

**“HOW THANKFUL WE SHOULD BE  
TO KNOW THE TRUTH”:  
ZEBEDEE COLTRIN’S WITNESS OF THE  
HEAVENLY ORIGINS OF TEMPLE ORDINANCES**

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*Abstract: In this article, we examine circumstantial evidence for the claim of Zebedee Coltrin, contained in a secondhand report within a heretofore unpublished letter, that Jesus Christ came personally to the Kirtland Temple over an extended period to give instruction about temple work. After summarizing what Joseph Smith seems to have known about temple ordinances by 1836, we attempt to show when and how the experience reported in the letter might have occurred. We give short biographies of the participants in the story of the letter: Luna Ardell “Dell” Hinckley Paul, Zebedee Coltrin, and “Brother Potter.” We cite Matthew. B. Brown’s observations on the question of why it might have been expedient that the Saints wait several years before receiving the full complement of temple ordinances that were eventually administered in Nauvoo. Both a typescript and a reproduction of the manuscript of the letter are provided, as is an additional letter to family members from co-author K-Lynn Paul describing the circumstances under which his grandmother’s letter was found and donated to the Church. The Dell Paul letter is consistent with arguments that the Prophet learned much about temple ordinances through personal experiences with heavenly beings, translations, and revelations as much as a decade before he got to Nauvoo. If the letter’s claim that Jesus Christ “stood and talked to them just as I am talking to you” is accurately reported, it provides an additional witness of the Savior’s frequent presence in Kirtland in 1836.*

Some people dismiss Joseph Smith's story about the coming forth of the Book of Mormon a priori, having already concluded that "you don't get books from angels and translate them by miracles."<sup>1</sup> Others find the Prophet's claim of divine origins for LDS temple ordinances equally incredible — arguing instead, for example, that "the rituals of Masonry" provided the "starting point"<sup>2</sup> for the sacred ceremonies that were administered in Nauvoo.<sup>3</sup> Individuals who accept premises of this sort sometimes have come to "see the evolution of the temple as very organic, growing out of the mind of Joseph, not God."<sup>4</sup>

To anyone who rejects outright the possibility of actual visits from heavenly messengers, the present article will have little interest. But others who are foolish enough to accept "the absurdity of seeing visions in the age of railways"<sup>5</sup> may be interested to know something about a recently discovered letter written by Luna Ardell "Dell" Hinckley Paul that attests to extended divine appearances that occurred in the Kirtland Temple in 1836.

In this article, we examine circumstantial evidence for the letter's specific claim, based on a secondhand report, that Jesus Christ came personally to the Kirtland Temple over a two-week period to give instruction about temple work. We begin by summarizing what Joseph Smith seems to have known about the temple by 1836. Then we provide a historical overview and a discussion of the significance of the claim. Afterward, we discuss alternatives for the dating of the event described in the letter, the provenance of the letter, and give brief biographies of the three individuals important to its story: Luna Ardell Hinckley Paul, Zebedee Coltrin, and "Brother Potter." Following a conjectural timeline of events, we reproduce a typescript of the letter itself. The article continues with a discussion of some possible reasons argued by Matthew B. Brown for why it might have been expedient to wait until the Saints gathered to Nauvoo to receive the full complement of temple ordinances. A first appendix reproduces a digital scan of the letter made by the Church History Library in 2016, and a second contains excerpts from a letter K-Lynn Paul wrote to family members on 9 June 2015.

### **What Did Joseph Smith Know About the Temple by 1836?**

Latter-day Saints have long known that the most significant features of modern LDS temple-related doctrines and practices were already evident in the translations, revelations, experiences, and teachings of Joseph Smith in the 1830s and earlier.<sup>6</sup> In addition, striking resemblances

between modern temple work and ancient ritual practices that pre-date Masonry have been well documented.<sup>7</sup>

Specific knowledge about temple matters that seems to have been known by the Prophet by 1836 includes: 1) the narrative backbone, covenants, and clothing of the modern temple endowment; 2) the sequence of blessings of the oath and covenant of the priesthood, including additional ordinances; and 3) priesthood keys symbolized in words, signs, and tokens. In this section we provide only a brief summary of what Joseph Smith seems to have learned about the temple early in his ministry. More extensive information and documentation has been published elsewhere.<sup>8</sup>

**Narrative backbone, covenants, and clothing, of the modern temple endowment.** Many accounts in scripture relate experiences of heavenly ascent, in which individuals may be transfigured temporarily in order to see God in actuality face to face. The LDS temple endowment depicts a figurative journey that brings the worshipper step-by-step into the presence of God.<sup>9</sup> Significantly, the sequence of events described in accounts of heavenly ascent often resembles the same general pattern symbolized in temple ritual, so that reading scriptural accounts of heavenly ascent can help Latter-day Saints make sense of temple ritual, and experiencing temple ritual can help them prepare for an eventual entrance into the presence of God.<sup>10</sup> In that sense, heavenly ascent can be understood as the “completion or fulfillment” of the “types and images” of temple ritual.<sup>11</sup>

By 1830, Joseph Smith would have been familiar with many accounts of those who had actually encountered God face to face. Indeed, while still a boy he had experienced a visit of the Father and the Son as part of his First Vision.<sup>12</sup> In translating the Book of Mormon, Joseph Smith learned the stories of other prophets who had seen the Lord, including the detailed account of how the heavenly veil was removed for the brother of Jared so that he could personally come to know the premortal Jesus Christ.<sup>13</sup>

From the point of view of temple ritual, in contrast to heavenly ascent, the Book of Mormon seems to have provided an important formative influence for Joseph Smith on temple-related doctrines and practices.<sup>14</sup> However, the most significant early tutoring that Joseph Smith received



**Figures 1 and 2.** Arnold Friberg (1913–2010): *The Brother of Jared Sees the Finger of God*, 1951; Walter Rane (1949–): *The Desires of My Heart*, 2004.

likely came in 1830 and 1831 with his translation of the early chapters of Genesis, canonized in LDS scripture as the book of Moses. The book of Moses makes significant additions to the Bible account that throw additional light on temple doctrines and ordinances. Significantly, these additions, mainly dealing with events that occurred after the Fall, also illustrate the same covenants introduced to the Saints more than a decade later in the Nauvoo temple endowment.<sup>15</sup> Following a prologue in chapter 1 of Moses that relates his heavenly ascent, the remainder of the book of Moses provided the central narrative backbone and covenants for the Nauvoo temple endowment — an outline of the way in which the Saints could come into the presence of God ritually.

As he translated the Bible in 1830–1833, Joseph Smith would have come across descriptions of temple clothing.<sup>16</sup> For instance, he would have been familiar with the story of the fig leaf apron and the coats of skins in the account of Adam and Eve<sup>17</sup> and the robes of the temple priests in the book of Exodus,<sup>18</sup> which were patterned after the clothing of heavenly beings. The temple clothing of Israelite priests symbolized the heavenly clothing that would someday supersede it.<sup>19</sup>

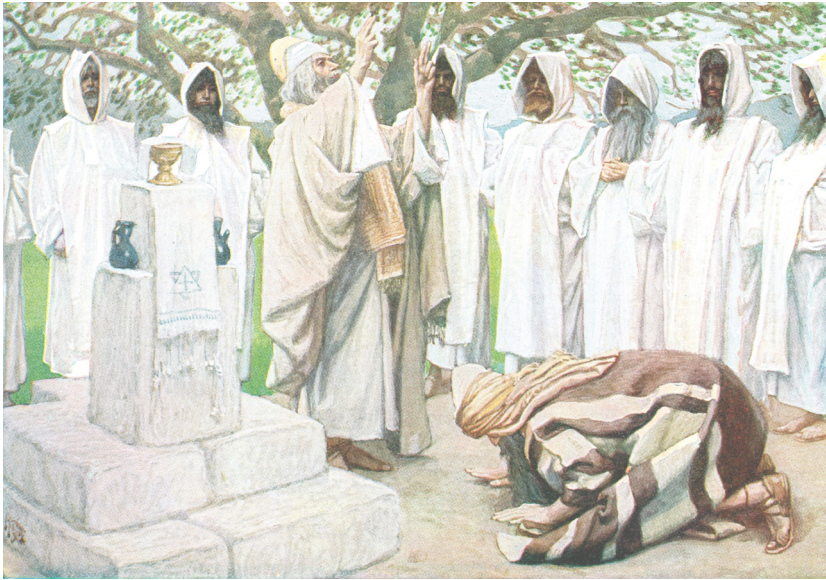
It was reported in late retrospection of an 1833 incident that the Prophet had seen Michael the Archangel “several times,” “clothed in white from head to foot,” with a “peculiar cap, ... a white robe, underclothing, and moccasins.”<sup>20</sup>



**Figure 3.** *God Dressing Adam and Eve.* Detail of the Creation Cupola, San Marco, Venice, thirteenth century.

According to Hugh Nibley, the white undergarment used anciently represents “the proper preexistent glory of the wearer,<sup>21</sup> while the [outer garment of the high priest] is the priesthood later added to it.”<sup>22</sup> In Israelite temples, the high priest changed his clothing as he moved to areas of the temple that reflected differing degrees of sacredness.<sup>23</sup> These changes in clothing mirror details both of the nakedness of Adam and Eve and the garments they wore in different parts of their garden sanctuary.<sup>24</sup>

**Sequence of blessings of the oath and covenant of the priesthood, including additional ordinances.** The temple endowment was only one part of the extended sequence of ordinances of exaltation that were revealed over time to the Prophet. As Joseph Smith continued his translation of the Old Testament beyond the chapters contained in the book of Moses, he learned of righteous individuals whose experiences provided a further tutorial about temple ordinances and the priesthood as they existed anciently. For example, between December 1830 and June 1831, Joseph Smith translated Old Testament chapters that described the plural marriages of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the New Testament account of the Sadducees’ question about marriage in the resurrection.<sup>25</sup> By at least 1835, Joseph Smith had begun teaching the principle of eternal marriage to others such as William W. Phelps, who was told that he and his wife were “certain to be one in the Lord throughout eternity” if they continued “faithful to the end.”<sup>26</sup> In 1835, William W. Phelps mentioned



**Figure 4.** J. James Tissot (1836–1902): *The Offerings of Melchizedek*, ca. 1896–1902.

new light he had received from the Prophet on the subject of exaltation and eternal marriage, wherein those who would become “the sons of God” would dwell in “a kingdom of glory ... where the man is neither without the woman, nor the woman without the man in the Lord.”<sup>27</sup>

Additional revelations and teachings of Joseph Smith, in conjunction with the ongoing work of Bible translation, elaborated on the accounts of righteous individuals such as Melchizedek and Elijah, explaining how the priesthood authority they held related to additional ordinances and blessings that could be given in the temple after one had already received the endowment and been sealed in eternal marriage covenants.<sup>28</sup> For example, he learned that the blessings of the fulness of the Melchizedek Priesthood belong to one who is made a “king and a priest unto God, bearing rule, authority, and dominion under the Father.”<sup>29</sup> Correspondingly, he learned that worthy women may receive the blessings of becoming queens and priestesses.<sup>30</sup> Fittingly, these blessings were associated with the name of Melchizedek because he was both the great “king of Salem” and “the priest of the most high God,”<sup>31</sup> and the one who ordained Abraham to this same priesthood.<sup>32</sup> Later kings of Israel as well as Jesus Christ Himself, were declared to be part of the “order of Melchizedek,”<sup>33</sup> which was originally called “the Order of the Son of God.”<sup>34</sup> Additional revelatory insights of the Prophet relating to these crowning ordinances are especially evident in the changes he made in his translation of the Gospel of John and the Epistle to the Hebrews.<sup>35</sup>

