sacred nature of temple dedications, the church does not grant access to the official records of these events; however, by reading the diaries of Saints who participated in the Salt Lake temple dedication, one can almost attend the ceremonies vicariously. As viewed through the pages of the contemporary diarist, the dedication emerges as a spiritual event unparalleled since the dedication of the Kirtland, Ohio, House of

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1. For examples of church leaders teaching that the Salt Lake temple fulfilled Isaiah’s prophesy, see Orson Pratt, 10 Mar. 1872, *Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. (Liverpool, Eng.: F.D. Richards, 1855-86), 14:349; 15 June 1873, *Journal of Discourses* 16:80; Erastus Snow, 14 Sept. 1873, *Journal of Discourses* 16:202-203; George A. Smith, 18 Mar. 1855, *Journal of Discourses* 2:212-13; George Q. Cannon, 2 Nov. 1879, *Journal of Discourses* 21:264-65; also 3 Aug. 1890, *Collected Discourses*, 5 vols., ed. Brian H. Stuy (Burbank, CA: B.H.S. Publishing, 1886-98), 2:93; and Charles W. Penrose, 15 May 1892, *Collected Discourses*, 3:57.

the Lord.

For Wilford Woodruff, president of the church, dedication of the Salt Lake temple was one of the most important experiences of his life, an event for which he believed the Lord had protected and preserved him, and over which he had been foreordained to officiate. Woodruff's experiences regarding the temple began with a vision he received while the Saints were still in Nauvoo, Illinois, following the martyrdom of Joseph Smith in 1844. During dedication services in Salt Lake City, Woodruff "related his vision he had in Boston some 50 years ago. How the Lord showed him the Saints would move to the Rocky Mountains and build this Temple, and [that] he would be called upon to open it to the people and dedicate it to the Lord."<sup>2</sup> "I anticipated the dedication of that Temple for fifty years," he proclaimed shortly after the dedication, "for I attended the dedication of that Temple fifty years ago in a vision, and when I got through that work, I felt that I had arrived at the end of my work in the flesh."<sup>3</sup> Another time he recounted that "I was ordained to dedicate this Salt Lake Temple fifty years before it was dedicated. I knew I should live to dedicate that Temple. I did live to do it."<sup>4</sup>

Woodruff's experiences with the temple increased as construction progressed. In August 1862 President Brigham Young toured the temple lot with Woodruff and Isaac Morley. While inspecting the temple foundation,<sup>5</sup> Young said: "I expect this Temple will stand through the Millennium & the Brethren will go in and give the Endowments to the people." Turning to the two men, Young then declared, "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 pointed out by Joseph Smith. *Keep*

2. Francis Asbury Hammond Journal, 10 Apr. 1893, archives, Historical Department, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah (hereafter LDS archives), spelling and punctuation corrected.

3. Discourse delivered 13 Dec. 1893, *Collected Discourses*, 3:421.

4. Wilford Woodruff, 7 Apr. 1898, *Sixty-eighth Annual Conference of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1898), 29.

5. The temple foundation had been buried in preparation for the arrival of Johnston's Army in 1858. In 1860, after the army had settled thirty miles outside of Salt Lake City, Brigham Young began making preparations to resume construction of the temple. As the foundation was uncovered, large cracks were found running from the walls into the foundation. Young was informed by the mason foreman that "the work on one side was defective and such a foundation is dangerous" (Wallace Alan Raynor, *The Everlasting Spires: A Story of the Salt Lake Temple* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1965], 102). After consultation with other specialists, Young decided to have the foundation excavated and relaid. It was the newly completed foundation that Brigham Young, Wilford Woodruff, and Isaac Morley were inspecting.

*this a secret to yourselves lest some may be discouraged.*"<sup>6</sup>

The impact of this statement on Woodruff is evident by the fact that he recorded Young's words in both his personal diary and in the historian's office journals.<sup>7</sup> Young's statement no doubt impressed Woodruff with the millennial nature and significance of the Salt Lake temple and

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6. *Wilford Woodruff Journal, 1833-1898*, 9 vols. (Midvale, UT: Signature Books, 1983-85), 6:71-72, 23 Aug. 1862, emphasis in the original (spelling and punctuation corrected). As church leaders publicly proclaimed their desire to finish the temple, Young declared, "I want to see the Temple finished as soon as it is reasonable and practicable. Whether we go in there to work or not makes no difference; I am perfectly willing to finish it to the last leaf of gold that shall be laid upon it, and to the last lock that should be put on the doors, *and then lock every door, and there let it stand* until the earth can rest before the Saints commence their labors there" (Brigham Young, 8 Apr. 1867, *Journal of Discourses* 11:372, emphasis mine). Although an in-depth study of Young's views concerning the return to Jackson County is beyond the scope of this essay, a brief study of Young's sermons indicates a millennialistic cycle that peaked with the commencement of the Civil War in 1861. In response to the question of when the Saints would return to Jackson County, Young proclaimed in 1852: "Not until the Lord commands it" (28 Aug. 1852, *Journal of Discourses* 6:269). Earlier he had indicated his belief that if the Saints then listening did not return themselves, their children would (15 Aug. 1852, *Journal of Discourses* 6:296; also 6 June 1858, *Journal of Discourses* 7:66; 21 Oct. 1860, *Journal of Discourses* 8:225; on Young's expectation to see Jackson County "in the flesh," see 9 Sept. 1860, *Journal of Discourses* 8:175). Prior to the commencement of the Civil War, Young's teachings indicated an uncertainty regarding when the Saints would return to Jackson County but a conviction that the time was near and that the Saints should be ready to go at any moment.

The beginning of the war increased Young's expectation that the time was nearing for the Saints to return to redeem Zion. "One great blessing the Lord wishes to pour upon this people is that they may return to Jackson county," he declared. "If our enemies do not cease their oppression upon this people, as sure as the Lord lives it will not be many days before we will occupy that land and there build up a Temple to the Lord" (6 Apr. 1862, *Journal of Discourses* 9:270). While the Civil War raged in the East, Young boldly declared, "We are determined to build up the kingdom of God on the earth; to bring forth Zion, to promote the cause of righteousness on the earth ... The time has now come when this work will be consummated" (31 Aug. 1862, *Journal of Discourses* 9:368). This declaration was made one week after Young uttered his instructions to Woodruff on the temple grounds to delay completion of the temple until after the return to Jackson County. Two years later the president prepared the Saints for his departure to return to Jackson County by warning them, "I expect to be absent, some time from now, for quite a while" (15 May 1864, *Journal of Discourses* 10:290). With the U.S. government still intact following the Civil War, Young's attitudes regarding the imminent return of the church to Jackson County cooled. It became clear that the time frame for the Saints' return was unknown. No longer was the return to Zion as immediate. It is not possible to determine if Young intended to complete the Salt Lake temple irrespective of the return to Jackson County or if the ending of the Civil War altered his views. If Young did change his intent, he did not communicate this change to Woodruff, who clearly held to the original teachings of the president in 1862. (For an in-depth discussion of the millennial fervor brought on by the Civil War among Young and the Saints, see Louis G. Reinwand, "An Interpretive Study of Mormon Millennialism During the Nineteenth Century with Emphasis on Millennial Developments in Utah," M.A. thesis, Brigham Young University, 1971.)

