

Section 110

DC 110

Historical Background

The week leading up to April 3, 1836 had been the most dramatic week for divine manifestations, angelic ministrations, and spiritual gifts in the history of the young church. It's fair to say that a spiritual outpouring of this magnitude has not occurred since, and such a melding of heaven and earth will not likely occur again until the prophesied gathering at Adam-ondi-Ahman.

- Sunday March 27, 1836—the temple is dedicated and during an evening meeting a noise like the sound of rushing wind enters the temple, the Brethren prophesy and speak in tongues and angels fill the temple.
- Tuesday March 29, 1836—the Prophet administers the ordinance of the washing of feet to the leading brethren.
- Wednesday March 30, 1836—Again the brethren attend to the ordinance of washing the feet and the sacrament followed by another Pentecostal outpouring in which many prophecy, others speak in tongues, angels appear, and some of the brethren see the Savior.
- Thursday March 31, 1836—A second Temple Dedication meeting is held for those who could not get in the preceding Sabbath. (See *History of the Church*, 2:410-432)
- Sunday April 3, 1836—Joseph records he “attended meeting in the Lord’s House, and assisted the other Presidents of the Church in seating the congregation, and then became an attentive listener to the preaching from the stand. Thomas B. Marsh and David W. Patten spoke in the forenoon to an attentive audience of about one thousand persons. In the afternoon, I assisted the other Presidents in distributing the Lord’s Supper to the Church, receiving it from the Twelve, whose privilege it was to officiate at the sacred desk this day. After having performed this service to my brethren, I retired to the pulpit, the veils being dropped, and bowed myself, with Oliver Cowdery, in solemn and silent prayer. After rising from prayer, the following vision was opened to both of us...” (*History of the Church*, 2:434-435)

Introduction: I retired to the pulpit, the veils being dropped

For those unfamiliar with the Kirtland Temple, perhaps it should be explained that the assembly hall on the main floor had a stand and pulpit on each end of the large room. On one end were places for the presidents of the Melchizedek

Priesthood to sit. On the other end were places for the presidents of the Aaronic Priesthood to sit.

There were curtain partitions which could be dropped around a portion of the pulpit on the Melchizedek Priesthood end of the room. These veils would isolate the Prophet and Oliver from other brethren on the stand and from the congregation. It was while these curtains were dropped that Joseph and Oliver saw the vision. The rest of the congregation was kept from seeing the Lord only by the veil dropped behind the Prophet and Oliver as shown in the painting below. The Kirtland Temple did not have a veil like is common in modern temples because the endowment as performed today had not yet been revealed in its fullness.



Introduction: I... bowed myself, with Oliver Cowdery, in solemn and silent prayer

Robert D. Hales

Brothers and sisters, can we see the pattern? Every major event of the Restoration—the First Vision, the appearance of Moroni and the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, the restoration of the priesthood, and the appearance of Jesus Christ following the dedication of His holy temple—was preceded by prayer.

Since that time, 116 temples have been dedicated. I have attended a number of these sacred meetings. Dedicatory prayers have been offered. The Holy Ghost has been present in abundance. During these times, among many others, I have felt the undeniable witness of the Spirit of God, like a fire burning in my heart, that the restored gospel is true. (*Ensign*, Nov 2003, 28)

Samuel O. Bennion

It is a striking thing that at no time were any of the keys of the Priesthood restored in our time when only one man was present. Always there were two. Oliver Cowdery and Joseph Smith were together when John the Baptist restored the Aaronic Priesthood. Likewise they were together when the Melchizedek Priesthood was restored. When the keys of the gathering of Israel, of the dispensation of the Gospel in the days of Abraham, and the keys held by Elijah were brought again to the earth, these two men were together to receive them, so that in compliance with this law of witnesses, there would be more than one voice to declare the truth to the world, and so that being two, one would corroborate the other and thus establish the truth of what they said. (*Conference Report*, April 1940, Afternoon Meeting 129)

DC 110:2 We saw the Lord

For Joseph Smith to see the resurrected Lord was not a new thing. However, in previous visions, the Prophet never really described what he saw because the Father and the Son were so glorious as to “defy all description” (JS-Hist. 1:17, see also D&C 76:20-24). We should be thankful that in this account, the Prophet describes the indescribable—penned with language as sublime as any prophet of any age.