The orderly sequence of blessings that culminates in the fulness of the priesthood was summarized in D&C 124:39 on January 19, 1841,<sup>36</sup> and again in a firsthand description of the events of May 4, 1842,<sup>37</sup> the day the Prophet Joseph Smith began to administer temple ordinances in the upper story of the Red Brick Store. Significantly, however, the most complete list of these ordinances and blessings is found in D&C 84:32–44, given in 1832.<sup>38</sup>

**Priesthood keys symbolized in words, signs, and tokens.** Though some regard the keys of the priesthood taught in the temple as having “only the most peripheral doctrinal significance,”<sup>39</sup> the teachings of Joseph Smith and Brigham Young make it clear that they are as essential in the next life as they are in this one.<sup>40</sup> For example, D&C 132 teaches that as a requirement for entering into “exaltation and glory” within the heavenly temple, the candidate for eternal life must be able to “pass by the angels, and the gods.”<sup>41</sup> Elaborating details of this requirement, Brigham Young taught that in order to do so, the Saints must be “able to give them the key words, the signs and tokens, pertaining to the Holy Priesthood.”<sup>42</sup>

“Keywords” have been associated with temples since very early times. In a temple context, the meaning of the term can be taken quite literally: the use of the appropriate key word or words by a qualified worshipper, “unlocks” the gate for access to specific, secured areas of the sacred space.<sup>43</sup> Because the ultimate efficacy of temple ordinances depends as much on what worshippers have *become* as what they *know*, keywords are always closely associated with names. Indeed, Joseph Smith taught that “The new name *is* the key word.”<sup>44</sup> According to René Guénon, “all ancient traditions agree that the true name of a living thing reflects precisely its nature or its very essence.”<sup>45</sup> This idea is consistent with Old Testament examples of figures such as Abraham, Sarah, and Jacob who received new names only after God had tested their integrity.<sup>46</sup>

The theme of God’s disclosure of His own name to those who approach the final gate to enter His presence is pervasive in the ancient Near East. It is also reminiscent of the explanations of Facsimile 2 from the book of Abraham that date to sometime between 1835 and 1841.<sup>47</sup> In Figure 7 of that facsimile, God is pictured as “sitting upon his throne, revealing through the heavens the grand Key-words of the Priesthood.” Similarly, to take upon oneself the name of Jesus Christ in actuality is to identify with Him to such a degree that we become one with Him in every aspect of saving knowledge and personal character.<sup>48</sup> As Hugh Nibley explained: “The importance of knowing the names of things and giving those names when challenged is more than the mere idea of the

password; it is ... nothing less than ... ‘the law which makes of the name a veritable attribute of the thing named.’<sup>49</sup>

In 1829, Joseph Smith would have encountered this principle as he translated the words of King Benjamin,<sup>50</sup> who described how, at the last day, God would call by the name of Christ all those who had taken upon themselves the nature of Christ,<sup>51</sup> while calling all those who did not thus qualify by a different name that would reflect their different nature.

The use of “signs” and “tokens” as symbols connected with covenants made in temples and used as aids in sacred teaching is an ancient practice.<sup>52</sup> For example, the raised hand is a long-recognized sign of oath-taking,<sup>53</sup> and the Ark of the Covenant in the Tabernacle contained various tangible “tokens of the covenant”<sup>54</sup> relating to the priesthood, including the golden pot that had manna, Aaron’s rod that budded, and the tablets of the law.<sup>55</sup>



Figure 5. Impression Seal of Gudea, Tello, Iraq, ca. 2150 BCE.

By way of analogy to a possible function of the items within the Ark of the Covenant — items that symbolized priesthood<sup>56</sup> — consider the Greek Eleusinian Mysteries,<sup>57</sup> which endured over a period of nearly two thousand years. These rites were said to consist of *legomena* (= things recited), *deiknymena* (= things shown), and *dromena* (= things performed). A sacred casket contained the tokens of the god, which were used to teach initiates about the meaning of the rites. At the culmination of the process, the initiate was examined about his knowledge of these tokens. “Having passed the tests of the tokens and their passwords, ... the initiate would have been admitted to the presence of the god.”<sup>58</sup>

In addition to a physical representation within sacred containers such as the Ark of the Covenant, tokens could be expressed anciently in the form of a handclasp,<sup>59</sup> “a precise image for absolutely unique individuality



and perfectly joined unity<sup>60</sup> that could be used both in tests of knowledge and identity as well as in acts of recognition and reunion. In this respect, the two-armed embrace found in some ancient temple rituals can be seen as an intensification and a fulfillment of the handclasp gesture because it signifies not only an unbreakable bond between two individuals but also provides powerful symbol that signifies absolute unity and oneness between them. Matthew L. Bowen argues persuasively that the embrace described in Moses 7:63 is one of several temple motifs that Joseph Smith would have encountered in his translation of the account of Enoch in December 1830.

Both the handclasp and the sacred embrace may represent not only mutual love and trust but also a transfer of life and power from one individual to another. In what Willard Richards called “the sweetest sermon from Joseph he ever heard in his life,”<sup>61</sup> the Prophet described a vision of the resurrection that, like analogous Mandaean rituals symbolizing steps in one’s return to God after death,<sup>62</sup> included a handclasp and an embrace:<sup>63</sup>

So plain was the vision. I actually saw men, before they had ascended from the tomb, as though they were getting up slowly. They *took each other by the hand*, and it was, “My father and my son, my mother and my daughter, my brother and my sister.” And when the voice calls for the dead to arise, suppose I am laid by the side of my father, what would be the first joy of my heart? Where is my father, my mother, my sister? They are by my side. I *embrace* them, and they me.

Of course, the keywords, names, signs, and tokens would be of no importance as symbols of authentication unless deception were a real possibility. Documenting such deception, the Apostle Paul, drawing on early Jewish tradition,<sup>64</sup> spoke of Satan transforming himself “into an angel of light.”<sup>65</sup> With similar language, Joseph Smith also spoke of the devil having appeared deceptively to him “as an angel of light.”<sup>66</sup>

When did Joseph Smith first learn about the keys by which he could detect true messengers from false ones? Arguably, on May 15, 1829, when John the Baptist restored the “keys of the ministering of angels”<sup>67</sup> to him and Oliver Cowdery.<sup>68</sup> If this experience was the same as the one reported in D&C 128:20 as having taken place “on the banks of the Susquehanna,”<sup>69</sup> it seems that Satan appeared in order to deceive the Prophet and thwart the restoration of priesthood authority. As the Prophet later recorded, Michael (or Adam) then came to his aid, “detecting the devil when he appeared as an angel of light!”<sup>70</sup> “Thus,” according to Joseph Fielding McConkie and Craig Ostler, “the right to receive the ministrations of angels and the ability to discern true messengers of God from counterfeits came before the Church was organized.”<sup>71</sup> Significantly, an account of how

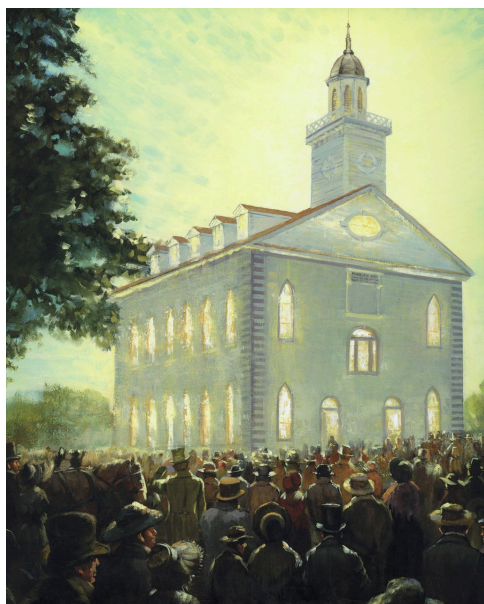
Moses recognized and successfully commanded Satan to depart by virtue of his authority while invoking the name of “the Only Begotten” was received by Joseph Smith in 1830, about one year after this experience.<sup>72</sup>

### **Historical Context and Significance of the Claim in the Dell Paul Letter**

Although it is clear that Joseph Smith knew much about the specifics of temple-related matters early in his ministry, his understandable reluctance to share details of sacred events publicly<sup>73</sup> has resulted in our possessing only very general descriptions of how these things were revealed to him. And, of particular relevance as we try to picture the kind of instruction about temple work that is described in the Dell Paul letter, we know even less about how the Prophet gained the knowledge necessary for teaching these things to others. While Joseph Smith’s exposure to Masonic ritual no doubt led him to seek further revelation as he prepared to introduce the ordinances of temple worship in Nauvoo,<sup>74</sup> there is evidence that he received crucial knowledge about the pedagogical aspects of temple work by divine means well prior to that time. For instance, Matthew B. Brown has summarized some of the accounts that speak in broad terms about heavenly visions and visits from one or more heavenly messengers:<sup>75</sup>

Elder Parley P. Pratt stated in early 1845 that Joseph Smith had given the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles “a pattern in all things pertaining to the sanctuary and the endowment therein” and explained to them that this pattern had been shown to him in a “heavenly vision.”<sup>76</sup> On another occasion Elder Pratt asked: “Who instructed [Joseph Smith] in the mysteries of the Kingdom, and in all things pertaining to Priesthood, law, philosophy, sacred architecture, ordinances, sealings, anointings, baptisms for the dead, and in the mysteries of the first, second, and third heavens, many of which are unlawful to utter? Angels and spirits from the eternal worlds.”<sup>77</sup> Elizabeth A. Whitney likewise stated her understanding, in a Church periodical, that an angel of God committed the temple rituals to Joseph Smith.<sup>78</sup>

One plausible occasion for further revelation concerning temple ordinances was the set of events surrounding the dedication of the Kirtland Temple during the five-day period of 27–31 March 1836. The dedicatory prayer for the Kirtland Temple, given by revelation, highlighted its preparatory function, including ordinances such as washing and anointing that were associated anciently with the Aaronic Priesthood.<sup>79</sup>



**Figure 6.** Glen S. Hopkinson (1946-):  
*Like a Fire is Burning*, 2005.

Within the Kirtland Temple were given initiatory ordinances and an endowment focused on time — principally having to do with the immediate needs and duties of missionaries and others of the Saints<sup>80</sup> — while ordinances for both time and eternity — promising supernal blessings in both earth and heaven through continued faithfulness to the end, including the commencement of selected ordinances for both the living and the dead — would be performed later in Nauvoo.<sup>81</sup> In the words of the dedicatory prayer, the Kirtland Temple was built “that the Son of Man might

have a place to manifest himself to his people,”<sup>82</sup> and so that the Saints “may grow up in thee [i.e., Jesus Christ], and receive a fulness of the Holy Ghost, and be organized according to thy laws, and be prepared to obtain every needful thing.”<sup>83</sup>

The dedication of the Kirtland Temple would have provided a long-awaited place fit for additional, extensive personal instruction by the Lord Himself on details of the temple ordinances. At long last, the Savior had a place where He could “lay his head.”<sup>84</sup> Hence, the circumstances seem favorable for the report in the Dell Paul letter that “Jesus the Christ came ... and drilled them in the temple work. ... He was there day after day and far in the night ... for two weeks.<sup>85</sup> [He] took them through the ceremonies time and again.”<sup>86</sup> The lengthy instruction on temple work as reported in the letter could not have been centered primarily on the preparatory Kirtland Temple rituals, which, after all, were relatively simple and few.<sup>87</sup> Rather, it seems more reasonable, if the gist of the report is accurate, that any such instruction would have almost certainly focused on the additional ordinances that would be shared later, in their mature form, with the Saints in Nauvoo. A second possibility is that the account has its basis in the many visionary experiences reported by Joseph Smith, Zebedee Coltrin, and others prior to the temple dedication. We outline the arguments for both possibilities in the following section.