7. *Woodruff Journal*, 6:71-72, 23 Aug. 1862, spelling and punctuation retained; also Wilford Woodruff's Office Journal, 22 Aug. 1862, LDS archives.

further heightened in his mind its prophetic destiny.

In 1887 Woodruff recorded a dream in which he received what he felt was an important message from Brigham Young:

I dreamed last night that the L D Saints were holding a great Conference at Salt Lake City at the great Temple and thousands of Mechanics were laboring hard to finish the Temple. I was requested to open the Conference As I was an Exile and they might not have me with them long. The Key of the Temple was given me to open it. As I went to the door A large Company were assembled and I overtook Presid[en]t Brigham Young and He asked what the matter was with the great Company at the Door. Some one Answered the Elders did not want to Let the people into the Temple. He said *Oh, oh, oh* and turned to me & said let all[,] all into the Temple who seek for Salvation. I saw several who were Dead and among the Number my wife Phebe. I Believe there is some meaning to this dream.<sup>8</sup>

Following dedication of the Salt Lake temple, Woodruff reflected on the message he felt he was intended to receive from these nocturnal visitations. As he contemplated his accomplishments following the dedication in 1893, Woodruff interpreted his dreams from six years earlier in a new context. "Two nights in succession before John Taylor[']s Death President Young gave me the Keys of the Temple and told me to go and dedicate it which I did."<sup>9</sup> These visitations by Young had evidently impressed Woodruff with the need to hasten the temple's dedication and had effectively reversed the policy he understood to have been established by Young twenty-five years earlier of delaying the temple's completion until the Saints began to return to Jackson County.<sup>10</sup> At the capstone ceremonies held during April 1892 general conference, Woodruff instructed Apostle Francis M. Lyman to place the Saints under covenant to hasten

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8. *Woodruff Journal*, 8:429, 12 Mar. 1887, spelling and punctuation retained. A few days later Woodruff recorded: "I dream almost Ev[er]y night of these great Meetings. I do not understand what those Dreams Mean" (*ibid.*, 15 Mar. 1887).

9. *Ibid.*, 9:279, "A Synopsis of Wilford Woodruff Labors in 1893."

10. It is difficult to determine what, if any, delay tactics were actually employed by Young in construction of the temple. In his public discourses Young frequently admonished the Saints to donate means to hurry completion of the temple (Brigham Young, 2 Mar. 1862, *Journal of Discourses* 9:241; also 8 Apr. 1862, *Journal of Discourses* 10:36; 6 Oct. 1863, *Journal of Discourses* 10:267; 8 Apr. 1867, *Journal of Discourses* 11:372). As has been shown above, however, Young felt that the return to Jackson County was imminent, and thus it is probable that, if the temple had been completed, Young would have delayed its dedication and use until after the church had returned to Jackson County (see n6). Construction and dedication of the St. George temple shows that Young had changed his ideas concerning the need to delay completion of any temple until the building of the Jackson County temple. It is possible that the focus had shifted only to the Salt Lake temple, and that other temples, which were not viewed in the same millennialistic light, could be completed before the Saints' return to Jackson County.

the temple's completion. This resolution, adopted by the unanimous vote of the gathered Saints, also alludes to the change in policy regarding completion:

## RESOLUTION

Believing that the instructions of President Woodruff respecting the *early completion* of the Salt Lake Temple is the word of the Lord unto us, I propose that this assemblage pledge themselves, collectively and individually, to furnish, as fast as it may be needed, all the money that may be required to complete the Temple at the earliest time possible, so that the dedication may take place on April 6, 1893.<sup>11</sup>

The date for the dedication was thus set to commence the following April, forty years after the cornerstones were laid and building begun. "We have been as long building that Temple as Moses was leading the children of Israel through the wilderness to the land of promise," observed Woodruff, "and I would like to see it finished."<sup>12</sup>

The following year was spent finishing the interior of the temple in anticipation of the dedication. Following the laying of the capstone, Woodruff walked through the interior and noted in his journal that "a great Deal of work [is] yet to be done in order to get the work done by next April Conference."<sup>13</sup>

In the various settlements, the diligence of the Saints was exerted in a more spiritual direction. With the dedication now less than one year away, the Saints sought ways to prepare themselves for what many expected to be a pentecostal event not witnessed since the days of Kirtland. A wave of community cooperation and forgiveness swept over the settlements. In order to foster this spirit further, many church authorities toured the settlements, admonishing the Saints to put aside their differences, especially regarding politics. Great spiritual manifestations were promised as a reward for the years of suffering and persecution the members had undergone defending plural marriage. On one occasion Lorenzo Snow "spoke of the great sacrifice made by the saints in the issuance of the manifesto relinquishing the practice of plural marriage. He felt that the Lord had accepted it, and would bless the people. It was one of the greatest sacrifices made by any people since the days of Enoch. Upon this and other accounts he was of [the] opinion the Lord would grant some interesting manifestations in the Salt Lake Temple."<sup>14</sup>

11. *Millennial Star* 54 (July 1892):436 (emphasis mine).

12. Wilford Woodruff, 12 June 1892, *Collected Discourses*, 3:82.

13. *Woodruff Journal*, 9:195, 11 Apr. 1892.

14. Rudger Clawson Journal, 23 Oct. 1892, Box Elder Stake Quarterly Conference, Special Collections, Marriott Library, University of Utah, Salt Lake City.

Two weeks prior to the dedication, the First Presidency called on all the Saints to set aside Saturday, 25 March, as a day of fasting and prayer. The Saints were instructed "that the Presidencies of Stakes, the High Councils, the Bishops and their Counselors, meet together with the Saints in their several meeting houses, confess their sins one to another, and draw out from the people all feelings of anger, of distrust, or of unfriendliness that may have found a lodgment; so that entire confidence may then and there be restored and love from this time prevail through all the congregations of the Saints."<sup>15</sup> Apostle Marriner W. Merrill records that he "went to meeting at 11 a.m., met with the people of Richmond, confessed my sins, and asked forgiveness of the Saints if I had done anyone any wrong."<sup>16</sup>

As the Saints gathered in attitudes of forgiveness and penitence, Woodruff repeatedly gathered with his counselors to the temple to view the work being done on the interior. Woodruff records that his heart was heavy as they viewed the work that still remained to be completed. "We are in hopes to get it ready for Dedication," he wrote in his journal three weeks before the dedication, "but it is a load upon us."<sup>17</sup> On the afternoon of 5 April, a scant twelve hours before the dedication services were to begin, the temple received the finishing touches and was ready at last to be presented to the Lord.