S. Dilworth Young

Here was the Lord, risen, glorified, and exalted. He had gone to his Father. He had received a fulness. He revealed himself as he was in 1836...

There is no doubt that Joseph Smith knew, loved, and worshiped the Lord with all his heart. He knew by seeing and by hearing that God lives and that Jesus is the Christ. His mission was to bear that witness so that we all could understand the truth of it, and understanding, accept and learn to part the veil and come into the presence of the Lord. All of us may know the same truths, by reading, pondering, and asking for the same knowledge. Let us fully realize these potent words:

“Verily, thus saith the Lord: It shall come to pass that every soul who forsaketh his sins and cometh unto me, and calleth on my name, and obeyeth my voice, and keepeth my commandments, shall see my face and know that I am.” (D&C 93:1.)

Then, by doing as he says, we may find him and see him and know him as he is. (“What Joseph Smith Teaches Us of Christ,” *Ensign*, Dec. 1973, 44)

Alexander B. Morrison

How fortunate we are that the testimonies and revelations of the resurrected Christ in both the Old and New Worlds have been added upon in our day... (quotes D&C 110:1–4).

Questioning, doubt, and cynicism about the role and significance of Jesus, the reality of his resurrection, and even of his historicity increasingly have become the hallmark of our age. We observe with sorrow and sadness learned scholars who, in their cynical disbelief, make a mockery of Christ, denying his virgin birth and resurrection, deriding his laws and commandments, substituting pale and pallid situational ethics for the thundering, eternally relevant certainties of the Sermon on the Mount. With no hope of Christ’s return, with faith in his divine Sonship long since dissipated, the ultimate destination of their views is the trash heap of history, for God will not be mocked. Of such the Savior proclaimed, “They draw near to me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me, they teach for doctrines the commandments of men, having a form of godliness, but they deny the power thereof” (JS—H 1:19). (“I Am the Resurrection and the Life,” *Ensign*, Apr. 1995, 40–41)

Brigham Young

Where are the individuals that can say that they know that Jesus lives? And who are the individuals that can say that his gospel is true and is the plan of salvation to man? I will let Christendom answer this question for themselves; but to me it is certain, that *no man lives on the face of the earth, no woman lives, that can say this, except those to whom Christ has revealed himself.* (1 Cor. 2:1–16; 1 Cor. 12:3.)

Though others may say in all good conscience they believe he lives—who knows the doctrine of the Lord Jesus Christ to be true? There is one class of people, and one only, that live upon the face of the earth, who do know it; and that class of men and women are those that keep his commandments and do his will; none others can say it. None others can declare with boldness, and emphatically, that Jesus lives. (“My

Friend, My Savior, My Lord, My God': Latter-day Prophets Bear Testimony of Jesus Christ," *New Era*, Dec. 1979, 8)

M. Russell Ballard

How grateful I am for revelation that has enhanced my understanding of Heavenly Father, and His Beloved Son, Jesus Christ, and their gospel. That knowledge has been a blessing in my life and in the lives of my family. Several years ago we sat together in the Kirtland Temple and tried to imagine what it would have been like for the Prophet Joseph and Oliver Cowdery to see in revealed truth "the blazing throne of God, whereon was seated the Father and the Son," or to see "the Lord standing upon the breastwork of the pulpit" and hear Him say, "Your sins are forgiven you; you are clean before me; therefore, lift up your heads and rejoice."

Can you imagine, brothers and sisters, how Joseph and Oliver must have felt as Moses, Elias, and Elijah appeared to them and committed keys, dispensations, and sealing powers—not unlike what occurred on the Mount of Transfiguration about 2,000 years before? ("Marvelous Are the Revelations of the Lord," *Ensign*, May 1998, 32)

DC 110:5 your sins are forgiven you; you are clean before me; therefore, lift up your heads and rejoice

Boyd K. Packer

What would it be worth to have announced to you, as was announced to Joseph and Oliver on this occasion, "Behold, your sins are forgiven you; you are clean before me; therefore, lift up your heads and rejoice"?

