

## Temples –



The Ancient Temple of Solomon



Salt Lake City Temple

Temples were a part of worship anciently, even when the Israelites were in the wilderness, they constructed a portable edifice in which they could participate in temple worship. The building of temples and the reinstatement of temple worship is an important part of “*the restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began*”. (Acts 3:21) There at this writing over one hundred and sixty temples in operation around the world with many more in the construction or planning stages.

<https://churchofjesuschristtemples.org/maps/>

<https://www.lds.org/media-library/images/categories/temples?lang=eng>

We call a temple the **House of the Lord** and I personally love to attend as I can feel a special spirit of peace there. The dress in temples is all white symbolic to me of purity and cleanliness.

What is the purpose of LDS temples and why can't non-LDS go into operating temples? – This is a common question and the answer is straightforward. Temples are not used for regular Sunday worship services like the other meeting houses of the Church. When a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints participates in the temple ceremony, he or she enters into sacred covenants, or in other words, offers vows to live by specific principles of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Only those who have demonstrated a willingness and ability to live by these principles are invited to enter into such sacred promises. Membership of the Church through baptism is an obvious prerequisite, for example. We believe that it would be detrimental to any individual to enter into such covenants without being prepared to make such commitments. Some of the covenants involved are sacred and are not discussed outside of the temples. Of course there are those who, contrary to their promises, have exposed the sacred temple ceremonies and clothing that are associated with it. This is hurtful to me, personally, as I do consider the temple covenants as very sacred.

Before a temple is dedicated, there is typically an open house for several weeks, and the public is invited through. After the dedication, the temples are closed to the public and are reserved for their sacred purposes. The sacred ceremonies in the temple involve entering into covenants or promises with the Lord to live his gospel and to serve him willingly. His part of these covenants is the promise of exaltation in his celestial

presence with our families forever and ever.

## Temple Marriage

The most sacred and special of the temple ceremonies, we call temple marriage. The Temple in Hawaii is shown in the background of this couple who have participated in what is called “The New and Everlasting Covenant of Marriage.”



Young Couple Going to the Temple, photo © 1997 IRI

Worthy couples can be married there or if already married can have their marriage sealed for eternity as opposed to the typical marriage covenant, “until death you part”. Their children are sealed or bound to them forever. The lofty promises that accompany this most sacred covenant are contingent upon the parties keeping their promises made in the temple.

Shown here is a sealing room typical of those found in all of the temples.



The couple kneel across the altar from each other while one who has been commissioned with the priesthood keys to perform such binding covenants performs the ceremony. The authority or keys to perform these eternal promises were given to Peter by the Lord as he said:

*And I will 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 same keys were a part of the restoration of the Lord's Church when Peter, James and John and other heavenly messengers returned and bestowed them upon Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery. Here one of the living apostles and prophets describes this part of the restoration.

[https://www.lds.org/media-library/video/2011-04-24-special-witness-elder-bednar?lang=eng&\\_r=1](https://www.lds.org/media-library/video/2011-04-24-special-witness-elder-bednar?lang=eng&_r=1)

Also, the very last verses in the Old Testament speaks of Elijah the Prophet returning to turn hearts of "fathers to their children" and "children to their fathers".

*5 ¶ Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD:  
6 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. (Old Testament | Malachi 4:5 - 6)*

I know of no Christian denomination that understands this very critical event that was to take place, so critical, that if it did not occur, the earth would be smitten with a curse. Elijah's return occurred on April 3, 1836 in the Kirtland Temple and Elijah conferred upon Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon, who was with him, the specific **keys** of priesthood authority "to bind on earth that which will be bound in heaven" or in other words, joining "fathers to children" and "children to fathers" and which is otherwise referred to as sealing families forever as explained above.

I am most grateful to know that I am bound by these keys of priesthood authority to my eternal companion forever with our children bound to us as we are sealed or bound to our parents in a patriarchal chain that will be an important part of the **fullness of joy** promised in the Celestial Kingdom: (see the chapter on the Plan of Salvation)

Let me explain a doctrine that has to do with eternal families that is not understood and is even criticized and mocked by some mainstream Christian leaders: To me, the generations of families is a prototype of our Heavenly Father's eternal purpose, by that I mean that we are the "**offspring of God**" as indicated in Acts 17:29 and as documented in Romans 8:16-17:

*16 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that **we are the children of God**:*

*17 And if children, then heirs; **heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ**; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. (Romans 8:16 - 17)*

To become a "joint heir with Christ" carries the promise given to the Lord that he is... "appointed heir of all things" (Hebrews 1:2) So, the scriptures are clear that if "we suffer with him" or in other words diligently follow the Lord, we will also become "heirs of all things". This concept is so very foreign to Christian professors who point to us as blasphemous to suggest such.