#### DEDICATION, 6-24 APRIL 1893

A large crowd gathered around the temple on the morning of 6 April 1893. Admission to the temple was through a narrow gate at the west end of the temple block, admitting only one person at a time onto the grounds.<sup>18</sup> As the Saints entered the grounds, a gentle breeze blew across the square. Overhead clouds were visible, with an occasional ray of sunlight adding to the beauty of the day. Promptly at 8:30 a.m. the Saints were conducted through the temple's interior, touring each of the various rooms, until they gathered in the fourth floor Assembly Hall. One participant described what no doubt was experienced by all:

We were surprised and filled with wonder at the beauty and finish of ev-

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15. James R. Clark, ed., *Messages of the First Presidency of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1833-1964*, 6 vols. (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1965-75), 3:244, message dated 18 Mar. 1893.

16. Melvin Clarence Merrill, ed., *Utah Pioneer and Apostle Marriner Wood Merrill and His Family* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1937), 163, 25 Mar. 1893, hereafter Marriner W. Merrill Diary.

17. *Woodruff Journal*, 9:244, 18 Mar. 1893.

18. Joseph West Smith Journal, 6 Apr. 1893, Special Collections, Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

ery room as it was more costly and grand till we came to the upper when we were struck dumb as it were with astonishment at the heavenly grandeur of this room of rooms, it defies description by pen of mortal as to the effect it produced in the mind and heart of the true latter day saint it was indeed the Holy of Holies, and we felt the majesty of heaven was there. ...<sup>19</sup>

John M. Whitaker, private secretary and reporter for Church Historian Franklin D. Richards, described his tour as one of "awe, wonderment and glory."<sup>20</sup>

At 10 a.m., after the crowd of over 3,000 had been seated, and with many more left standing in the aisles, the services began. Following the singing of "Let Israel Join and Sing" by the Tabernacle Choir, Woodruff arose to deliver the dedicatory prayer. The prayer, described by many as comprehensive, requested the blessings of the Lord to rest upon the temple and everything located therein.<sup>21</sup> "The prayer was simply grand," wrote one witness, "and caused all hearts to overflow with praise and thanksgiving to our heavenly Father, and so manifest was the Spirit of God that the vail was almost rent and we indeed felt we were in the presence of our God and Jesus Christ our Redeemer and hosts of heavenly beings."<sup>22</sup>

The peace and tranquility of the dedicatory services being conducted inside the Assembly Room stood in sharp contrast to the terrible wind storm then raging outside the temple. "The worst windstorm, perhaps, which ever visited Salt Lake, prevailed between 10:30 and 12 o'clock noon," declared the *Deseret News* in describing the storm, "the destruction ... was beyond precedent here."<sup>23</sup> "The air was filled with dust, gravel and debris of many kinds and pedestrians sought shelter in the nearest buildings. Outhouses and small barns were blown down and trees uprooted in all parts of the city. Many fences were badly damaged by falling shade trees."<sup>24</sup>

The timing of the storm with the dedication was not without spiritual overtones. To many who witnessed it, the raging storm stood as a manifestation of the anger and fury of Satan and his angels. One member wrote:

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19. Hammond Journal, 6 Apr. 1893 (spelling standardized).

20. John Mills Whitaker Journal, 6 Apr. 1893, 53, transcript, Special Collections, Marriott Library.

21. *The Contributor* 14 (Apr. 1893):292-300; also *Millennial Star* 55:333-38, 349-53, reprinted in N. B. Lundwall, *Temples of the Most High*, all editions (Salt Lake City: Zion's Printing & Publishing Co.), 122-32. On average, it took over forty minutes to read the dedicatory prayer at each of the sessions.

22. Hammond Journal, 6 Apr. 1893.

23. *Deseret News*, 6 Apr. 1893, 1; 7 Apr. 1893, 4.

24. *Ibid.*, 6 Apr. 1893, 1.

It is claimed that Heber C. Kimball once predicted that when the Salt Lake Temple should be dedicated the power of Satan should be loosed and the strongest wind storm ever witnessed in Utah should be felt on that occasion. In pursuance and fulfillment of this prediction, a strong breeze began blowing upon our entering the grounds at 9 a.m. and increased to a hurricane of great violence at the precise time the dedicatory prayer was being offered by Pres[ident] Wilford Woodruff.<sup>25</sup>

The storm took on added significance when seagulls were sighted hovering over the temple. "The Evil One seemed *mad*," wrote one observer, and "gulls came and hovered over the House; [they] have not been seen here before for many years. They saved the crops in 1847 by devouring the *crickets*."<sup>26</sup> Thus the twin manifestations of the gulls and the gale became a powerful symbol of the ongoing battle between God and Satan, a battle centered on the Lord's Saints gathered at the temple.

There were other manifestations, of a personal character, that accompanied the dedicatory services. Elder Rudger Clawson recorded in his journal that his wife, Lydia, "heard some beautiful singing that seemed to come from the N[orth] E[ast] corner of the room," even though there was no choir in the area.<sup>27</sup> Apostle Francis M. Lyman also heard this music and declared that he saw "a beautiful light cross the building above the chandeliers."<sup>28</sup> Some witnessed the apparent transfiguration of Wilford Woodruff into the likeness of Brigham Young,<sup>29</sup> while others observed a halo of glory surrounding Woodruff.<sup>30</sup> One individual reported seeing on the stand Brigham Young and several members of the Quorum of the Twelve who had passed away, as well as other spirit beings.<sup>31</sup>

Another unusual event that occurred following the second day's services was the delivery of a baby boy in the font room of the temple.<sup>32</sup> *The Contributor* described the circumstances of the birth of the child as follows:

An unusual incident occurred in the Temple on Friday, April 7, shortly after the close of the evening session. Benjamin F. Bennett and his wife, Emma, had attended the meeting. The journey from Provo had doubtless hastened an event that had not been expected on that particular occasion. Before Mrs.

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25. John Franklin Tolton Autobiography, 6 Apr. 1893, LDS archives.

26. Hammond Journal, 6 Apr. 1893 (emphasis in the original); also John F. Tolton Autobiography, 6 Apr. 1893; Jean Bickmore White, ed., *Church, State, and Politics: The Diaries of John Henry Smith* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books in Association with Smith Research Associates, 1990), 6 Apr. 1893, 289.

27. Rudger Clawson Diary, 8 Apr. 1893.

28. Melvin A. Lyman, *Francis Marion Lyman Biography* (Delta, UT: n.p., 1958), 135.

29. Joseph West Smith Journal, 9th Session, 9 Apr. 1893, 117; *The Contributor* 16 (Dec. 1894): 116.

30. *Jesse Nathaniel Smith Journal*, 6 Apr. 1893 (Salt Lake City: Jesse N. Smith Family Association, Deseret News Publishing Co., 1953).