The rejoicing the Lord referred to was extended beyond those two brethren to His people in the thousands and tens of thousands who would rejoice in consequence of what would be accomplished that Sabbath day. (*The Holy Temple*, p. 134)

DC 110:8 I will appear unto my servants, and speak unto them

"An apostle of our own century, **Melvin J. Ballard**, records an experience he had in a dream:

"As I entered the door, I saw, seated on a raised platform, the most glorious Being my eyes have ever beheld or that I ever conceived

existed in all the eternal worlds. As I approached to be introduced, he arose and stepped towards me with extended arms, and he smiled as he softly spoke my name. If I shall live to be a million years old, I shall never forget that smile. He took me into his arms and kissed me, pressed me to his bosom, and blessed me, until the marrow of my bones seemed to melt! When he had finished, I fell at his feet, and, as I bathed them with my tears and kisses, I saw the prints of the nails in the feet of the Redeemer of the world. The feeling that I had in the presence of him who hath all things in his hands, to have his love, his affection, and his blessing was such that if I ever can receive that of which I had but a foretaste, I would give all that I am, all that I ever hope to be, to feel what I then felt! (Bryant S. Hinckley, *Sermons and Missionary Services of Melvin Joseph Ballard*, Deseret Book Company, 1949, p. 156.)” (Sheryl Condie Kempton, “To Be Loved by Perfect Love: John’s Special Message of the Savior,” *Ensign*, July 1976, 56)

“Upon learning of the death of President Wilford Woodruff, President Snow dressed in his holy temple robes, retired to the sacred altar in the Salt Lake Temple, and poured out his heart to the Lord. He reminded the Lord how he had pleaded that President Woodruff outlive him, that he might not be called to bear the heavy burdens and responsibilities of Church leadership. ‘Nevertheless,’ he prayed, ‘Thy will be done. I have not sought this responsibility, but if it be Thy will I will present myself before thee for Thy guidance and instruction. I ask that Thou show me what Thou wouldst have me do.’

“After finishing the prayer, he expected a reply, some special manifestation from the Lord. He waited—and waited—and waited. There was no reply, no voice, no manifestation. He left the room in deep disappointment, passed through the celestial room and out into the large corridor leading to his own room, where a most glorious manifestation was given him. One of the most beautiful accounts of this experience is given by his granddaughter, Allie Young Pond: One day she and President Snow were walking in the Salt Lake Temple, and she tells of the following conversation:

“After we left his room and while we were still in the large corridor, leading into the Celestial room, I was walking several steps ahead of Grandpa when he stopped me, saying, ‘Wait a moment, Allie, I want to tell you something. It was right here that the Lord Jesus Christ appeared to me at the time of the death of President Woodruff. ...’

“Then grandpa came a step nearer and held out his left hand and said, ‘He stood right here, about three feet above the floor. It looked as though He stood on a plate of solid gold.’

“Grandpa told me what a glorious personage the Savior is and described His hands, feet, countenance and beautiful white robes, all of which were of such a glory of whiteness and brightness that he could hardly gaze upon Him.

“Then grandpa came another step nearer me and put his right hand on my head and said: ‘Now, granddaughter, I want you to remember that this is the testimony of your grandfather, that he told you with his own lips that he actually saw the Savior here in the Temple, and talked with Him face to face.’ ” (Deseret News, Church Section, April 2, 1938, p. 8)”

(Ivan J. Barrett, “He Lives! For We Saw Him,” *Ensign*, Aug. 1975, 19-20)

Joseph Anderson

Others in this dispensation have seen the Lord. We are not restricted to the testimonies of Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon, Oliver Cowdery, and others who have seen the Lord in this day and time. We may and do know for ourselves that Jesus the Christ does live, that he is the mediator between us and the Father. We have that gift and power that Peter had when he said: “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.” (Matt. 16:16.)

We have had hands laid upon our heads by men of divine authority, men holding the priesthood of God, which has been restored to earth in our time, and have received the gift of the Holy Ghost, which is the spirit of prophecy and revelation. The Holy Ghost manifests and bears witness concerning the existence of the Father and the Son and the truth of the restored gospel of Christ.