### Dating the Experience Reported by Zebedee Coltrin

One plausible time frame for the experience reported by Zebedee Coltrin is the period of 17 January to 6 February 1836, about two months prior to the temple dedication.<sup>88</sup> Mark L. Staker summarizes the spiritual manifestations that took place in the Kirtland Temple during this period:<sup>89</sup>

When the temple neared completion, the upstairs garret was finished and Joseph Smith moved immediately to prepare the priesthood quorums in their use of the temple space. He organized a series of meetings in the last weeks of January 1836. Each of the quorums met in the upper rooms of the temple with Zebedee Coltrin as a member of one of these. He met with his quorum in the third-floor garret in one of the western rooms. They washed, anointed each other with oil, and experienced marvelous things. Joseph Smith described receiving an “endowment of power.” Oliver Cowdery wrote that “the glorious scene is too great to be described. . . . I only say, that the heavens were opened to many, and great and marvelous things were shown.” Bishop Edward Partridge affirmed that some of the brethren “saw visions & others were blessed with the outpouring of the Holy Ghost.” Joseph Smith’s vision of the Celestial Kingdom that laid the foundation for his later understanding of baptism for the dead (D&C 137) was part of these experiences.

The length of this period fits the two-week interval reported in the Dell Paul letter. Moreover, among the experiences reported were visions of the Savior, some of which were experienced by Joseph Smith and others by Zebedee Coltrin himself. These visions were part of the “endowment” spoken of in D&C 110:9. The Prophet was attended by sacred dreams on two occasions during that period,<sup>90</sup> which lasted, in the words of Dell Paul letter, “far into the night.” The reference to “them” in the letter could be seen as including others of the brethren, not simply Coltrin and Joseph Smith. If the experience of Zebedee Coltrin occurred prior to the temple dedication, it must have taken place during this period.

However, while keeping in mind that the Dell Paul letter is a late, third-hand account of the event it describes, it seems to provide reasons to consider a second possible time frame, one that falls sometime after the vision of the Savior received by Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery on 3 April 1836.

Section 110 of the Doctrine and Covenants, a summary of that vision, is one of the most significant accounts we possess about the meaning and significance of temple-related knowledge and keys that were restored to

the Prophet Joseph Smith. Shortly after the dedication of the Kirtland Temple, Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery “retired to the pulpit, the veils being dropped,” and knelt “in solemn and silent prayer.”<sup>91</sup> “After rising from prayer,” a vision was opened to them, in which Jesus Christ, Moses, Elias, and Elijah successively appeared. Although we are told that Moses, Elias, and Elijah came in order to commit specific keys at that time, section 110 tells us relatively little about the specific purpose of the visit of Jesus Christ. The heart of His relatively brief message to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery, as reported in section 110, is His personal testimony of Himself and His Atonement, and His formal declaration of acceptance of the temple built to His name.<sup>92</sup>

Did the Savior Himself restore any keys during this visit? Matthew B. Brown concluded that he did, although it should be clarified that these were probably keys of knowledge rather than what we typically think of as keys of the priesthood.<sup>93</sup> Brown writes:<sup>94</sup>

Even though one does not get the impression from reading the contents of D&C 110 that the Savior delivered any particular keys during this visitation, as did the angelic messengers who appeared after Him, Elder Orson Pratt testified that the Lord did indeed bestow “keys of instruction and counsel and authority” on this occasion.<sup>95</sup> Elder Franklin D. Richards adds that the Lord “conversed with the Prophet Joseph and Oliver, and revealed to them their duties, and informed them that the gospel should go [forth] from there and be preached throughout the nations of the earth.”<sup>96</sup> It is apparent from these comments that D&C 110 does not record everything that occurred during this manifestation.<sup>97</sup>

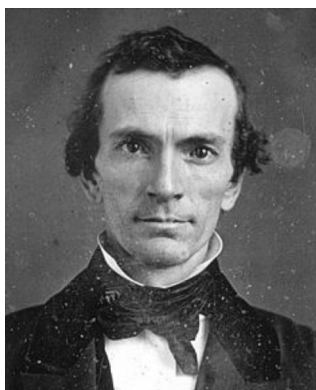
In addition to questions raised by the fact of the surprising brevity of the report of this singular vision, its position as the last journal entry made by the Prophet for a period of years is striking. Expressing subdued perplexity, the editors of Joseph Smith’s diary for this period note that the vision of 3 April 1836 “closes the journal. After more than six months of almost daily recording of developments in Kirtland ceased. For nearly two years, there were no more entries written in this or in any other [Joseph Smith] journal.”<sup>98</sup> It is, of course, understandable that during the later Kirtland period in 1837–38 — when discord among the Saints prevailed, when persecution of the Prophet himself reached its apogee, and when Joseph Smith’s scribe, Warren Cowdery (along with his brother, Oliver) had begun to take firm steps down the road of apostasy — the keeping of a regular journal became a challenge. But why were additional journal entries not made during the spring and early summer of 1836?

It is apparent from other historical evidence that this period was an unsurpassed moment of spiritual glory for the Church in Kirtland. Members such as Heber C. Kimball, John Corrill, and William W. Phelps recorded at the time that divine manifestations continued or perhaps even increased following the temple dedication.<sup>99</sup> “Others later remembered an intensity of spirit associated with the temple for weeks, even months. Eliza R. Snow wrote of ‘an abiding holy heavenly influence’ following the dedication and declared that ‘many extraordinary manifestations’ of God’s power were experienced after the events recorded in [Joseph Smith’s] journal.”<sup>100</sup> Despite the fact that we do not possess a personal record of the Prophet’s activities, it does not seem unreasonable to suppose that he also may have enjoyed supernal spiritual manifestations sometime following the 3 April 1836 vision, during the brief halcyon days of the Church in Kirtland.

What reasons might lead one to consider the alternate possibility of a date following rather than preceding the vision of 3 April 1836? For one thing, the restoration of the keys Joseph and Oliver received from Moses, Elias, and Elijah seem integral to the additional, extensive instruction on the temple ordinances that Coltrin is said to have experienced. Besides, the accounts of the visions reported during January and February do not describe a lengthy period of pedagogy wherein selected brethren were “drilled” in the specifics of temple ceremonies so much as they relate personal experiences designed to fortify faith and strengthen testimony. Indeed, apart from Joseph Smith’s revelation on the celestial kingdom on 21 January, there are no accounts of the Lord’s voice being heard.

Moreover, it is significant that the 3 April 1836 vision contained a promise, given by the Savior Himself, of further personal instruction that was to be given in the Kirtland Temple: “I will appear unto my servants, and speak unto them with mine own voice.”<sup>101</sup> We have located no other account of the fulfillment of this promise besides the report in the Dell Paul letter, where it is written that “Jesus Christ stood and talked to them just as I am talking to you.”<sup>102</sup>

In considering the plausibility of the later alternative for dating Coltrin’s experience, an additional question comes to mind: Why might Zebedee Coltrin have been selected to accompany Joseph Smith during this divine instruction rather than the seemingly more logical choice of Oliver Cowdery? Although Joseph Smith’s journal is silent on the matter, the historical record indicates that Oliver Cowdery became aware of the Prophet’s plural marriage to Fanny Alger not long after D&C 110 was received. This ultimately led to sharp disagreements on the matter with the Prophet and was a factor in Cowdery’s eventual excommunication on 12 April 1838.<sup>103</sup>



**Figure 7.** *Oliver Cowdery.*  
Daguerreotype taken in the  
1840s by James Presley Ball.

More precisely, Brian C. Hales concludes that “the most plausible timing for the Alger-Smith relationship to have become known with its explosive repercussions appears to be ... early in the summer — shortly after the Kirtland Temple dedication in late March 1836.”<sup>104</sup> He also argues that “Oliver Cowdery may have been a primary source of the rumors of Joseph Smith’s alleged adultery.”<sup>105</sup>

In contrast to the periodic vacillations of Oliver Cowdery (which concluded, happily, with repentance, rebaptism, and a complete reconciliation with Church leaders before his death in 1850<sup>106</sup>), Zebedee Coltrin remained solidly anchored to the Church and its leaders throughout his life. From the time of his baptism, he had received many heavenly visions.<sup>107</sup> For example, he is reported to have seen personal visions of the Savior on two occasions, in 1833 and 1836.<sup>108</sup> In the spring of 1836, he was serving faithfully as one of the presidents of the Seventy.<sup>109</sup> Given Oliver Cowdery’s spiritual struggles in the period that followed the 3 April 1836 vision and the possible need for essential, extensive temple-related instruction during the relatively short time the Kirtland Temple remained fit for personal visitations by Jesus Christ, Zebedee Coltrin may have been a more suitable candidate than Oliver to serve as a companion to Joseph Smith for these events at the time.

Although Zebedee Coltrin’s suitability for such an experience could be argued on the basis of his faithful service as one of the presidents of the Seventy in Kirtland, his personal gifts rather than his office may be a more relevant factor. Calvin R. Stephens, Coltrin’s biographer and a long-time student of church history during the Kirtland years, observes: “Zebedee Coltrin’s experience with the Prophet concerning the revelation on the endowment and the temple ordinances is plausible because of his sensitivity to the things of the Spirit. This was a gift ... that he was blessed with.”<sup>110</sup> Because there is a lack of precedent, since the organization of the Church, for anyone other than the apostles and prophets who lead it to be the recipient of an initial heavenly restoration of truth (see, e.g., D&C 28), one reviewer suggests that, assuming the gist of the experience happened as reported, it might be best to regard Coltrin as witness to the events described in the letter rather than as a co-recipient with Joseph Smith of the revelation and an equivalent of Cowdery.

## Background of the Dell Paul Letter

### Provenance and Physical Description

The letter from Dell Paul was found by K-Lynn Paul (b. 14 June 1937, Fergus Falls, Otter Tail County, Minnesota) in the spring of 2015, among the effects of his deceased parents, Lynn Paul (b. 29 June 1898, Victor, Teton County, Idaho; d. 28 November 1984, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma County, Oklahoma) and Lettie Annie Ririe Paul (b. 1 February 1901, Eden, Weber County, Utah; d. 23 April 1985, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma County, Oklahoma). Lynn Paul was the eighth child of Luna Ardell “Dell” Hinckley Paul (b. 18 March 1868, Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, Utah; d. February 19, 1945, Ogden, Weber County, Utah) and John Robert “Jack” Paul (2 December 1863, Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, Utah; d. 15 January 1940, Ogden, Weber, Utah).

The letter consists of a manuscript of four pages in the handwriting of Dell Paul. The original is preserved at the Church History Library in Salt Lake City, Utah.<sup>111</sup> A black-and-white version of the letter, based on a digital scan made by the Library that has been enhanced for readability, is reproduced in Appendix 1. A typescript of the letter appears in a later section of the present article.