31. Abraham H. Cannon Journal, 18 May 1893, copy in my possession.

32. John Lee Jones Biography, 90, Special Collections, Lee Library.



Bennett could leave the building she gave birth to a son. She was attended by Mrs. Julina Smith; and as soon as mother and child could be safely moved they were taken to the residence of Andrew J. Gray and given all necessary care. On the evening of Saturday, April 15, the infant was carried into the Temple, to the room where it first saw light in mortal probation, and was there blessed by President Joseph F. Smith, the name conferred being Joseph Temple Bennett.<sup>33</sup>

The circumstances surrounding the boy's birth provided much discussion for the Saints, many speculating "who that boy could be, born in the Temple."<sup>34</sup>

The program of each of the thirty-one dedicatory sessions, held between 6 and 24 April, was essentially the same. Woodruff delivered the dedicatory prayer at the first session. He then allowed the prayer to be read by his two counselors, George Q. Cannon and Joseph F. Smith, and by the Quorum of the Twelve at the remaining sessions. Thus each apostle received the opportunity to deliver the prayer.<sup>35</sup>

33. *The Contributor* 14 (Apr. 1893): 301.

34. John Mills Whitaker Journal, 278, Special Collections, Lee Library.

35. The following table lists the individual who delivered the prayer in each session of the dedication. The prayers were offered by the apostles in descending order, according to their position in the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve, with President Woodruff delivering the prayer only at the first session. Although Moses Thatcher was present at most of the dedicatory services of 6-11 April, lingering illness prevented his delivering the dedicatory prayer (Edward Leo Lyman, "The Alienation of an Apostle from His Quorum: The Moses Thatcher Case," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 18 [Summer 1985]: 67-92; also Thomas G. Alexander, *Things in Heaven and Earth: The Life and Times of Wilford Woodruff, a Mormon Prophet* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1991), 292-95; *Millennial Star* 55 [29 May 1893]: 363).

	Morning	Afternoon	Evening
April 6	Wilford Woodruff	George Q. Cannon	
April 7	Joseph F. Smith	Lorenzo Snow	Franklin D. Richards
April 8	Brigham Young, Jr.	Francis M. Lyman	
April 9	John Henry Smith	George Teasdale	
April 10	Heber J. Grant	John W. Taylor	
April 11	Marriner W. Merrill	Anthon H. Lund	
April 12	Abraham H. Cannon	George Q. Cannon	
April 13	Joseph F. Smith	Lorenzo Snow	
April 14	Franklin D. Richards	Brigham Young, Jr.	
April 15	Francis M. Lyman	John Henry Smith	
April 16	George Teasdale	Heber J. Grant	
April 17	John W. Taylor	Marriner W. Merrill	
April 18	Anthon H. Lund	Abraham H. Cannon	
April 19	PRIESTHOOD LEADERSHIP MEETINGS		
April 20	NO SESSIONS		
April 21	Three Children's Sessions; No Dedicatory Prayers		
April 22	Two Children's Sessions; No Dedicatory Prayers		
April 23	George Q. Cannon	Joseph F. Smith	
April 24	Lorenzo Snow	Franklin D. Richards	

Following the dedicatory prayer, Elder Lorenzo Snow arose to lead the Saints in the Hosanna Shout, an act he performed at each of the dedicatory services. "This was truly the grandest sight my mortal eyes ever beheld," recorded one participant, "it seemed the heavenly hosts had come down to mingle with us."<sup>36</sup> "The Shout was given with such vehemence and force," wrote another, "as to almost shake the building on its foundations."<sup>37</sup>

Following the Hosanna Shout, the choir sang the "Hosanna Hymn,"<sup>38</sup> after which the congregation arose and joined in singing "The Spirit of God Like a Fire is Burning." The rest of the session was then set aside for various members of the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve to address the Saints. "The Lord has accepted this House as an offering from the Saints" was the common theme of the discourses, and "he has forgiven his penitent people." This theme of acceptance and forgiveness was consoling to the Saints, many of whom harbored lingering feelings of confusion and anxiety regarding the Woodruff Manifesto banning plural marriage. The dedicatory services thus became a time of recommitment to the laws and covenants of God, and many Saints came prepared to receive divine confirmation that they and the church were accepted of the Lord.

No person sought this confirmation more than Woodruff. Perceiving the expectations of the Saints regarding the spiritual manifestations they had been promised, Woodruff sought on every occasion to relate visions, revelations, and other manifestations he had received regarding the temple dedication. "I feel at liberty to reveal to this assembly," he announced during the second day of dedication, "what has been revealed to me since we were here yesterday morning." He proceeded to relate a marvelous vision in which he had seen the heavens singing with the Saints:

Last night I had a vision: I saw President Joseph Smith, Brigham Young, John Taylor and all the heavenly hosts who have died in this dispensation shouting praises to the Lord; and that as the shouting of the Hosannah went up from the temple, the shout was re-echoed to Christ and the saints, up to the throne of God: That they were more interested in the dedication of this temple than we possibly could be and that the Lord accepted this temple.<sup>39</sup>

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36. Hammond Journal, 6 Apr. 1893.

37. Rudger Clawson Diary, 6 Apr. 1893.

38. L. John Nuttall Journal, First Session, 6 Apr. 1893, typescript in my possession. Other popular hymns were often substituted for the "Hosanna Hymn," including Eliza R. Snow's "O My Father," which was sung with a solo by R. C. Easton in a "soul-inspiring manner" (Joseph West Smith Journal, 13th Session, 11 Apr. 1893).

39. John M. Whitaker Journal, 3rd Session, 7 Apr. 1893; also Archibald Bennett, ed., *Saviors on Mount Zion*, Advanced Senior Department Course of Study (Salt Lake City: Deseret Sunday School Union Board, 1950), 142-43; Anthon H. Lund Journal, 7 Apr. 1893, LDS archives.

Another witness recorded that Woodruff stated that "Our Saviour had appeared unto [me] in the East Room in the Holy of Holies, & told [me] that He had accepted of the Temple & of the dedication services, & that the Lord forgave us His Saints who had assisted in any manner towards the erection and completion of the Temple."<sup>40</sup>

It was also crucial for Woodruff to assert his calling as God's true prophet, which he accomplished by emphasizing his frequent spiritual witnesses. The manifestations recounted emphasized his role in the early church, including his experiences with the prophet Joseph Smith, and divine manifestations he had received throughout his life. One vision, which Woodruff alluded to frequently during the dedication discourses, portrayed to him "thousands of the Lamanites [Native Americans] enter[ing] the temple by the door in the west end of the [Temple] previously unknown to him. They took charge of the temple and could do as much ordinance work in an hour as the other brethren could do in a day."<sup>41</sup> Another experience occurred in St. George in 1877, following dedication of that temple, when "a class of men came to me in the night visions, and argued with me to have the work done for them. They were the Signers of the Declaration of Independence."<sup>42</sup> Through these experiences, Woodruff sought in nearly every session in which he spoke to reconfirm to the Saints his position as prophet, seer, and revelator of the church. He hoped that the dedication would manifest to the Saints that the church was still under the guidance of the Lord.