Yes, the world needs contact with the heavens in this day and age. The world needs a prophet. Little does the world generally realize that the Lord is revealing his mind and will through his living prophets today. As Latter-day Saints and members of the Lord’s church, we are truly a light set upon a hill, and it is our privilege and responsibility to assist in the

great work of the Savior in bringing to pass the immortality and eternal life of man. (“The Living Christ,” *Ensign*, Dec. 1971, 128)

DC 110:9 the endowment with which my servants have been endowed in this house

Were the Brethren endowed prior to the dedication of the temple? Yes, they had been using the temple for instruction and early ordinance work in the weeks prior to the dedication. Were they endowed with the same ordinance we know as the endowment today? No. The endowment as we know it had not yet been received. This would come later to the Prophet Joseph in the Nauvoo years with subsequent refinement under the administration of Brigham Young. Nevertheless, the endowment they received was similar in its power and glory. In a similar fashion, it empowered the Brethren, and particularly the Twelve, to go abroad and preach the gospel to the world. The Prophet remarked that once endowed, “*then* the Elders would go forth, and each must stand for himself... to go in all meekness, in sobriety, and preach Jesus Christ and Him crucified... This I delivered by way of commandment; and all who observe it... shall always be filled with the Holy Ghost; this I pronounced as a prophecy, and sealed with hosanna and amen.” (*History of the Church*, 2:431) The endowment received prior to missionary service would be the pattern for later generations as well.

Joseph Smith

Wednesday, [March 30, 1836].—At eight o'clock, according to appointment, the Presidency, the Twelve, the Seventies, the High Council, the Bishops and their entire quorums, the Elders and all the official members in this stake of Zion, amounting to about three hundred, met in the Temple of the Lord to attend to the ordinance of washing of feet. . . .

Tubs, water, and towels were prepared, and I called the house to order, and the Presidency proceeded to wash the feet of the Twelve, pronouncing many prophecies and blessings upon them in the name of the Lord Jesus; and then the Twelve proceeded to wash the feet of the Presidents of the several quorums. The brethren began to prophesy upon each other's heads, and upon the enemies of Christ, who inhabited Jackson county, Missouri; and continued prophesying, and blessing, and sealing them with hosanna and amen, until nearly seven o'clock in the evening. (*History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 7 Vols. 2:430, 431)

DC 110:10 the fame of this house shall spread to foreign lands

Boyd K. Packer

At this time the Lord prophesied that the “fame of this house shall spread to foreign lands.” (D&C 110:10.) That, under the circumstances then existing, was at best improbable. The Church members were but a handful of Saints living and scattered in the rural areas of a new land. But despite the persecution and struggles and trials of those early days, there are congregations now spread literally across the world, and tens of thousands of missionaries bear witness at every door where they are welcome. (*The Holy Temple*, 135)

DC 110:11 Moses...committed unto us the keys of the gathering of Israel

The ministry of Moses is symbolic. The children of Israel had gone astray. After over 400 years of living in Egypt, they had lost the spirit and gospel of their fathers. Moses brought them out of that lost and fallen state. In scripture, Egypt is often symbolic of Babylon or the world. Moses literally gathered the Israelites and took them out of Egypt. His intent was to bring them into the promised land as a people prepared to enjoy the presence of God.

Figuratively speaking, the President of the Church is doing the same thing. The scattered Israelites throughout the world must be gathered in. They must come out of spiritual Babylon and enjoy the blessings of the covenant. The goal is to prepare them for the literal building of Zion wherein they will enjoy the very presence of Jehovah.

Harold B. Lee

The spirit of gathering has been with the Church from the days of that restoration. Those who are of the blood of Israel, have a righteous, desire after they are baptized, to gather together with the body of the Saints at the designated place. This, we have come to recognize, is but the breath of God upon those who are converted turning them to the promises made to their fathers. (*Conference Report, April 1948, Afternoon Meeting 55.*)

Bruce R. McConkie

With increasing power and in great glory, we have gathered, from their Egyptian bondage as it were, the dispersed of Ephraim and a few

others, initially to the mountains of America, but now into the stakes of Zion in the various nations of the earth. The gathering of Israel is a reality. When the ten tribes return they will come at the direction of the President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, for he now holds and will then hold the keys of presidency and direction for this mighty work. (“This Final Glorious Gospel Dispensation,” *Ensign*, Apr. 1980, 22)

DC 110:11 the leading of the ten tribes from the land of the north

Israel must be gathered in two great movements: 1) the individual gathering of those scattered throughout the earth, and 2) the collective return of the ten tribes from the land of the north. **Elder Bruce R. McConkie** put it this way: “The gathering of Israel is one thing, the return of the Ten Tribes to a specified place is another; and Moses gave to men in our day the keys and power to perform both labors.” (*The Millennial Messiah: The Second Coming of the Son of Man* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1982], 322.)