### Biographies of Selected Individuals

In this section, we give short biographies of Luna Ardell “Dell” Hinckley Paul (the author of the letter), Zebedee Coltrin (who was reported in the letter as having participated in a heavenly manifestation in the Kirtland Temple), and Ezra Potter (presumed to be the “Brother Potter” referred to in the letter who had heard Coltrin relate the story and had later passed it on to Dell Paul).

**Luna Ardell Hinckley Paul.**<sup>112</sup> Luna Ardell “Dell” Hinckley Paul was the fourth child of Utah pioneer Arza Erastus Hinckley (b. 15 August 1826, Bastard, Leeds, Upper Canada [now Ontario, Canada]; d. 18 February 1901, Rexburg, Madison County, Idaho) and Mary Christine (originally Maria Christina) Heiner (b. 20 July 1839, Wasungen, Sachsen-Meiningen, Thüringen, Germany; d. 11 October 1879, St. George, Washington County, Utah).

As a small child, she moved with her family from Salt Lake City to Cove Creek (Cove Fort) in southern Utah. Her father’s brother, Ira Hinckley, had been called by Brigham Young to build a fort there for the protection of Mormon emigrants who passed through the area on



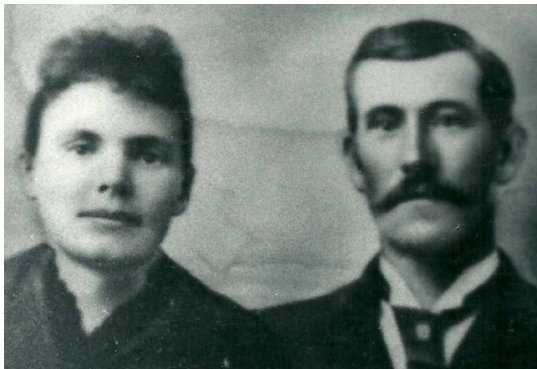


**Figure 8.** *Dell Hinckley at the age of 16, about the time she attended the Logan Temple dedication in 1884.*

before the young girls went to live with their mother's parents, Johann Martin and Adelgunda Dietzel Heiner, in Morgan, Utah. While living in Morgan with her grandparents, Dell attended the dedication of the Logan Temple on 17 May 1884.<sup>114</sup>

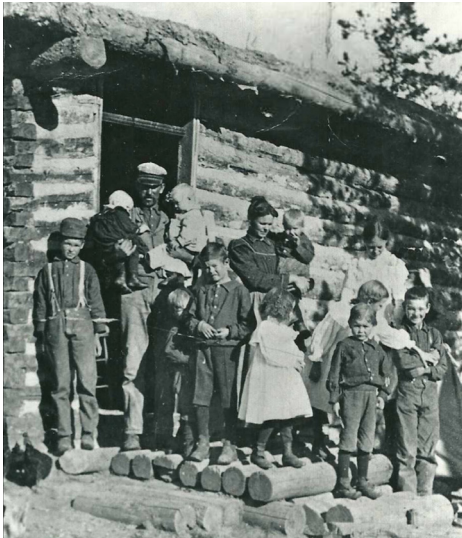
their way to other settlements further south and west. Having had no opportunity for formal schooling, Dell received the equivalent of a "third-grade education."<sup>113</sup>

When Dell's mother, Mary, became critically ill in 1879, they took her on an arduous wagon ride of 150 miles to St. George, Utah, for treatment. Tragically, Mary died there on 11 October 1879. After the death of their mother, Dell and her sister Martha, received their endowments at the St. George Temple on 7 January 1880. At the time, Dell was not yet twelve years old. The family stayed in St. George six weeks longer to perform temple work for deceased family members



**Figure 9.** *Dell Paul and John Robert Paul about the time of their marriage in 1886.*

In 1885, Dell went once more to live with her immediate family, who had since moved to Rexburg, Idaho. The family consisted of her father; a new stepmother, Temperance Ricks; four boys; and two girls. In Rexburg, she met John Robert Paul and was sealed to him in marriage in the Logan Temple on 20 May 1886.



**Figure 10.** *The John Robert and Luna Ardell Paul family at their homestead at Cedron, Idaho, ca. 1899. Two additional girls were born after this picture was taken. Lynn Paul is the small child wearing dark clothes in the right arm of his father.*

After financially challenging years in St. Anthony, Cedron, and Rexburg, Idaho, and a sojourn in Nevada, Dell and Jack moved with nine surviving children to Ogden in 1914. (One son died at age six of diphtheria in Idaho.) Though continually busy with caring for a large family, Dell served extensively in the Church, community projects, and in the Daughters of Utah Pioneers. After three happy decades in Ogden, Dell passed away on 19 February 1945.

Although it is always possible that Dell could have met Ezra Potter by chance and heard the story of Zebedee Coltrin's experience in her earlier life, it seems more likely that he told

her of the experience while they both lived in Ogden, sometime between 1917 (when Ezra Potter moved there from West Weber) and 15 May 1922 (when Dell Paul wrote the letter). According to family sources, Dell Paul was living at 1223 26th Street in Ogden in October 1918.<sup>115</sup> Both at the time of the 1920 census<sup>116</sup> and also at his passing in 1926,<sup>117</sup> Ezra Potter was living at 2215 Lincoln Avenue in Ogden. These addresses are approximately two miles apart.

**Zebedee Coltrin.** Zebedee Coltrin was one of sixty residents of Strongsville, Ohio, who joined the Church in 1830–1831. From the time of his conversion, he had many visionary experiences. On 8 January 1831, the night before his baptism, he reported that “the room became lighted up with a brilliant light, and I saw a number of men dressed in white robes, like unto what we call temple clothes.”<sup>118</sup> He was called on a mission on 7 June 1831.<sup>119</sup> In the spring of 1833, he experienced spiritual manifestations in connection with meetings of the School of the Prophets, including the gift of tongues<sup>120</sup> and a vision of God the Father and Jesus Christ.<sup>121</sup> On 19 April 1834, he, along with Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery, saw Adam and Eve in vision.<sup>122</sup> On 28 January



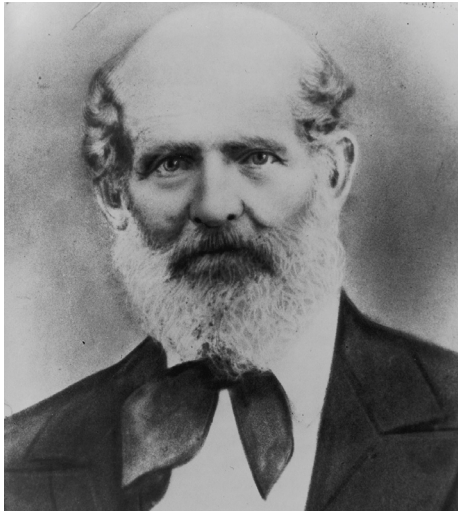
**Figure 11.** *Jack and Dell Paul, probably in 1926 at the time of their Golden Wedding Anniversary*

1836, Zebedee saw a vision of Jesus Christ on the cross in the Kirtland Temple. He also saw a vision of “the Lord’s host” on 7 February, and testified of seeing “the power of God as it was in the day of Pentecost and cloven tongues of fire [resting] on the brethren” and other spiritual manifestations during the March temple dedication.<sup>123</sup>

On 28 February 1835, Joseph Smith organized the First Quorum of Seventy, with members selected from those who had gone to Missouri in Zion’s Camp. Zebedee was selected as one of the seven presidents of this quorum and was ordained on 1 March 1835, receiving the promise: “You shall have heavenly visions and the ministry of Angels shall be your lot.”<sup>124</sup> For the next two years, Zebedee “fulfilled his duties and obligations honorably.”<sup>125</sup> However, on 6 April 1837, it was discovered that, along with four others who were serving as presidents of the First Quorum of the Seventy, he had been ordained previously as a high priest. As a result, all five of them were invited by Joseph Smith to unite themselves with the high priests quorum.<sup>126</sup> Unfortunately, we have no details from Zebedee’s biographer of his activities during 1836–1838 that would help date the manifestation reported in the Dell Paul letter.

Coltrin came to Nauvoo in 1839 but soon returned to Kirtland. A stake was reorganized for a short time in Kirtland, and he served as a counselor in the stake presidency.<sup>127</sup> When the stake was dissolved

in 1841, he returned to Nauvoo with his family. In Nauvoo, he became a merchant, but according to Stephens, “how successful he was in this



**Figure 12.** *Zebedee Coltrin, ca. 1865.*

enterprise is not known. He was involved in missionary work and he probably had little time to devote to being a successful merchant during this period.”<sup>128</sup>

Zebedee was called as a full-time missionary to Virginia in 1843<sup>129</sup> and in 1844 campaigned for Joseph Smith as a candidate for the presidency of the United States until the death of the Prophet.<sup>130</sup> He was endowed on 22 December 1845 and sealed in marriage in the Nauvoo temple on 20 January 1846.<sup>131</sup>

Zebedee came to Utah with the first pioneer group in 1847.<sup>132</sup>

Soon afterward, he was called by Brigham Young to help settle the Spanish Fork area.<sup>133</sup> He served faithfully within his high priests quorum in Spanish Fork<sup>134</sup> and was reputed to be a “staunch supporter” of the United Order that was organized there.<sup>135</sup> On 31 May 1873, he was ordained a patriarch by President Brigham Young.<sup>136</sup> He served in this calling until his death in 1887, giving more than one thousand patriarchal blessings.<sup>137</sup>

Later in life, Zebedee Coltrin began sharing some of his visionary experiences in Kirtland publicly. For example, in at least one occasion in 1878, he related some of these events to his high priests quorum.<sup>138</sup> Then, in 1883, President John Taylor reorganized the School of the Prophets, an institution that had met previously at different periods during the administrations of Presidents Joseph Smith and Brigham Young. In order “that the School might be properly organized,” John Taylor asked Elders George Q. Cannon and George Reynolds to “get together all papers and information that they could obtain relating to the former Schools of the Prophets.”<sup>139</sup> Zebedee Coltrin, as “the only surviving member of the School of the Prophets organized by the Prophet Joseph Smith at Kirtland,”<sup>140</sup> was invited to answer questions about the School on 3 and 11 October 1883.<sup>141</sup> Elder Wilford Woodruff recorded the following in his journal entry for 12 October 1883:<sup>142</sup>

This was a day of fasting and Prayer with the leaders of the Church. I took a Bath and wash in the Morning and went to

the Endowment House at 9 o'clock to receive the washing of feet as it was done in Kirtland 47 years ago By the Prophet Joseph Smith as an Initiatory ordinance into the school of the Prophets. Remarks were made By the Presidency & others. President John Taylor washed the feet of Zebedee Coltrin as He was the ownly man living that was in the first school of the Prophets organized by Joseph Smith in Kirtland /in 1833/. Then Zebedee Coultrin washed the feet of Presidet Taylor. Then Presidet Taylor washed the feet of his two Councillors & all the Twelve Apostles except C. C. Rich who was sick & John Henry Smith in England. He washed the feet of 38 in all. At the Close of this Ceremony we partook of Bread & wine as a sacrament as they did in the Temple in Kirtland which Closed the labor of the day.