During his opening remarks, Woodruff uttered a prophesy in which he said "a better day was dawning, and as the Apostles were now united Satan would not have power to create division among them." "He said the light & power of this Temple would be felt all over the earth, that our enemies should not have power over his Saints. The Lord is going to give His Saints the good things of the earth in greater abundance."<sup>43</sup>

The topics presented to the Saints varied from speaker to speaker and session to session. However, a study of the minutes shows that three prominent themes were discussed by Woodruff, by the other members of the First Presidency, and by the Quorum of the Twelve: namely, Forgiveness, the Millennial Reign, and Union.

The Manifesto, issued three years previously, relinquished what many Saints felt to be a vital and essential commandment of the Lord.

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40. John Lee Jones Biography, 90.

41. Jesse Nathaniel Smith Journal, 8 Apr. 1893, 393; Joseph West Smith Journal, 12 Apr. 1893.

42. Joseph West Smith Journal, 11 Apr. 1893; John D. T. McAllister Journal, 7 Apr. 1893, Special Collections, Lee Library.

43. John Lee Jones Biography, 90.

Many questioned the Manifesto's divinity,<sup>44</sup> and leaders of the church often taught that a lack of diligence on the part of the church as a whole led to the Lord's removing plural marriage from the church. These points were also addressed in the various sessions of the dedication.

Joseph F. Smith, in addressing the congregation, introduced the subject of the Manifesto by testifying, "[There is] not one principle of the Gospel but what is true. No not one! They can never be false." In answer to the rhetorical question "Why did the church abandon plural marriage?" Smith "explained that a number of laws had been given, and withdrawn on account of the people not being prepared for them. Only 2% of the people ever entered the Celestial order of marriage; ... Some were only too glad of an excuse to forsake and abandon. Now if any man shall forsake and abandon his loved ones, he shall wither away and die. Obey the laws of the land but do not forsake your covenants."<sup>45</sup> Smith also reminded the Saints that "the Prophet Joseph suspended the Law of consecration after the people had rejected it in a conference. Pres[iden]t Woodruff suspended Plural Marriage when the Lord told him to and not till then. We would have been ground to powder by this Government if we had not been led by the Lord to do as we did."<sup>46</sup> Smith admitted, however, that "had the Lord given the Manifesto earlier than He did, he could not have accepted it but he had become convinced it was right."<sup>47</sup>

Smith echoed what was no doubt felt by many of the authorities and by other church members, namely, that the Lord had withdrawn plural marriage due to slothfulness on the part of many Saints. For this reason, the tenor of the talks relating to forgiveness centered on the Lord's pardoning his people as a whole, not necessarily as individuals. "Prest. Woodruff told us the Lord had accepted the House," wrote one observer, "and the people as a Church and our sins were all forgiven and would

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44. General authorities who viewed the Manifesto as politically expedient included apostles John W. Taylor, John Henry Smith, Marriner W. Merrill, Heber J. Grant, Brigham Young, Jr., and George Teasdale (Alexander, 269). For additional comments on the views of these men and of the general church membership towards the Manifesto, see Richard S. Van Wagoner, *Mormon Polygamy: A History* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1986), 145-56; B. Carmon Hardy, *Solemn Covenant: The Mormon Polygamous Passage* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992), 127-53; D. Michael Quinn, "LDS Church Authority and New Plural Marriages, 1890-1904," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 18 (Spring 1985): 46-49.

45. Joseph West Smith Journal, 8th Session, 9 Apr. 1893, 116. Recent studies have shown that a higher percentage of members entered into polygamy. Stanley S. Ivins estimated that at the time of the Woodruff Manifesto more than 10 percent of church members were in polygamous relationships (Stanley S. Ivins, "Notes on Mormon Polygamy," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 35 [Fall 1967]: 311). Davis Bitton places the percentage at 10-20 percent ("Mormon Polygamy: A Review Article," *Journal of Mormon History* 4 [1977]: 111).

46. Hammond Journal, 19th Session, 14 Apr. 1893.

47. John Henry Smith Diary, 18th Session, 14 Apr. 1893 (spelling and punctuation standardized).

not be proclaimed on the house tops."<sup>48</sup> Like Joseph F. Smith, Woodruff also sought to explain the reasons for the Manifesto, but rather than focus on the failings of the Saints, he emphasized governmental pressure to relinquish the practice of plural marriage.

I feel disposed to say something upon the Manifesto. To begin with, I will say that this work was like a mountain upon me. I saw by the inspiration of Almighty God what lay before this people, and I know that something had to be done to ward off the blow that I saw impending. But I should have let come to pass what God showed me by revelation and vision; I should have lived in the flesh and permitted these things to come to pass; I should have let this temple gone into the hands of our enemies; I should have let every temple been confiscated by the hands of the wicked; I should have permitted our personal property to have been confiscated by our enemies; I should have seen these people—prophets, and apostles, driven by the hands of their enemies, and our wives and children scattered to the four winds of heaven—I should have seen all this, had not the Almighty God commanded me to do what I did.<sup>49</sup>

Woodruff sought to console the Saints, repeatedly stressing that the Lord would never have permitted him to do something contrary to his will. He reminded the Saints that he had lived with Joseph Smith, Brigham Young, and John Taylor. "Was there a man on God's footstool that could have moved them to the right or the left from anything that they felt inspired to do?" he asked. Directing the Saints' attention to the assembled First Presidency and Twelve, Woodruff asked the defining question that the Saints needed to answer in order to come to grips with the Manifesto:

Here are George Q. Cannon, Joseph F. Smith, and these Twelve Apostles. I want to ask you if Wilford Woodruff could have done anything that these men would have accepted, in performing the work that was done, that pained the hearts of all Israel, except by the spirit and power of God? No. I would just as soon thought of moving the foundations of this world as to have taken any course to move these men only by the revelations of God. When that Manifesto was given they accepted it. Why? Because they had the Spirit of God for themselves; they knew for themselves it was right. It was passed also before ten thousand Latter-day Saints and there was not a solitary hand lifted against that edict.<sup>50</sup>

Woodruff's sentiments were echoed by his counselor George Q. Cannon, who also reminded the Saints that "A little while ago the U.S. Govern-

48. Hammond Journal, 1st Session, 6 Apr. 1893.

49. "Manifesto of 1890, Extract of sermon by President Wilford Woodruff at the sixth session of the Dedication Services of the Salt Lake Temple," Special Collections, Lee Library.