When the ten tribes come, they will come with their scriptures, their prophets, and their history. **President Kimball** said, “They will return with their prophets, and their sacred records will be a third witness for Christ.” (*Conference Report, October 1959, Afternoon Meeting* 61.)

James E. Talmage

Some people say...the “Lost Tribes” are now being gathered; but that we are not to look for the return of any body of people now unknown as to their whereabouts. True, the gathering is in progress, this is a gathering dispensation; but the prophecy stands that the tribes shall be brought forth from their hiding place bringing their scriptures with them, which scriptures shall become one with the scriptures of the Jews, the holy Bible, and with the scriptures of the Nephites, the Book of Mormon, and with the scriptures of the Latter-day Saints as embodied in the volumes of modern revelation. (Gerald N. Lund, *The Coming of the Lord* [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1971], 163.)

Joseph Fielding Smith

Another striking statement pointing to the fact that these people are now in a body in preparation for their return is the statement by the **Prophet Joseph Smith** at the conference held in Kirtland, June 3 to 6, 1831. At this conference the Prophet said: “John the Revelator was then among

the ten tribes of Israel who had been led away by Shalmaneser, king of Assyria, to prepare them for their return from their long dispersion.” The Savior also bore witness that these tribes were in a body like the Nephites and he would visit them. (3 Nephi 15:20 and 16:1-4.) (*Signs of the Times* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1952], 159.)

Orson Pratt

After Zion is built in Jackson County, and after the Temple is built upon that spot of ground where the corner stone was laid in 1831; after the glory of God in the form of a cloud by day shall rest upon that Temple, and by night the shining of a flaming fire that will fill the whole heavens round about; after every dwelling place upon Mount Zion shall be clothed upon as with a pillar of fire by night, and a cloud by day, about that period of time, the ten tribes will be heard of, away in the north, a great company, as Jeremiah says, coming down from the northern regions, coming to sing in the height of the latter-day Zion. Their souls will be as a watered garden, and they will not sorrow any more at all, as they have been doing during the twenty-five hundred long years they have dwelt in the Arctic regions. They will come, and the Lord will be before their camp, he will utter his voice before that great army, and he will lead them forth as he led Israel in ancient days. This long chain of Rocky Mountains, that extends from the cold regions of the north away into South America, will feel the power of God, and will tremble before the hosts of Israel as they come to sing on the heights of Zion. In that day the trees of the field will clap like hands, says the Prophet, and in that day the Lord will open waters in the wilderness, and streams in the desert, to give drink to his chosen, his people Israel. And when they come to the height of Zion they shall be crowned with glory under the hands of the servants of God living in those days, the children of Ephraim, crowned with certain blessings that pertain to the Priesthood, that they could not receive in their own lands. (Gerald N. Lund, *The Coming of the Lord* [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1971], 164.)

DC 110:12 After this, Elias appeared

The identity of this Elias is not clear. Elias is a title which can be used to refer to an individual with a preparatory function or a restorative function. In this case, Elias restored the keys of Abraham’s dispensation in preparation for the Second Coming. Well who was this Elias? Joseph Fielding Smith, with good reason, stated that this Elias was Noah (see Joseph Fielding Smith, *Answers to Gospel Questions*, 5 vols. [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1957-1966],

3:139-141.). Elder Bruce R. McConkie felt it was an individual who lived in the days of Abraham. Hence the Bible Dictionary states, “A man called Elias apparently lived in mortality in the days of Abraham, who committed the dispensation of the gospel of Abraham to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery in the Kirtland (Ohio) Temple on April 3, 1836 (D&C 110:12). We have no specific information as to the details of his mortal life or ministry.”