Because of his participation in many of the sacred events that took place in Kirtland, including the temple dedication, Coltrin was a natural choice to assist with preparation for the Logan Temple dedication. L. John Nuttall, secretary to President John Taylor, recorded that Zebedee Coltrin boarded a train in Ogden as a member of the group accompanying President Taylor to the Logan Temple twice: once on 2 February<sup>143</sup> and another time on 14 May 1884.<sup>144</sup> He also noted that Coltrin was accompanied by his son when he boarded the train on the second trip.<sup>145</sup> According to Nuttall, the overall purpose of the February trip was to inspect the temple “to determine firsthand how near [it] was to completion.”<sup>146</sup> The trip in May was on the occasion of the temple dedication itself, held on 17 May 1884. Zebedee had been asked to give a prayer on that occasion.<sup>147</sup>

Dell Paul’s letter describes the reason for Zebedee Coltrin’s passage through Ogden on his way to Logan in general terms, saying that he “was called by President Taylor to go and help start the work in the Logan Temple.”<sup>148</sup> Similarly, Margaret McNeil Ballard, in whose home Zebedee was a house guest during the Logan Temple dedication, understood that he had come at that time “to assist in the ordinance work of the temple.”<sup>149</sup> Dell Paul’s description could fit either the February 1884 or May 1884 time frame. Because Coltrin would have traveled from his home in Spanish Fork prior to boarding the train, it seems likely that he would have stayed in the Ogden area for one or more previous nights on each occasion.<sup>150</sup> Such a stay would have afforded the circumstances in which Coltrin’s conversations “in Ogden” with “Brother Potter and two other men” could have taken place while he was “on his way” to “help start the work in the Logan Temple.”<sup>151</sup>

According to Coltrin’s biographer, “the last two years of Zebedee’s life were spent in doing ordinance work in the Logan Temple.”<sup>152</sup> He died on 21 July 1887.

**Ezra Potter.**<sup>153</sup> Although it is unlikely that we will ever be able to establish definitively the identity of the “Brother Potter” referred to in Dell Paul’s letter, the figure of Ezra Potter has emerged as a prominent candidate in our search through newspapers, census records, burial records, and genealogical databases. Potter was a faithful member of the LDS Church throughout his life, was living in the Ogden area (West Weber) when Zebedee Coltrin passed through there on his way to the Logan Temple (1883), and his residence was about two miles away from Dell Paul for five of the eight years that Dell Paul lived in Ogden prior to writing the letter (1917–1922).



**Figure 13.** *Ezra and Mary Jane Potter Family, ca. 1903*

Ezra Potter was born in Leicester, England, on 16 May 1851, the only son of Richard (1820–1902) and Mary Newman Grain Potter (1814–1891). He joined the Church with his family and immigrated to Utah as an 11-year-old in 1862. His early life was spent in Logan, Utah, and Malad, Idaho. His only known journal dates from 22 July 1877 to 15 March 1879, shortly after his marriage and sealing to Mary Jane Douglass (1863–1909) on 26 February 1879.<sup>154</sup> Just prior to his marriage he bought land on the Douglass homestead in West Weber, Utah. There they made their home and became the parents of eight children. From 1904–1906,

Ezra served as a missionary in the Western States Mission. In 1917, eight years after Mary Jane passed away, he married Louisa Festersen Rohwer (1868–1940) and moved to Ogden, Utah. He passed away on 23 May 1926 in Ogden, Utah.

## **Conjectural Timeline of Events**

### **1 March 1835<sup>155</sup>**

Zebedee Coltrin was ordained as one of the seven presidents of the First Quorum of the Seventy.

### **17 January–6 February 1836<sup>156</sup>**

A pentecostal season opens in Kirtland. Experiences reported by many individuals included the gift of tongues; the sound of a mighty wind; visions and appearances of the Father, the Son, and other heavenly beings; and prophesying. D&C 137, a vision of the celestial kingdom, was received on 21 January. If the experience of Zebedee Coltrin reported in the Dell Paul letter occurred prior to the temple dedication, it must have taken place during this period.

### **27–31 March 1836<sup>157</sup>**

The Kirtland Temple was dedicated over a five-day period, accompanied by glorious heavenly manifestations.

### **3 April 1836**

Following morning meetings in the temple, Joseph Smith administered the sacrament to those assembled in the afternoon. After the veils were dropped, Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery received the vision of Jesus Christ, Moses, Elias, and Elijah published in D&C 110. A promise was given in D&C 110:8 that Jesus Christ would later “appear unto [His] servants, and speak unto them with [His] own voice, if my people will keep my commandments, and do not pollute this holy house.” Following the record of this vision, no further entries were made in Joseph Smith’s journal for nearly two years.

### **April–May 1836**

Spiritual outpourings among the Saints continued in Kirtland.

### **After 3 April 1836 and Before 12 January 1838**

If the experience of Zebedee Coltrin reported in the Dell Paul letter took place after the temple dedication, it must have occurred sometime following the vision of 3 April 1836 (D&C 110), after Oliver Cowdery had fallen out of harmony with Joseph Smith. Brian C. Hales dates the disclosure of Joseph Smith's marriage to Fanny Alger, which was a significant factor in Cowdery's disaffection during that period, to "early in the summer — shortly after the Kirtland Temple dedication in late March 1836."<sup>158</sup> Eventually, after several attempts at reconciliation and much vacillation, Cowdery was excommunicated on 12 April 1838.<sup>159</sup>

Because Joseph Smith's journal entries ended after 3 April 1836, we have relatively few records of his activities in the late spring and early summer of 1836. Apart from a short trip to escort his grandmother Mary Duty Smith to Kirtland on 17 May 1836, there is no report of Joseph Smith being away from Kirtland until his departure for New York City and Salem, Massachusetts on 25 June 1836 (see D&C 111). Frederick Granger Williams Smith was born to Emma on 20 June 1836. On 29 June 1836, Clay County Missouri citizens demanded an end to Mormon immigration and the eventual departure of all the Saints. During the last half of 1836, the Prophet's attention turned largely to practical matters: raising money for Missouri land, his journey to the east (which lasted into September), and preparing for the opening of Kirtland Safety Society on 9 January 1837.

From all this we conclude that if the experience reported in the Dell Paul letter did not happen in January-February 1836, the most likely alternative time frame would have been in April-June 1836. It could have occurred no later than 12 January 1838, when the Prophet left Kirtland definitively.<sup>160</sup>

### **6 April 1837**

Zebedee Coltrin was released as a president of the First Quorum of the Seventy, along with four others, after it was discovered that they had been previously ordained high priests.

### **31 May 1873**

Zebedee Coltrin was ordained a patriarch by President Brigham Young.<sup>161</sup>



### **5 February 1878**

Zebedee Coltrin is recorded as having related some of his visionary experiences in Kirtland to his high priests quorum in Spanish Fork, Utah.<sup>162</sup>

### **1879**

Ezra Potter moved to West Weber, a few miles west of Ogden, Utah.<sup>163</sup>

### **3 and 11 October 1883**

Zebedee Coltrin as “the only surviving member of the School of the Prophets organized by the Prophet Joseph Smith at Kirtland,”<sup>164</sup> was invited by President John Taylor to answer questions about how the school was organized and to share some of his visionary experiences.<sup>165</sup>

### **2 February<sup>166</sup> or 14 May 1884:<sup>167</sup>**

On one of these dates, Zebedee Coltrin may have related the experience in the Kirtland Temple reported in the Dell Paul letter to “Brother Potter” and two others in the Ogden area before joining a group led by President John Taylor bound for the Logan Temple.

### **21 July 1887**

Zebedee Coltrin passed away.

### **1914**

Dell Paul moved to Ogden.

### **1917**

Ezra Potter moved to Ogden from West Weber.

### **1917–1922**

Assuming that Ezra Potter is the “Brother Potter” referred to in Dell Paul’s letter, this is the most plausible time period for him to have related what he had heard from Zebedee Coltrin to Dell Paul.

### **15 May 1922**

Dell Paul wrote her remembrance of what she was told by “Brother Potter” in a letter to her son, Lynn Paul.

**28 November 1984**

Lynn Paul passed away.

**Spring 2015**

K-Lynn Paul, son of Lynn Paul, came across the 15 May 1922 letter of Dell Hinckley Paul among the effects of his parents. He donated the letter to the Church History Library for safekeeping, scanning, and access by researchers.

**Letter of Luna Ardell Hinckley Paul to Lynn Paul, 15 May 1922**

Ogden May 15 1922

Mr Lynn Paul

Dear boy your Mother letter came today thanks many times for your love. I have been going to whrite you for some time but have not been in the umer [humor, i.e., mood]. a number of things about the church, now I have a lot more to tell you so hold your breath for you will have the task of reading a lot. In the first place they are going to divide the stake. and it is rumered a number of wards. They have called a specal [special] Priesthood meeting. next saturday. and a special conference sunday to devide the Weber stake. there is some talk of the devision being [illegible, perhaps Washington?] Ave. but [I] do not know. I went to mother day program. it was grand the best I ever atended. also last week a program in the Junior Hy [High]. abot [about] 5 hundred girls all dressed in cotsem [costume] took part. you can amagen [imagine] the buty [beauty] and grace they sure done well. to day there is a big perade [parade] with all the boys in the city. this is boy week in the state. you speak of hot weathr well we have not had it warm an uf [enough] not to make fires to be cumfertabel [comfortable] hear this spring the trees are covered with blom [bloom]. it may be good that the weath [weather] has stayed cool as the weather counts so much with the hay water

[page 2]

Lynn you speak of cycole [cyclones] and the feer of them<sup>168</sup> you can expect them, as this is the time the Profits of old fortold about the desasters of this time in Weaber Colege, they had a testamoniyal meeting and one of the visiting Ladies spoke in tong [tongues] and another interpereted it and this is the intent taken as it was reported to me. that this is the day the profits told abot in the last days and

that we could look for the changes in the earth, but the promes if the Laterday sants would live their religion that they would ascape and if not they would sufer with the disobedent. your Fathe[r's] helth is better, but he has not his teath as his goms [gums] do not heal as fast as they should. you speak of art. they seem to have a specal awaking down their. the quire [choir] down have been invited to sing in a number of large halls. England or her people are having a time percuting [persecuting] the sants. the worst they ever have had. I wanted to tell you about Zdbide Colter [Zebedee Coltrin]. this man was called by Present Talor [President Taylor] to go and help start the work in the Logon Temple. And on his way he vised [visited] a brother hear in Ogden while hear he talked to Brother Potter and two other men and he told them he wanted them

[page 3]

[to] remember what he said. this is as near as I can remember as Broth[er] Potter told me. he said that he was with the Profit Joeph [Prophet Joseph] in the curtland [Kirtland] temple. and he said that Joeph had called him to help with this work and he said that Gesios the Crist [Jesus the Christ]. came their and drilled them in the temple work and he was their day after day and for [far] in the night every day for two weeks.<sup>169</sup> and took them thru the sarmones [ceremonies] time and again. he said he stood and talked to them just as I am talking to you. and then Zebide Colter described him his hight wate culer of eys [height weight color of eyes] and hair but I canot remember only he was tall. And I think blue eys. but am not shure. I was going to whrite this at the time but put it off. he said that what he told them was true and then he explained a lot of things that Joeph and oth[ers] of the L.D.S. had

done and said that he was the only one  
 living that was thair at that time and  
 he has since died. How thankful we

[page 4]

should be to know the truth with love I must  
 write some other letters mother.