50. Ibid.

ment had possession of this Temple and ground surrounding it and clouds of darkness hung heavy over us[. It] seemed as though the Lord had hid his face from us, but now behold the peace and joy we are permitted to see and partake of[.] Should we not praise the Lord and thank his most Holy name! He it is that has wrought out this great deliverance and not man."<sup>51</sup>

The Salt Lake temple became, in essence, a symbol and token of the Saints' penitence to the Lord, and the message of the leaders to the Saints was that the Lord had accepted their sacrifice. "The Lord had forgiven the sins of the people," Woodruff assured the Saints, "and accepted our offering of broken hearts and contrite spirits." In addition, Woodruff "promised great blessings to the people[;] if [we] are united Satan should never have power to cause us to stray away from the Lord."<sup>52</sup>

A second theme prominently discussed during the dedicatory services concerned the imminent return of the Saints to Jackson County and the approach of the Millennium. The commencement of the 1890s found the Saints anxiously awaiting the expected migration of the church to Missouri and the return of Jesus Christ. As a result of several prophecies made by Joseph Smith—prophecies which in turn had been reinterpreted and promulgated by later church authorities—the millennial expectations of the Saints reached a crescendo in the early 1890s.<sup>53</sup> No one individual felt this urgency more than Woodruff. For him dedication of the temple signified the fulfillment of ancient and modern prophesy and the approaching millennial era. "The Savior is here and rejoicing with us and many of the now born will live to see him in the flesh," he declared, "the vail is growing thinner."<sup>54</sup> "The Ancient Prophets, Isaiah and others prophesied and we are fulfilling, Christ is near and the work must be hastened, we are approaching the time for Jesus to come and be in our midst. ... [The] Millennium is at hand [and] we must wake up."<sup>55</sup> "I urge the saints to enter into their secret chambers and pray for the redemption of Zion—prayers which will assuredly be heard and answered, for Zion's redemption is at hand."<sup>56</sup>

Others also exhibited their feelings regarding the future: "I dare say there are many under the sound of my voice who will be present in Jackson County,"<sup>57</sup> declared Lorenzo Snow, "some of you will give this [Ho-

51. Hammond Journal, 16th Session, 13 Apr. 1893.

52. Ibid. 12th Session, 11 Apr. 1893.

53. See Dan Erickson, "Joseph Smith's 1891 Millennial Prophecy: The Quest for Apocalyptic Deliverance," *Journal of Mormon History* 22 (Fall 1996): 1-34.

54. Hammond Journal, 10th Session, 10 Apr. 1893.

55. Ibid., 16th Session, 13 Apr. 1893.

56. Joseph C. Muren, *The Temple and Its Significance* (Ogden, UT: Temple Publications, 1973), part IV, "When the Dead Shout Hosannas: Remarks made by Wilford Woodruff at the Salt Lake Temple Dedication."

57. Joseph West Smith Journal, 15th Session, 12 Apr. 1893.

sanna] shout in the great Temple to be built in Jackson County."<sup>58</sup> George Q. Cannon told the Saints that "women have a right to prophecy when wrought upon by the Holy Spirit, and that we are approaching the time when the saints will go back to Jackson County and there build up the Center Stake of Zion and redeem the land of Zion."<sup>59</sup> Thus, even though the temple was dedicated prior to the Saints' return to Jackson County as Brigham Young had wanted, the dedication should not be seen as an indication of the demise of millennial expectations in the church. "We have built this House to have the Savior come to it, which will be soon."<sup>60</sup>

By far the most emphasized theme of the dedication dealt with unity. After the dissolution of the People's party in 1892, the issue of politics had become increasingly important to church leaders and members in general. Evidence shows that even within the highest ranks of the church the discussion of politics brought contention and ill-will. The dedication thus became a time of reflection and evaluation for those caught in the web of politics. "Many good humble souls have had their feelings sorely tried because of the divisions among the *leaders* in politics," Cannon explained, "but thank the Lord we are now united as never before, and Satan shall never have power [to] divide us again on those lines, we must give heed to the Counsel of the first Presidency in all things for the Lord will [not] suffer us to lead you astray; we are after liberty for this people and we care not whether it comes through Democrats or Republicans, we want Statehood."<sup>61</sup>

For several days prior to the dedication, the First Presidency and Twelve had sought unity with each other. One member of the group, Apostle Moses Thatcher, had been the source of serious contention and discord in the quorum dating back to President John Taylor's administration. Ill-will had been generated between Thatcher and George Q. Cannon over Cannon's assumption of leadership when Taylor had been in declining health prior to his death in 1887. These problems, and several others, had alienated Thatcher from the majority of his quorum.<sup>62</sup> The most significant source of friction, however, was the extremely partisan position taken by Democrat Thatcher in open opposition to the First Presidency, which sought to obtain political parity in Utah between the Republican and Democratic parties. In a May 1892 speech before the Utah Democratic Territorial Convention in Ogden, Thatcher reportedly implied that "Jesus Christ would have been a Democrat and Lucifer a Republican."<sup>63</sup> This angered several members of the First Presidency and

58. Hammond Journal, 16th Session, 13 Apr. 1893.

59. John Mills Whitaker Journal, n.d., 55.

60. William Derby Johnson, Jr., Brigham Young University manuscripts, 13 Apr. 1893.

61. Hammond Journal, 16th Session, 13 Apr. 1893 (emphasis in the original).

62. Edward Leo Lyman, 68-72.

63. Ibid., 73.

Twelve, especially Joseph F. Smith, and threatened to prevent a unity of leadership at the dedication.

To resolve the disunity within the leadership, the apostles began meeting almost daily beginning 21 March 1893. Of utmost importance was their desire to establish a genuine spirit of harmony and goodwill before the dedication commenced. However, little progress was made; thus as leaders entered the last week before the dedication, the meetings intensified. Apostle Marriner W. Merrill recorded on 3 April: "Went to meeting of Quorum at 2 p.m. when Apostle Moses Thatcher's case was again discussed, F[rancis] M. Lyman and John W. Taylor having visited him since our last meeting. They reported him as being very defiant and justifying himself in his course, and treating them in a very discourteous manner while at his house. President Snow was very pronounced against Brother Thatcher's course."<sup>64</sup>

As the dedication approached, it appeared that leaders would be unable to bring unity to their ranks. One last meeting was scheduled to convene two days before the dedication. Although Thatcher had been too ill to attend the previous day's meeting, he telegraphed his intention to attend this last meeting. For over two hours members of the quorum pleaded with Thatcher to acknowledge his being out of harmony with the First Presidency. Finally, as the meeting neared midnight, Thatcher "confessed he had done wrong in the position he had taken in regard to political matters and that he desired the fellowship of the presidency and his quorum."<sup>65</sup> "All voted to forgive him freely."<sup>66</sup> With union restored to their ranks, all looked forward to the spiritual blessings expected at the dedication services.

Given the intense focus church leaders had placed on establishing unity in their ranks over the previous weeks, it is no surprise that the topic should be given such emphasis during the dedicatory services. In announcing his intention to avoid political controversy, President Woodruff "prophesied that the Presidency and Twelve would never again be disunited, but if any one of them got wrong the Lord would remove them."<sup>67</sup> Before leading the congregation in the Hosanna Shout, quorum president Lorenzo Snow stated, "Pres. Woodruff would not allow the Hosanna Shout to be given unless he believed there was union in our midst."<sup>68</sup> President Cannon stated that "he had almost dreaded to see the Dedication day come on account of the division among the people."<sup>69</sup> Al-

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64. Marriner W. Merrill Diary, 3 Apr. 1893, 163.