Bruce R. McConkie

After Moses, came Elias. We know not who he was in mortality. There were many prophets who bore that name and title. One was Noah. Apparently this Elias lived in the day of Abraham, and may even have been Abraham himself. In any event he “committed the dispensation of the gospel of Abraham” (D&C 110:12)—not, be it noted, the gospel of Christ, for that had already been received, but the gospel of Abraham, meaning the great commission which God gave Abraham in his day. That commission dealt with families, those of Abraham and his seed, who were and are promised continuance “in the world and out of the world ... as innumerable as the stars; or, if ye were to count the sand upon the seashore ye could not number them” (D&C 132:30). (“This Final Glorious Gospel Dispensation,” *Ensign*, Apr. 1980, 22–23)

DC 110:12 the dispensation of the gospel of Abraham

Bruce R. McConkie

Thus Elias brought back the great commission given to Abraham—called in the revelation “the gospel of Abraham”—which gospel or commission was that in Abraham and in his seed all generations would be blessed; which commission was that all the seed of Abraham had the right to the continuation of the family unit in eternity and to eternal increase, which is part of eternal life. Such, as we have seen, was the promise made to the fathers. (“A New Commandment: Save Thyself and Thy Kindred!” *Ensign*, Aug. 1976, 10)

Bruce R. McConkie

And so, the Lord be praised, the marriage discipline of Abraham was restored; it is the system that enables a family unit to continue in eternity; it is the system out of which eternal life grows. The laws and conditions pertaining to this holy order of matrimony in the new and everlasting covenant constitute “the promises made to the fathers,” which, as Moroni said (quoting Malachi),

were to be planted “in the hearts of the children” (D&C 2:2). (“This Final Glorious Gospel Dispensation,” *Ensign*, Apr. 1980, 23)

DC 110:12 in us and our seed all generations after us should be blessed

The blood of Israel has blessed mankind for many centuries. Certainly, this promise has reference to the blessings available through the gospel and priesthood ordinances, but the meaning doesn't end there. In large measure, those of Israelite blood have been leaders in all fields of study, whether science, philosophy, politics, arts, or economics. The scattering of Israel sprinkled some light and knowledge wherever it occurred such that all mankind has benefited from the promise made to Abraham.

John Taylor

That was the promise made to Abraham some 3,500 years ago. It was not a promise made to Abraham alone, but through him to others. He and his seed were to be the instrumentality, the media through which mankind should be blessed; they were to be the special instruments in the hands of God for the accomplishment of these purposes. Hence the Priesthood began to be organized... Things as they existed in the heavens again began to be introduced upon the earth. Hence, that His servants might be properly instructed and comprehend correctly the great principles which He designed to unfold to the human family, He sent those several messengers holding those various keys that they might unlock the doors and place His servants in communication with the heavenly Priesthood in the eternal worlds. (*Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. [London: Latter-day Saints' Book Depot, 1854-1886], 25: 181.)

DC 110:13 Elijah the prophet...stood before us

“Elijah did come. He came to the Kirtland Temple on April 3, 1836. (See D&C 110:13–16.) Jewish literature is replete with the promise and expectation of Elijah's coming. That is the last promise of the Old Testament, in the last verses of Malachi. And it is Jewish tradition that on the second night of Passover they must leave open the door and place at the table head an empty chair and a goblet full of wine in the expectation that Elijah may come. It is interesting, especially in light of that Jewish tradition, that April 3, 1836, was the second day of Passover. The symbolism is beautiful. Elijah comes, as they expect, to a home. He comes to a goblet of wine—the sacramental wine. He comes

to turn hearts, which is more than changing minds—he turns hearts to hearts.” (Truman Madsen, *The Radiant Light*, p. 106-7)

Joseph Fielding Smith

“Among the Jews [Elijah the Tishbite] finds a place of honor in their history second to none of the prophets...It was, I am informed, on the third day of April, 1836, that the Jews, in their homes at the Paschal feast, opened their doors for Elijah to enter. On that very day Elijah did enter—not in the home of the Jews to partake of the Passover with them—but he appeared in the house of the Lord, erected to his name and received by the Lord in Kirtland, and there bestowed his keys to bring to pass the very things for which these Jews, assembled in their homes, were seeking.” (*Doctrines of Salvation*, 2:100-1)

The story of Elijah’s return is unknown to those Jews who for Millennia have awaited his return. Obviously, there is no need to wait for him any longer. This became the subject of conversation between **Elder LeGrand Richards** and the Mayor of Jerusalem, Teddy Kollek. Elder Richards had just dedicated the Orson Hyde Memorial Garden on the Mount of Olives. After the ceremony, the two conversed as they ate lunch:

“Elder Richards...said, ‘Mayor, I want to tell you something.’