Surely Jesus had this potential in mind when he said:

*48 Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect. (Matthew 5:48)*

Of course, we will have no way to reach such a status without the atoning grace of Jesus Christ and unless we strive to learn and live the true gospel. The gospel is nothing more than the training guidelines to become like our Father and to become his heirs. I am sure that the typical mortal father desires that his offspring have things as good or better than they have had. Why then, is it so difficult to believe that our Heavenly Father desires to share all that he has with his children. To plan to prepare for such an inheritance is called The Plan of Salvation. I have written a chapter focusing on that title specifically and it can be made available.

### **Becoming like our Father**

One of Gods attributes as is generally accepted is that Heavenly Father has **all power**. It has been clarified through latter-day revelation, that the **priesthood power** given to every worthy man in the Lord's Church has potential to grow into the power by which the Lord created the earth and which we can characterize as **all power**. As resurrected beings we will have the capacity to learn and eventually to **know all things**, another of the attributes of our Heavenly Father.

The attribute that really is beyond mainstream Christian understanding is that all of God's children have the potential, if they prepare for it, to become heavenly parents themselves. In other words, we are here to learn and learn to live by the true gospel principles that will prepare us to not only live with our Heavenly Father and his Son Jesus Christ, but to strive to become like them. This will include the potential, as worthy resurrected beings, the capacity to produce spirit children of our own. This opportunity is described by the Lord:

*13 ¶ Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to **destruction**, and many there be which go in thereat:*

*14 Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto **life**, and few there be that find it. (Matthew 7:13 - 14)*

The word **life** is the key word here and its meaning is not clear to most. The real meaning was revealed to Joseph Smith and reads:

*22 For strait is the gate, and narrow the way that leadeth unto the **exaltation and continuation of the lives**, and few there be that find it, because ye receive me not in the world neither do ye know me.*

**Life** as is used in Matthew 7:14 means **continuing lives** or participating in populating the next generation of Spirit Children, whom those involved will help prepare for a mortal experience like ours here. This will go on generation after generation in a similar manner as our family generation. This is the eternal future for those who prepare to receive the full benefit of the Atoning sacrifice of the Lord and who enter into and keep their covenants or promises with the Lord including the likes of baptism and the covenants made in Holy Temples. These are all capped by the New and Everlasting Covenant of Marriage that seals couples and upon couples these potential opportunities if they remain worthy and keep their side of the covenants.

The word "destruction" to which the broad way leads and into which many will enter, merely is another word for damnation or death. To be damned means to be stopped in progression, and the Lord is merely saying that most will not prepare for "exaltation and the continuation of lives" or will not qualify to share in the "fullness of joy" promised to those who will thus prepare.

The revelation to the Prophet Joseph Smith refrases that verse in Matthew 7:13:

*25 Broad is the gate, and wide the way that leadeth to the **deaths**; and many there are that go in thereat, because they receive me not, neither do they abide in my law. (Doctrine and Covenants | Section 132:22 - 25)*

The death as mentioned here is spiritual death or the separation from God. This is further explained in the chapter on the Atonement of Jesus Christ.

Here is another verse which I submit uses the word **life** with the same meaning and here, John does use the word damnation rather than **destruction**.

*29 And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of **life** (meaning the continuation of lives); and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of **damnation**. (John 5:29)*

There are other passages in the Bible that begin to make more sense when we understand our real potential. For instance:

*21 To him that overcometh will I grant to **sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne**. (Revelation 3:21 )*

*5 And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, 6 And hath made us **kings and priests** unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. (Revelation 1:5 - 6)*

*16 For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: (Colossians 1:16)*

As joint heirs of Christ, we also have the capacity to inherit these same divine opportunities as has been clarified in this modern day revelation:

*29 All thrones and dominions, principalities and powers, shall be revealed and set forth upon all who have endured valiantly for the gospel of Jesus Christ. (Doctrine and Covenants | Section 121:29)*

The Lord cautioned the we should offer milk before meat as it relates to teaching the gospel, and surely this is what might be referred to as meat. I realize this is totally new to most, but I know it is true. I have been in the temple and participated in and witnessed the keys of the priesthood being exercised in binding couples and families together forever with the promise of eternal progression as here described. I have felt the peace, love and beauty of the Spirit in so doing and I know with all of my heart and soul that these things are true.