### **Why Might It Have Been Expedient That the Saints Wait Before Receiving the Full Complement of Temple Ordinances?**

In considering what Joseph Smith seems to have known about the temple by 1836, an additional question merits attention: Why might it have been expedient that the Saints wait several years before they received the full complement of temple ordinances that were eventually administered in Nauvoo? In response to this question, we can do no better than to cite Matthew B. Brown:<sup>170</sup>

First of all, it must be remembered that Kirtland, Ohio, was only a temporary gathering place for the Saints. In May of 1831 the Lord indicated that the Saints would only remain in Ohio “for a little season” until he should “provide for them otherwise, and command them to go hence.”<sup>171</sup> On 11 September 1831 the Lord was even more specific when He announced that the Saints would only remain in Kirtland, Ohio, for the space of five years,<sup>172</sup> during which time they would lay the foundation for a great work which was yet to come.<sup>173</sup> It was not until near the very end of this time frame that the Kirtland Temple was dedicated and the angels of D&C 110 came to commit their keys. According to Joseph Fielding Smith, the house of the Lord in Kirtland “was only a preparatory temple” that “was built primarily for the restoration of keys of authority.”<sup>174</sup>

Elder George A. Smith indicated that there were other reasons why the Lord only bestowed a portion of his full temple rites upon the Saints during the Kirtland period. He said that during those years the Saints had among them “a great many traditions which they borrowed from their fathers,” and some of them were so unstable in the gospel that they apostatized over very trivial matters. Even when the Lord restored the basic temple rituals of the Kirtland period, some of the Saints

“apostatized because there was not more of it, and others because there was too much.” Elder Smith continues:<sup>175</sup>

If the Lord had on that occasion revealed one single sentiment more, or went one step further to reveal more fully the law of redemption, I believe he would have upset the whole of us. The fact was, he dare not, on that very account, reveal to us a single principle further than he had done, for he had tried, over and over again, to do it. He tried at Jerusalem; He tried away back before the flood; He tried in the days of Moses; and he had tried, from time to time, to find a people to whom he could reveal the law of salvation, and he never could fully accomplish it; and he was determined this time to be so careful, and advance the idea so slowly, to communicate them to the children of men with such great caution that, at all hazards, a few of them might be able to understand and obey.

All of this raises an interesting question. Since Joseph Smith had the necessary keys, could he have restored and administered the Nauvoo-style temple rites during the Kirtland period? Brigham Young seems to have thought so. After giving a basic outline of the Nauvoo-era temple rites, President Young said that<sup>176</sup> “before these endowments could be given at Kirtland, the Saints had to flee before mobocracy.” The Saints then settled in Far West, Missouri, and laid the cornerstones of a temple there but eventually “had to retreat to [Nauvoo,] Illinois to save the lives of those who could get away alive from Missouri.” President Young lamented that the Kirtland Temple then fell “into the hands of wicked men, and by them [it was] polluted, like the temple at Jerusalem, and consequently it was disowned by the Father and the Son.”

And what about the Far West Temple? Did the Lord plan to restore the full temple ordinances to the Saints in His house at Far West, Missouri? This seems to be a definite possibility. The “pattern” that the Lord revealed for the Kirtland Temple would not have lent itself very well to the administration of the type of ordinances that were practiced during the Nauvoo period. But notice that the Lord was going to “show” the First Presidency the “pattern” for the Far West Temple just as He

had for the Kirtland Temple.<sup>177</sup> Why would this have been necessary unless the “pattern” for the Far West Temple was going to be different than the “pattern” for the Kirtland Temple? As noted above in Brigham Young’s statement, persecution and mobocracy prevented the building of the Far West Temple and the Saints did not get another chance to build a House of God until they had settled in Nauvoo, Illinois. Before the Prophet even set foot in Nauvoo, he wrote a member of the Church saying: “I never have had [an] opportunity to give [the Saints] the plan that God has revealed to me.”<sup>178</sup>

### Conclusions

The Dell Paul letter is consistent with arguments that the Prophet learned much about temple ordinances through personal experiences with heavenly beings, translations, and revelations as much as a decade before he administered them in Nauvoo.<sup>179</sup> A careful study of this question will reveal that many unmistakable references to significant components of priesthood and temple doctrines, authority, and ordinances date to the 1830s or earlier. These components include: 1) the narrative backbone, clothing, and covenants of the modern temple endowment; 2) the sequence of blessings of the oath and covenant of the priesthood, including additional ordinances; and 3) priesthood keys symbolized in words, signs, and tokens.<sup>180</sup>

Because the Dell Paul letter is a late, third-hand account of the event it describes, the accuracy of the report in all its details cannot be known with any certainty. We have described what circumstantial evidence is available for the heavenly manifestation and have outlined two major possibilities for its setting: 1. As a part of the many visionary experiences reported by Joseph Smith, Zebedee Coltrin, and others prior to the temple dedication in January-February 1836; and 2. As a separate heavenly manifestation that took place after the temple dedication in April-June 1836 that would have provided a fitting capstone to all that Joseph Smith had learned about temple matters up to that time. In either case, if the letter’s claim that Jesus Christ “stood and talked to them just as I am talking to you” is accurately reported, it provides an additional witness of the Savior’s frequent presence in Kirtland in 1836.

Every Latter-day Saint who cherishes the temple blessings restored through the Prophet and his successors will resonate with the grateful exclamation of Luna Ardell Hinckley Paul: “How thankful we should be to know the truth!”

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**K-Lynn Paul** was born in Fergus Falls, Otter Tail County, Minnesota. He was called to the Northwestern States Mission, and served in Washington, Oregon, and northern Idaho. He graduated from Brigham Young University in 1963, and from the University of Minnesota Medical School in 1967. In 1971, he completed specialty training in psychiatry at Kansas University Medical Center. After two years as a Major in the U.S. Army Medical Corps, he worked at the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences



*Center and the VA Hospital in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. He then became Director of Psychiatric Residency Training at the University of South Dakota School of Medicine in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. There, he directed the training of physicians to become psychiatrists until he retired in 2005. K-Lynn and his wife, Karen, served a two-year mission in Hong Kong as Area Mental Health Advisors for missionaries in the Philippines and in Asia from 2009–2011. K-Lynn has served in member missionary leadership callings for many years and currently serves as a ward mission leader. He has also served as a high councilor in two stakes, as a bishop in Sioux Falls, and as a high priests group leader.*

Appendix 1: Digital Scan of a Letter from Luna Ardell Hinckley  
Paul to Lynn Paul, 15 May 1922<sup>181</sup>

Ogden May 15 1922

Mr Lynn Paul.

Dear boy your Mothers letter came to day thanks  
many times for you love. I have been going to  
write you for some time but have not been in the  
mood. a number of things about the church, now I have  
a lot more to tell you so hold your breath for  
you will have the task of reading a lot.  
On the first place they are going to divide the stake,  
and it is covered a number of words. They have  
called a special District meeting. meet saturday.  
and a special conference saturday to divide the Weber  
stake. this is some talk of the division leaving Washington  
but do not know. I went to mothers day program,  
it was grand the best I ever attended. also last week  
a program in the Junior High. about 5 hundred girls  
all dressed in costume took part. you can imagine  
the busy and great they show done well.  
to day there is a big parade with all the boys in  
the city. this is boy week. in the state you speak of  
hot weather well we have not had it woman  
up not to make girls to be uncomfortable here.  
this spring the trees are covered with bloom.  
it may be good that the weather has stayed  
cool as the weather counts so much with  
the big water.

Lynn you speak of cycles and the fear of them  
 you can expect them, as this is the time the Prophets  
 of old foretold about the dealects of this time  
 in Wether College, they had a testimonial meeting  
 and one of the visiting Ladies spoke in tongue  
 and another interpreted it and this is the inter-  
 taken as it was reported to me, that this is the  
 day the prophets told about in the last days and  
 that we could look for the changes in the earth, but  
 the promise is the Saturday sants would love their  
 religion that they would awake and if not they  
 would suffer with the disobedient. your Father  
 health is better, but he has not his teeth as his  
 gums do not heal as fast as they should.  
 you speak of art, they seem to have a spirital  
 awaking down there. the quire down here has  
 invited to sing in a number of large  
 halls, England or her people are having a time  
 persecuting the sants. the worst they ever have  
 had. I wanted to tell you about Goble Colter,  
 this man was called by President Fala to go and  
 help start the work in the Loagon Temple, and  
 on his way he visit a brother here in Ajden  
 while here he talked to Brother Potter and two  
 other men and he told them he wanted them

remember what he said, this is as near as I  
 can remember as Brother Patten told me, he said  
 that he was with the Prophet Joseph in the Courtland  
 temple, and he said that Joseph had called him  
 to help with this work and he said that  
 Geosis the Priest, came there and drilled them  
 in the temple work and he was there day  
 after day and for in the night every day  
 for two weeks, and took them through the  
 sacraments time and again, he said he stood  
 and talked to them just as I am talking  
 to you, and then Zebide Colter described  
 him his light wate color of eyes and hair,  
 but I cannot not remember only he was tall, and  
 I think blue eyes, but am not sure, I  
 was going to write this at the time but put  
 it off, he said that what he told them was  
 true and then he explained a lot of things  
 that Joseph and oth of the S. D. S. had  
 done and said that he was the only one  
 living that was there at that time, and  
 he has since died, How thankful we

should be to know the truth with love I cannot  
write some other letters mother.

## Appendix 2: Letter of K-Lynn Paul to Family Members

June 9, 2015

Dear Family,

I discovered a letter in my parent's things that Luna Ardell Hinckley Paul wrote to my father, Lynn Paul, in 1922 which contained some very interesting information if accurate. Here is what I wrote to the Church Historian:

I recently came across a letter that my grandmother, Luna Ardell Hinckley Paul, wrote to my father Lynn Paul dated May 15, 1922. In that letter she reports that a Brother Zebedee Colter (did she mean Coltrin) was passing through Ogden on his way to Logan, having been called by President Taylor to help start the work in the Logan Temple. According to the letter he talked to a Brother Potter and two other men and told them that he wanted them to remember what he said. He said that he was with the Prophet Joseph in the Kirtland Temple and that Joseph had called him to help with the work. Then he said that Jesus the Christ came there and "drilled" them in the temple work and he was there day after day and far in the night for two weeks and took them through the ceremonies time and again. He then described the Savior. He also told them that he was the only one living (when he spoke with Brother Potter) that was there at that time. Brother Potter told the story to my grandmother Luna Ardell Hinckley Paul. She said that she was going to write this at the time (she was told it) but put it off (until she wrote it to my father.)

I had never heard any of this information before, but not living in Utah, I don't always hear things that are common knowledge among Church members in Utah. However, in case this information is useful I could provide a copy of my grandmother's letter. ...<sup>182</sup>

[The Church Historian] indicated that they would love to have a copy (since that is what I said I could provide.) I decided that the Church History Department should have the original for safe keeping, but I am sending a copy to you for your interest. Below is the information I sent to Elder Steven E. Snow, the Church Historian.

Enclosed is the letter my grandmother, Luna Ardell Hinckley Paul, wrote to my father May 15, 1922. She had just a third

grade education so her spelling is not good. Therefore I have typed out the letter with corrected spelling which is enclosed with the original.