“‘What's that?’ asked the mayor.

“Looking Mayor Kollek directly in the eye, the apostle said, ‘Ten years ago I was here in Jerusalem, and one day I went into three synagogues, and hanging up on the wall in one of them was a large armchair. I asked the rabbi what it was there for (I knew, but I wanted him to tell me, which he did). He said that it was so that if Elijah comes, 'we can lower the chair and let him sit in it.' Now, Mayor, I want to tell you something, and what I tell you is the truth. Elijah has already been. On the third day of April 1836 he appeared to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery in the Kirtland Temple.’

“The mayor said, ‘I guess I'd better tell them to take that chair down.’”
(Lucile C. Tate, *Beloved Apostle*, p. 301)

A. Theodore Tuttle

Even today, in connection with the feast of the Passover, they will reenact the scene as they have done for centuries: they will set a place at their table, reserve an empty chair, open the door, raise their cups, and rise as if to greet Elijah.

Elijah has returned! Thanks be to God! He bestowed his keys! Work could now commence in the temples to weld eternal links between husbands and wives, between parents and children, through the sealing power of God.

It is essential to obtain the sealing power of the holy priesthood so that whatsoever an authorized officiator shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven and whatsoever he shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. (See D&C 127:7.) For in the sacred ordinances and through this sacred power come glory and honor and eternal life. (See D&C 128:11–12.)

It is by this power that husband and wife are sealed in a never-ending bond of marriage. It is by this power that a welding link is forged between children and parents. This is the holy power that is exercised in the temple. It is the power that validates all ordinances in the Church. This is the consummate authority in the kingdom of God.

Without the authority and use of that power, in all ages of the world, none of our Heavenly Father's children can enter His presence or ever become like Him! And if this were not so, the whole purpose of existence would be useless. That is why the Lord said "the whole earth would be utterly wasted at his coming." (D&C 2:3.) ("The First and the Last Words," *Ensign*, May 1982, 65-66)

DC 110:14 Behold, the time has fully come, which was spoken of by the mouth of Malachi

If April 1836 marked the moment when the time had "*fully come*," then previously the prophecy must have been fulfilled *in part*. The partial fulfillment of Malachi's prophecy occurred in the meridian of time. John the Baptist's mission (Luke 1:17) played a role in turning the hearts of the fathers to the children (see commentary for Luke 1:17). Furthermore, Peter, James, and John received these same keys from Elijah while on the Mount of Transfiguration. Moses, Christ, and Elias, or Elijah, on the Mount of Transfiguration transferred essential priesthood keys to Peter, James, and John. Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery had a temple rather than mountain

revelation but the purpose was the same, to transfer essential priesthood keys. If you think about it, Peter, James, and John had to hold these keys—otherwise how could the early saints perform baptisms for the dead as Paul asked, “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?” (1 Cor. 15:29).

Boyd K. Packer

And so it had happened. Elijah had returned. Or we might say it had happened again. For, as we have related, some eighteen hundred years previously Moses had appeared with Elijah on the Mount of Transfiguration. They had conveyed the keys of the priesthood to Peter, James, and John. The Lord Himself had made the introduction, as he now had in the Kirtland Temple. (*The Holy Temple* [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1980], 134)

DC 110:15 to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the children to the fathers

Howard W. Hunter

Does it seem reasonable that persons who have lived upon the earth and died without the opportunity of baptism should be deprived throughout eternity? Is there anything unreasonable about the living performing the baptisms for the dead? Perhaps the greatest example of vicarious work for the dead is the Master himself. He gave his life as a vicarious atonement, that all who die shall live again and have life everlasting. He did for us what we could not do for ourselves. In a similar way we can perform ordinances for those who did not have the opportunity to do them in lifetime. (Russell M. Nelson, “The Spirit of Elijah,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1994, 84)

Spencer W. Kimball

We do not know how many millions of spirits are involved. We know that many have passed away in wars, pestilence, and in various accidents. We know that the spirit world is filled with the spirits of men who are waiting for you and me to get busy. ...