65. Franklin D. Richards Journal, 3 [4] Apr. 1893, as quoted in Edward Leo Lyman, 77.

66. Marriner W. Merrill Diary, 3 Apr. 1893, 163.

67. Jesse Nathaniel Smith Journal, 8 Apr. 1893, 393.

68. Joseph West Smith Journal, 8th Session, 9 Apr. 1893.

69. *Ibid.*



luding to the political troubles within the quorum, Cannon also "spoke of the great division among the people caused by deviding on national politics, how many humble and meek souls had been grieved and sorely tried, but now through the great mercy of the Lord all these ill feelings have been healed up and we are united as never before since the orga[n]ization of the Church." Seeking to obtain the last word on the subject, President Cannon continued, "[This union] has been brought about by obeying the counsel of the first Presidency[.] Some had thought the Presidency had no right to counsel in political matters, but the Lord understands all things and we must be led by him to seek liberty in any way he may mark out."<sup>70</sup> Also alluding to the political troubles within the quorum, Francis M. Lyman matter-of-factly stated that "there is not a man in the chief councils of the Church but what sees eye-to-eye; we are united."<sup>71</sup>

• PRIESTHOOD LEADERSHIP MEETINGS, 19-20 APRIL 1893

In an effort to increase the unity experienced by local leaders who attended the dedication, President Woodruff decided to call as many stake leaders as could attend to a series of leadership meetings with the First Presidency and Twelve in the Assembly Room of the newly dedicated temple. Following the afternoon session of 18 April, stake leaders were called forward and invited to attend two special leadership meetings to be held on 19 and 20 April.

The first meeting commenced on 19 April at 10 o'clock, with the assembled leaders meeting in the President's Room in the temple. In attendance were all members of the First Presidency. The entire Quorum of Twelve Apostles also attended, except Moses Thatcher, who had returned home from the dedication on 11 April due to illness. The Seven Presidents of Seventies, the Presiding Bishopric, and the presidents of stakes and their counselors were also in attendance.<sup>72</sup> In all, the group numbered 115 men. Following the opening song, "Now Let Us Rejoice," Apostle Brigham Young, Jr., offered the opening prayer. The assembled body then sang "Come All Ye Sons of God."<sup>73</sup> President Woodruff began the testimony meeting "by saying that he would like to hear the brethren express themselves in relation to the dedicatory services of the Temple, as to whether they endorsed what been said and done, and also desired

70. Hammond Journal, 10th Session, 10 Apr. 1893.

71. Joseph West Smith Journal, 15 Apr. 1893, 126-27.

72. B. H. Roberts notes that each stake was represented by a member of the presidency "except one—St. Joseph—and a bishop represented that [stake]" (Brigham H. Roberts Journal, 19 Apr. 1893, Special Collections, Marriott Library).

73. Nuttall Journal, 19 Apr. 1893.

them to state how they felt towards the First Presidency and Apostles."<sup>74</sup> This approval was important to Woodruff. He wanted to know if the Saints harbored any lingering doubts as to his leadership and the direction he was taking the church. To manifest this unity among the Saints, he had President Joseph F. Smith request at each session a vote of acceptance by attending members. This vote was always unanimous.<sup>75</sup> Each leader stood and bore testimony to his happiness and satisfaction with the dedication proceedings and with President Woodruff's leadership. Following these emotional and heart-felt testimonies, Woodruff rose to address the assembled group:

We have been here about 4 hours and it is time of course for us to dismiss this meeting: but before dismissing I feel that it is a duty resting upon me and my counsellors to say a few words to this assembly, and it is our right and privilege to speak to you by the revelations of the Lord and by the power of truth, and I will promise this assembly that the Holy Ghost will bear witness to them of the truth of what I say, and it is this: The God of heaven and the Lord Jesus Christ and the heavenly hosts—I say this to you in the name of Jesus Christ the Son of God—have accepted the dedication of this Temple at our hands. The God of heaven has accepted His people, has accepted the people who have assembled here. The God of heaven has forgiven the sins of those Latter-day Saints in those that bear the Priesthood in this house, and those who have been humble before the Lord and have attended this Conference. Their sins are remitted, and will be remitted by the power of God, and will not be remembered anymore against his people, unless we sin further.

Shifting the emphasis from the Lord's acceptance of their offering to the leadership's willingness to make that offering, he continued:

And again I say to you that the God of heaven and the heavenly hosts accept of your offering. You recollect now, you have been making an offering; and I, as the President of the Church, accept the offering you have made before God and the heavenly host. It is this: you acknowledge the Presidency of this Church, that they bear the Priesthood, and that they are set to govern and control the affairs of the Church and Kingdom of God. This offering you have made before the heavens, and the heavens accept of it. I accept of it as the President of this Church; and I hope that while you live, from this time henceforth, wherever you see that spirit manifest that there is no power on the earth—that the Presidency of the Church have no power to govern or teach anybody—you will remember that you have all testified to the truth that upon their shoulders rests the responsibility of teaching, governing, controlling and counseling the church and Kingdom of God in *all* things on the earth.<sup>76</sup>

74. Rudger Clawson Journal, 19 Apr. 1893.

75. John D. T. McAllister Journal, 11, 13 Apr. 1893.

76. Rudger Clawson Journal, 19 Apr. 1893 (emphasis in original).

Following Woodruff, his counselor Joseph F. Smith stood, as he had in each of the dedicatory services, and called on the assembled brethren to support President Woodruff and the First Presidency. Not surprisingly, "all answered with a hearty amen, signifying that they bore witness to the truth of the remarks of Pres. Woodruff."<sup>77</sup> The meeting concluded with Smith offering the benediction,<sup>78</sup> and participants were requested to reconvene the following morning.

As leaders gathered again the next morning, the absence of President Woodruff was immediately apparent. The assembled leaders were informed that Woodruff had over-exerted himself in addressing them the previous day and that he would be unable to attend this day's meeting. Woodruff later commented on just how sick he had become: "I marvel that I am here. I know that the Lord has preserved my life. ... The Lord gave me power and strength of lungs to fulfil my mission there, until we nearly got through [with the Salt Lake Temple dedication]. But one day I staid [sic] there some six hours and I heard all the speeches of the presidents of Stakes. I staid too long and that prostrated me, and I went down apparently to the gates of death."<sup>79</sup>

As the same 115 participants of the previous day regrouped in the President's Room of the temple, they once more had the opportunity to listen to the remarks of the president's counselors and several of the Twelve. Beginning the testimony meeting was Joseph F. Smith, who remarked that "we lose nothing in remaining here waiting on the Lord. We must learn to wait upon the people, the Spirit of the Lord has reclaimed us from the cares of the world. The love of God casts out all bitterness, I am the brother of Christ. I love you because the Lord can speak through you and save the people. God is love, we must love God and our neighbour." In closing, Smith instructed the brethren in the ancient method of partaking of the sacrament, "read[ing] from 3rd Nephi how Jesus administered the sacrament, how we are to eat and drink in the presence of God."<sup>80</sup> The leaders were promised the opportunity to receive the sacrament in this method following the remarks by the general authorities.