When she wrote 'Colter' she well could have meant Coltrin as he is the only person that would fit the story. Zebedee Coltrin died in 1887, so if the story is accurate he must have spoken to Brother Potter in Ogden prior to that time. When Brother Potter spoke to my grandmother is unknown, but she says she did not write it down at the time but later on May 15, 1922. So 35-plus years had to have elapsed since the story was told to Brother Potter, and the story is dependent upon the memories of three people — Brother Coltrin, Brother Potter and my grandmother. Nevertheless, my grandmother had a knack for ferreting out historical information as she did in finding out the role of her father, Arza Erastus Hinckley, in the rescue of the handcart pioneers.

Brother Coltrin, who is mentioned in the Doctrine and Covenants apparently often told accounts of miraculous events, according to what I was able to learn about him from the Internet.

In her letter my grandmother refers to a fear of cyclone(s) that my father had mentioned to her (presumably in a prior letter.) My father had moved to Fergus Falls, Minnesota, where a tornado (called a cyclone back then) had destroyed much of the town in 1919, so the people there would still have had a considerable fear in 1922.

I hope you find this account interesting — I certainly did. Please feel free to pass the information on to your descendants or other family members as you see fit.

Your relative,  
K-Lynn Paul

### Figure Credits

1. Arnold Friberg (1913-2010): *The brother of Jared Sees the Finger of God*, 1951. <http://www.deseretnews.com/top/704/1/The-Brother-of-Jared-Sees-the-Finger-of-the-Lord-Arnold-Fribergs-religious-paintings.html> (accessed 21 June 2016).
2. Walter Rane (1949-): *The Desires of My Heart*, 2004. <http://www.walterraneprints.com/prints/the-desires-of-my-heart>. By permission of the artist, with special thanks to Linda Rane.
3. Unknown. *God Dressing Adam and Eve*. Detail of the Creation Cupola, Cathedral of San Marco, Venice, thirteenth century. With permission of PM Russian Icon. [http://www.ruicon.ru/arts-new/mosaics/1x1-dtl/italiya\\_venetciya\\_san-marko/11bog\\_odevaet\\_adama\\_i\\_evu\\_v\\_kozhanye\\_rizy\\_byt\\_3\\_23-24/?page\\_19=411&1=&p\\_f\\_15\\_66=1&ref-cat=](http://www.ruicon.ru/arts-new/mosaics/1x1-dtl/italiya_venetciya_san-marko/11bog_odevaet_adama_i_evu_v_kozhanye_rizy_byt_3_23-24/?page_19=411&1=&p_f_15_66=1&ref-cat=) (accessed 30 December 2015).
4. J. James Tissot (1836-1902): *The Offerings of Melchizedek*, ca. 1896-1902. Scanned from Jeffrey M. Bradshaw's personal copy of J. J. Tissot, *Old Testament*, 1:47. The Jewish Museum, No. 52-94. In the public domain. See Genesis 14:18-20
5. Unknown. *Impression Seal of Gudea*, Tello, Iraq, ca. 2150 BCE. Published in J. V. Canby, *Ur-Nammu*, Plate 14a.
6. Glen S. Hopkinson (1946-): *Like a Fire is Burning*, 2005. With permission and thanks to Glen S. Hopkinson. Original published in G. S. Hopkinson, *Faithful Life*, p. 45.
7. *Oliver Cowdery*. Daguerreotype taken in the 1840s by James Presley Ball. Public Domain. <https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/c/c6/Olivercowdery-sm.jpg> (accessed May 12, 2016).
8. *Dell Hinckley at the age of 16, about the time she attended the Logan Temple dedication in 1884*. <https://familysearch.org/photos/images/125627?p=527749> (accessed March 27, 2016).
9. *Dell Paul and John Robert Paul at about the time of their marriage in 1886*. <https://familysearch.org/photos/images/125590> (accessed March 27, 2016).
10. *The John Robert and Luna Ardell Paul family at their homestead at Cedron, Idaho, about 1899*. Two additional girls were born after this picture was taken. Lynn Paul is the small child wearing dark clothes in the right arm of his father. <https://familysearch.org/photos/images/759364> (accessed March 27, 2016).
11. *Jack and Dell Paul, probably in 1926 at the time of their Golden Wedding Anniversary*. <https://familysearch.org/photos/images/509645> (accessed March 27, 2016).



12. *Zebedee Coltrin*, ca. 1865. <http://www.josephsmithpapers.org/person/zebedee-coltrin> (accessed May 12, 2016). [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Zebedee\\_Coltrin.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Zebedee_Coltrin.jpg) (May 12, 2016). <http://contentdm.lib.byu.edu/cdm/ref/collection/RelEd/id/277> (May 12, 2016).
13. *Ezra and Mary Jane Potter Family*, ca 1903. <http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GRid=27916790> (accessed March 27, 2016). Photo contributed by Barbara Anne (Brownell) Potter. With permission of Glenn Kartchner.

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### Endnotes

- 1 “I came to the conclusion at a very early age, earlier than I can remember, that you don’t get books from angels and translate them by miracles; it is just that simple. So I simply don’t believe the Book of Mormon to be authentic. I think that all of the hassling over the authenticity of the Book of Mormon is just a waste of time” (S. M. McMurrin et al., *An interview with Sterling McMurrin*, p. 25).
- 2 M. W. Homer, ‘Similarity of priesthood in Masonry’: The relationship between Freemasonry and Mormonism, p. 40. Within the article, Homer repeats this point using the same wording four times (see also *ibid.*, pp. 100, 106, 112. See also M. W. Homer, *Masonry and Mormonism*). Though Homer’s tone in his more recent book-length treatment of the subject is somewhat gentler overall and he does summarize (with little discussion) some of the older literature that posits ancient origins for temple ordinances, the primary thrust of his argument has not changed: the burden

of the volume is to make the case that “the first Mormon prophet did use and adapt a Masonic formula [in the development of the Nauvoo temple ordinances] and extrapolated some of Masonry’s teachings that were developed during the previous one hundred years in England, France, and America” (M. W. Homer, *Joseph’s Temples*, p. 404).

For my own treatment of the relationship between Mormonism and Masonry, see J. M. Bradshaw, *Freemasonry*.

- 3 This is not to say that circumstances in Joseph Smith’s immediate environment and culture were not an important part of the process in which temple ordinances were revealed. However it is a significant overreach to say that Masonic ritual was the starting point. For my views on Freemasonry and the origins of temple ordinances, see J. M. Bradshaw, *Freemasonry*.
- 4 Peter\_Mary, *Critical Examination*.
- 5 J. Hannay, Smith, p. 385, cited in R. J. Dunn, *Dickens*, p. 4. A non-LDS observer similarly wrote of the Mormons in 2009: “What would you do if you met people you admired greatly, who reminded you of the best examples of your fellow believers, yet whose faith rested on what you saw as patent absurdities” (W. Lobdell, *Losing*, pp. 121–122). He goes on to concede, however: “Yet what’s so strange about Mormonism compared to traditional Christianity? ... The details of Mormonism are fresher but not much more strange and mythical” (*ibid.*, pp. 126, 127).

Elder Neal A. Maxwell expressed his “special appreciation for my friends who, though resolutely irreligious themselves, were not scoffers. Instead, though doubtless puzzled by me and their other religious friends, they were nevertheless respectful. I admire the day-to-day decency of such men and women. Though detached from theology, their decency is commendable” (N. A. Maxwell, *Inexhaustible*, p. 216). Among the many religious non-Mormon friends is historian Jan Shipps. She put her finger on part of the problem that people encounter in understanding LDS beliefs when she observed that “Mormonism is a really complex theological system. ... All its parts fit together beautifully. But if you just know a little bit about one of them, or part of them, it seems weird” (M. Luo, *Test*. For an insightful essay charting the historical evolution of charges that Mormonism is not Christian, see J. Shipps, *Sojourner*, pp. 335–357. For general overviews of

changes in public perceptions of the Mormons in America, see T. L. Givens, *Viper*; J. Shipps, *Sojourner*, pp. 51–123).

Vatican astronomer Guy Consolmagno, well-respected among both religionists and scientists, found that two religions were universally dismissed by the subjectively selected sample of scientists and engineers he interviewed as “obviously wrong”: Scientology and Mormonism. However, he also notes a difference between the two: “... no scientist of my acquaintance has ever had something good to say about Scientology — rather ironic, given its name. But as it happens, I know a number of techies who are Mormons, including my thesis advisor at MIT” (G. Consolmagno, *God’s Mechanics*, p. 98). Consolmagno’s masters thesis advisor was John S. Lewis, who joined the Church in Boston while teaching at MIT and, among many other accomplishments, was an internationally-respected professor of planetary science at the University of Arizona.

As one who has experienced both the perplexity and the generosity of spirit of his non-LDS colleagues, prominent Mormon historian Richard L. Bushman shared the following (R. L. Bushman, pp. 79–80):

I have lived an academic life ever since I graduated from Harvard College in 1955 and then later received a Ph.D. in the history of American civilization from that same institution. Since then I have taught at Brigham Young University, Boston University, and the University of Delaware, been visiting professor at Brown and Harvard universities, and now am Gouverneur Morris Professor of History at Columbia University. In these many years as an academic, I have never been belittled for my religious beliefs or felt excluded. I have published books, contributed to conferences, entered into scholarly controversies, and had my share of honors without once feeling that my well-known faith raised a barrier. Only now and then have I caught a glimpse of the wonder my colleagues must feel that a rational, modern man believes the stories and doctrines of the Latter-day Saints. Soon after I was hired as professor of history and chair of the department at the University of Delaware, a member of the search committee invited me to lunch. While we



were driving along, I mentioned my work on a biography of Joseph Smith, the founder of the Latter-day Saint Church. My colleague, doubtless to reassure me, turned quickly and said, “Dick, we took all that into account and decided it didn’t matter.” Apparently he was thinking of the peculiar tic in my intellectual makeup that allowed me to hold these strange beliefs. A similar reaction greeted me on coming to Columbia in 1989. Introduced to a member of the faculty, he said jovially, “Oh, you’re the Mormon,” an entirely amiable remark meant to make me feel at home. But one can imagine the repercussions if a new faculty member at Brigham Young University was greeted with “Oh, you’re the Jew,” or “Oh, you’re the Catholic.”

The extravagant nature of the Latter-day Saint religion probably accounts for the perplexity of my colleagues. Christian and Jewish doctrines, weathered by time, no longer strike people as bizarre or unusual. One can hold to one of the moderate versions of these ancient religions without startling one’s friends. But Joseph Smith saw the angel Moroni less than two hundred years ago and then brought home gold plates and translated the Book of Mormon. These miraculous events, happening so close to home, strain one’s credulity. How can anyone in this day of science and skepticism believe that God sends angels to speak to humans and requires such unlikely acts as the translation of an ancient history with the aid of a Urim and Thummim? My sophomore tutor, the distinguished historian of science, I. B. Cohen, once coyly mentioned to me that many people thought LDS beliefs were pure garbage. He doubtless was trying gently to bring me to my senses after my sheltered upbringing as a member of the Church.

For an additional perspective on this issue, see N. Kristof, *Confession*.

- 6 See S. C. Harper, *Joseph Smith and the Kirtland Temple* for an excellent general summary of the trajectory of temple revelations that led up to the dedication of the Kirtland Temple.