We wonder about our progenitors—grandparents, great-grandparents, great-great-grandparents, etc. What do they think of you and me? We are their offspring. We have the responsibility to do their temple work,

and the beautiful temples of the Lord stand day after day, yet we do not fill them always. We have a grave responsibility that we cannot avoid, and may stand in jeopardy if we fail to do this important work. (“The Things of Eternity—Stand We in Jeopardy?” *Ensign*, Jan. 1977, 5).

Brigham Young

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. Now, all you children, are you looking to the salvation of your fathers? Are you seeking diligently to redeem those 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. 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. (*Discourses of Brigham Young*, selected and arranged by John A. Widtsoe [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1954], 408.)

James E. Faust

President Joseph Fielding Smith stated concerning the keys of Elijah: “This sealing power bestowed upon Elijah, is the power which binds husbands and wives, and children to parents for time and eternity. It is the binding power existing in every Gospel ordinance. ... It was the mission of Elijah to come, and restore it so that the curse of confusion and disorder would not exist in the kingdom of God.” (*Elijah the Prophet and His Mission*, Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1957, p. 5.) Confusion and disorder are all too common in society, but they must not be permitted to destroy our homes.

Perhaps we regard the power bestowed by Elijah as something associated only with formal ordinances performed in sacred places. But these ordinances become dynamic and productive of good only as they reveal themselves in our daily lives. Malachi said that the power of Elijah would turn the hearts of the fathers and the children to each other. The heart is the seat of the emotions and a conduit for revelation. (See Mal. 4:5–6.) This sealing power thus reveals itself in family relationships, in attributes and virtues developed in a nurturing environment, and in loving service. These are the cords that bind

families together, and the priesthood advances their development. In imperceptible but real ways, the “doctrine of the priesthood shall distil upon thy soul [and thy home] as the dew from heaven.” (D&C 121:45.) (“Father, Come Home,” *Ensign*, May 1993, 37)

Harold B. Lee

If we neglect our families here in having family home night and we fail in our responsibility here, how would heaven look if we lost some of those through our own neglect? Heaven would not be heaven until we have done everything we can to save those whom the Lord has sent through our lineage. So, the hearts of you fathers and mothers must be turned to your children right now, if you have the true Spirit of Elijah, and not think that it applies merely to those who are beyond the veil. Let your hearts be turned to your children, and teach your children; but you must do it when they are young enough to be schooled. And if you are neglecting your family home evening, you are neglecting the beginning of the mission of Elijah just as certainly as if you were neglecting your research work of genealogy. (*The Teachings of Harold B. Lee*, edited by Clyde J. Williams [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1996], 281.)

DC 110:15 lest the whole earth be smitten with a curse

Elray L. Christiansen

Thus, my brothers and sisters, has the fulfillment of Malachi's prophecy come to pass in this time of ours? He has come, and the powers that were given to Joseph have been extended to others, so that the people of the whole world might, if they will, be blessed, and so that all of the ordinances of the gospel might be administered to in power and in righteousness.

Now, I know that men say, and they have said to me, “We do not believe this.” But the disbelief of a million men does not change the fact! The restoration of this priesthood will, as has been predicted, save the earth from being utterly wasted at the coming of the Lord, otherwise his purposes would be thwarted; and we are told he has said that his purposes and his designs will not be frustrated, but only the designs and the purposes and the acts of men will be brought to naught. (*Conference Report, April 1954, Afternoon Meeting 92 - 93*)

DC 110:16 the keys of this dispensation are committed into your hands

David B. Haight

The divine keys, power, and authority have been committed by heavenly messengers to Joseph Smith in this, the dispensation of the fulness of times. Those keys—the same that were delivered to Peter, James, and John on the mountain—authorize us to carry the true gospel to all nations to declare the power, glory, and majesty of our Lord Jesus Christ and to warn that the day of his coming is near. A prophet of God holds these keys of authority today. We invite people everywhere to inquire further into this divine message we have to offer to all mankind. (*A Light unto the World* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1997], 13)

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