Following Smith's testimony, George Q. Cannon bore testimony of his personal experiences with the Savior. "My joy is full, my desires are granted to see union again prevail in our midst. I have been greatly favored of the Lord. My mind has been rapt in vision and have saw the bea[u]ties and Glory of God. I have saw and conversed with the Savior face to face. God will bestow this upon you."<sup>81</sup>

77. John Franklin Tolton Diary, 19 Apr. 1893.

78. Nuttall Journal, 19 Apr. 1893.

79. Wilford Woodruff, 13 Dec. 1893, *Collected Discourses*, 3:421.

80. Hammond Journal, 20 Apr. 1893.

81. Ibid.

As noon approached, participants adjourned and clothed themselves in their temple robes. Meeting in the Celestial Room of the temple, all 115 men formed a prayer circle, "the largest ever formed in this generation."<sup>82</sup> Following introductory instructions by Joseph F. Smith, George Q. Cannon offered the prayer. During the prayer, one member of the group, Charles Kelly, stake president of Brigham City, fainted, "either for having the arm raised so long or on account of our fast, for we went to this meeting fasting."<sup>83</sup> After the prayer circle, the leaders returned to the President's Room where bishops William B. Preston, Robert T. Burton, and John R. Winder of the Presiding Bishopric had prepared three long tables for the sacrament. Each participant was given a large tumbler with the Salt Lake temple etched into it and a napkin. Presiding bishop Preston blessed the bread and "Dixie" wine (from southern Utah), "and the brethren were invited to 'eat till they were filled,' but to use caution and not indulge in wine to excess."<sup>84</sup> "The Sacrament as we partook of it was after the ancient pattern as taught to the Saints by the prophet Joseph."<sup>85</sup> As the men broke bread and drank the wine, each shared his thoughts on the temple dedication or bore testimony of any experiences he had had with the prophet Joseph Smith. For many, the leadership meetings, especially the sacrament, constituted the high-point of their dedication experience. After nearly six hours of intense camaraderie and companionship, the group adjourned at 6 p.m.<sup>86</sup>

Previous to the leadership meetings, it was decided to set aside two days during which Sunday school children throughout the church would be allowed to participate in the dedication. On the days chosen, 21 and 22 April, over 12,000 children attended one of five sessions. Although the dedicatory prayer was not read at these sessions, the children were able to participate in the Hosanna Shout and to hear from each of the attending apostles. One participant described the events of the children's session:

President Lorenzo Snow showed the children a lock of the Prophet [Joseph]'s auburn hair at each session. Apostle Franklin D. Richards testified he had seen the Prophet Joseph Smith, and heard him speak at many a meeting and on one occasion when his face shown bright as the sun, and how great was this manifestation, and so on at all the sessions. Most of the First Presidency arose and spoke briefly so all the children had a personal introduction to all of the General Authorities of the church and heard their voices in the temple, all bore fervent testimony of the greatness and majesty and power possessed

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82. *Ibid.*

83. Brigham H. Roberts Journal, 20 Apr. 1893.

84. John Franklin Tolton Diary, 20 Apr. 1893.

85. Brigham H. Roberts Journal, 20 Apr. 1893.

86. Hammond Journal, 20 Apr. 1893.

by the Prophet Joseph Smith as the Prophet who restored, or was the medium through whom was restored, all the Keys of Power, also the Priesthood of all former holders thereof, and of the place he will occupy in the future of this great work.<sup>87</sup>

Following the children's sessions, regular dedicatory services were held for two more days. The final session concluded on the afternoon of 24 April, a full twenty days after they had begun.

As the Saints returned to their homes following the dedication, many no doubt reflected on the events they had witnessed. The dedication became a time of rebirth, both for the church as a whole and for the individuals who constituted its membership. Throughout the dedicatory services, President Woodruff sought to convey to the Saints the Lord's forgiveness of the church as a people. The Salt Lake temple became, in fact, a sacrifice presented to the Lord to obtain corporate forgiveness of sins. The emphasis on the Manifesto and justification for its issuance show that many felt the Saints had brought the Manifesto upon themselves through a lack of obedience to the law of celestial marriage. The donations and efforts of each member, and of the church collectively, resulted in Woodruff's promise that God had accepted their offering and forgiven their sins. But each member also reflected personally upon his or her own standing before God. Having been promised forgiveness as a people for the lack of diligence in obeying God's commandments, many looked inward to assess their personal standing before God. Elder B. H. Roberts wrote:

It has been a Pentecostal time with me, the Lord has shown to me my inner parts, myself; and there I have found such grained and gnarled spots that I have been humbled into sincere repentance. At times I have wondered even how the Lord could tolerate me at all as His servant. Truly it is a manifestation of long suffering & mercy. I am deeply moved with gratitude toward Him for his mercy to me; and now Oh My Father if thou wilt give me grace, how hard will I try to reform, and cease from all my wrong doing.<sup>88</sup>

Along with confirmation of the Saints' forgiveness, Woodruff and the other leaders sought to convey to the Saints that the Lord was still with his church. The issuing of the Manifesto had not caused the Lord to desert them. Woodruff's often recounted vision of the Savior, along with Joseph Smith, Brigham Young, and other prominent leaders on the other side of the veil, was convincing evidence that the church was being guided by continual revelation. The Saints could now focus their atten-

87. John Mills Whitaker Journal, 21 Apr. 1893, 279.

88. Brigham H. Roberts Journal, 24 Apr. 1893.

tion on the quality and dedication of their own lives. The spirit of unity and love was palpable. "I never saw a time when everyone felt so humble and forgiving," wrote one participant following her dedication experience, "a good feeling prevails."<sup>89</sup> Even those not privy to visions or other manifestations returned to their homes uplifted and strengthened. "The dedication of this temple, has not been attended with many great visions of the appearance of angels," wrote B. H. Roberts, "but the spirit of the Lord has been there—the Holy Ghost and that is greater than the angels!"<sup>90</sup> "Pen cannot describe," wrote another participant, "the feeling I had in that most glorious place. ... I cannot express myself in words how we were all in heaven the time we were in the Temple."<sup>91</sup>

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89. Jane Wilkie Hooper Blood, "Autobiography and Abridged Diary," Ivy Hooper Blood Hill, ed., 103, Special Collections, Lee Library.

90. Brigham H. Roberts Journal, 24 Apr. 1893.

91. William Derby Johnson, Jr., Diary, 6 Apr. 1893.