- 7 Besides the many scattered articles found elsewhere, a quick sampling of titles of LDS monographs and collections of papers fully dedicated to the topic of ancient temple beliefs and practices might include, among others, J. W. Welch, *Sermon*; J. W. Welch, *Light*; L. L. Baker et al., *Who Shall Ascend*; J. M. Bradshaw, *Moses Temple Themes* (2014); A. L. Gaskill, *Lost*; T. G. Madsen, *Temple: Where Heaven*; D. W. Parry, *Temples*; D. W. Parry et al., *Time and Eternity*; J. M. Bradshaw, *God's Image 1*; J. M. Bradshaw et al., *God's Image 2*; H. W. Nibley, *Temple and Cosmos*; H. W. Nibley, *Message* (2005); H. W. Nibley et al., *One Eternal Round*; W. J. Hamblin et al., *Temple Insights*; M. B. Brown et al., *Ancient Temple Worship*; D. R. Seely et al., *Ascending the Mountain of the Lord*; S. D. Ricks et al., *Temple: Ancient and Restored*.
- 8 See, e.g., J. M. Bradshaw, What Did Joseph Smith Know; J. M. Bradshaw, *Temple Themes in the Keys and Symbols*; M. B. Brown, *Gate*; M. B. Brown, *Exploring*; G. E. Smith, *Schooling*; S. C. Harper, Joseph Smith and the Kirtland Temple.
- 9 J. E. Talmage, *The House of the Lord*, pp. 159–161. Oliver Cowdery, editor of the *Evening and Morning Star*, wrote the following description in 1834 (The Elders of the Church in Kirtland to Their Brethren Abroad, *Evening and Morning Star*, 2:17, February 1834, p. 135. See also J. Smith, Jr., *Teachings*, 22 January 1834, p. 51; J. Smith, Jr., *Documentary History*, 22 January 1834, 2:8. Note statement has been erroneously attributed to Joseph Smith (see A. F. Ehat, *Who Shall Ascend*, p. 62 n. 11)):

We consider that God has created man with a mind capable of instruction, and a faculty which may be enlarged in proportion to the heed and diligence given to the light communicated from heaven to the intellect; and that the nearer man approaches perfection, the more conspicuous are his views, and the greater his enjoyments, until he has overcome the evils of this life and lost every desire of sin; and like the ancients, arrives to that point of faith that he is wrapped in the glory and power of his Maker and is caught up to dwell with Him. But we consider that this is a station to which no man has ever arrived in a moment: he must have been instructed in the government and laws of that kingdom by proper degrees, till his mind was capable in some measure

of comprehending the propriety, justice, equity, and consistency of the same.

President David O. McKay is reported to have said (cited in T. G. Madsen, *House*, p. 282):

I believe there are few, even temple workers, who comprehend the full meaning and power of the temple endowment. Seen for what it is, it is the step-by-step ascent into the Eternal Presence. If our young people could but glimpse it, it would be the most powerful spiritual motivation of their lives.

About the difference between coming into the presence of God through heavenly ascent and through ritual, Andrew F. Ehat writes (*A. F. Ehat, Who Shall Ascend*, pp. 53–54):

As Moses' case demonstrates [see Moses 1], the actual endowment is not a mere representation but is the reality of coming into a heavenly presence and of being instructed in the things of eternity. In temples, we have a staged representation of the step-by-step ascent into the presence of the Eternal while we are yet alive. It is never suggested that we have died when we participate in these blessings. Rather, when we enter the celestial room, we pause to await the promptings and premonitions of the Comforter. And after a period of time, mostly of our own accord, we descend the stairs, and resume the clothing and walk of our earthly existence. But there should have been a change in us as there certainly was with Moses when he was caught up to celestial realms and saw and heard things unlawful to utter.

- 10 See, e.g., J. M. Bradshaw, *God's Image 1*, pp. 37ff; A. A. Orlov, *Garment of Azazel*, p. 48; J. M. Bradshaw, *Moses Temple Themes* (2014), pp. 26–50; J. M. Bradshaw et al., *God's Image 2*, pp. 82–85.
- 11 H. W. Nibley, *Apocryphal*, p. 312; cf. pp. 310–311. See W. W. Isenberg, *Philip*, 85:14–16, p. 159.
- 12 Joseph Smith — *History* 1:14–20.
- 13 *Ether* 3:6–28. For a detailed analysis, see M. C. Thomas, *Brother of Jared*.
- 14 G. E. Smith, *Schooling*.

- 15 See J. M. Bradshaw, LDS Book of Enoch.
- 16 For official Church descriptions and photographs of modern LDS temple clothing, see Sacred Temple Clothing. For detailed studies of ancient temple clothing, see, e.g., H. W. Nibley, *Vestments*; D. W. Parry, *Ancient Sacred Vestments*; B. T. Ostler, *Clothed*; J. A. Tvedtnes, *Clothing*; S. D. Ricks, *Garment*; M. B. Brown, *Gate*, passim.
- 17 Genesis 3:7, 21; Moses 4:13, 27.
- 18 Exodus 28.
- 19 J. A. Tvedtnes, *Clothing*, pp. 662–695.
- 20 Daniel Tyler stated (H. L. Andrus et al., *They Knew* (2004), p. 48; see also excerpts from this account in M. B. Brown, *Exploring*, p. 90):

A short time prior to his arrival at my father's house, my mother, Elizabeth Comins Tyler had a remarkable vision. Lest it might be attributed to the evil one, she related it to no person, except my father, Andrew Tyler, until the Prophet arrived, on his way to Canada, I think. She saw a man sitting upon a white cloud, clothed in white from head to foot. He had a peculiar cap, different from any she had ever seen, with a white robe, underclothing, and moccasins. It was revealed to her that this person was Michael, the Archangel.

The Prophet informed her that she had had a true vision. He had seen the same angel several times. It was Michael, the Archangel.

Other sources verify the circumstances of the reported incident, providing evidence that Daniel Tyler first met Joseph Smith when the Prophet stopped at his father's house in West Springfield, Erie County, Pennsylvania on October 6–8, 1833 — see J. Smith, Jr., *Documentary History*, 1:416–418. See also J. Smith, Jr. et al., *Journals: 1832–1839*, 6-12 October 1833, p. 12.

- 21 The undergarment served as an earnest of the heavenly garment that would be restored to them through their faithfulness. In the context of rituals and ordinances based on the experiences of Adam and Eve, Nibley explained (H. W. Nibley, *Message* (2005), p. 489): “The garment [of light] represents the preexistent glory of the

- candidate... When he leaves on his earthly mission, it is laid up for him in heaven to await his return. It thus serves as security and lends urgency and weight to the need for following righteous ways on earth. For if one fails here, one loses not only one's glorious future in the eternities to come but also the whole accumulation of past deeds and accomplishments in the long ages of preexistence." Cf. A. A. Orlov, *Garment of Azazel*, p. 49–53.
- 22 H. W. Nibley, *Message* (2005), pp. 489–490.
- 23 See G. A. Anderson, *Perfection*, p. 122.
- 24 See J. M. Bradshaw, *God's Image 1*, pp. 234–240.
- 25 Matthew 22:23–33. See S. H. Faulring et al., *Original Manuscripts*, pp. 57–58. The preface to the 1981 LDS edition of D&C 132 states that relevant “doctrines and principles ... had been known by the Prophet since 1831.” For detailed studies, see D. W. Bachman, *New Light*; D. W. Bachman, *Authorship*. Vestiges of the Prophet's early encounters with these marriage passages in Genesis and Matthew 22 seem to be reflected in some portions of D&C 132:1–40, though, as with many of the other revelations in the Doctrine and Covenants, the final form of the revelation clearly reflects continued development of these doctrines over succeeding years.
- 26 W. W. Phelps to Sally Phelps, May 26, 1835, cited in B. A. Van Orden, *Writing to Zion*, p. 550.
- 27 W. W. Phelps, Letter 8, p. 130. See 1 Corinthians 11:11. For more on this statement by Phelps, see D. W. Bachman, *New Light*, pp. 28–29. Thanks to Jacob Rennaker for pointing me to this reference.
- M. B. Brown, *Gate*, p. 308 notes that sometime between 2 February and 2 July 1833, Joseph Smith would have translated JST Exodus 34:1–2, which was modified to read as follows (modifications shown in italics): “Seek ye out of the book of the Lord, and read *the names written therein*; No one of these shall fail; none shall want [i.e., lack] *their mate*; for my mouth it hath commanded, and *my spirit* it hath gathered them.”
- 28 See, e.g., J. M. Bradshaw, *Temple Themes in the Oath*, pp. 45–58. References to the fact that Elijah was going to “reveal ... the Priesthood” and the implication that this would involve “the promises made to the fathers” were made by Moroni in his visit to Joseph Smith earlier on 21 September 1823 (D&C 2:1–2).

- 29 O. Hyde, Diagram, p. 23. See also D&C 76:56–59. See J. Smith, Jr., *Teachings*, 27 August 1843, p. 322 (cf. J. Smith, Jr. et al., *Journals 1843–1844*, 27 August 1843, p. 86): “Those holding the fulness of the Melchizedek Priesthood are kings and priests of the Most High God, holding the keys of power and blessings. In fact, that Priesthood is a perfect law of theocracy, and stands as God to give laws to the people, administering endless lives to the sons and daughters of Adam.” See also J. F. Smith, Jr., *Way* (1945), p. 208.
- 30 G. M. Leonard, *Nauvoo*, pp. 260–261; J. Smith, Jr., *Record*, 28 September 1843, p. 416. See also R. K. Esplin, Succession, pp. 314–315; J. Smith, Jr., *Words*, 27 August 1843, pp. 244–247, 303–307 nn.; W. W. Phelps, cited in S. M. Brown, Paracletes, pp. 80–81.
- 31 Genesis 14:18. See also Hebrews 7:1–10, Alma 13:15–19, and JST Genesis 14:25–40.
- 32 D&C 84:14.
- 33 Psalm 110:4; Hebrews 5:6–10, 6:20, 7:1–28, and Alma 13:1–19.
- 34 See D&C 107:2–4.
- 35 See J. M. Bradshaw, What Did Joseph Smith Know, pp. 78–85 n. 46.
- 36 D&C 124:39.
- 37 See J. Smith, Jr., *Teachings*, 4 May 1842, p. 237; J. Smith, Jr., *Documentary History*, 4 May 1842, 5:1–2. The account given in these sources is a later expansion by Elder Willard Richards of an entry he made in the daily record he had been assigned to keep for Joseph Smith (J. Smith, Jr. et al., *Journals, 1841–1843*, pp. 53–54, spelling, grammar, and punctuation standardized):

4 May 1842, Wednesday

... In council in the President’s and General Offices with Judge [James] Adams, Hyrum Smith, Newell K. Whitney, William Marks, William Law, George Miller, Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, and Willard Richards. [illegible] and giving certain instructions concerning the priesthood. [illegible], etc. on the Aaronic Priesthood to the first [illegible] continuing through the day.

Additional background for this entry is given by the editors in a footnote (*ibid.*, p. 54 n. 198, with my standardization of spelling, grammar, and punctuation of Richards’ statements):

[Willard] Richards, who participated in the events of 4 May 1842, made the brief summary of Joseph Smith's daylong temple instruction in this journal entry and also prepared the following description of the new endowment, which later became part of the Joseph Smith multivolume manuscript history: Joseph Smith instructed those present "in the principles and order of the Priesthood, attending to washings, anointings, endowments and the communication of keys pertaining to the Aaronic Priesthood, and so on to the highest order of the Melchizedek Priesthood, setting forth the order pertaining to the Ancient of Days, and all those plans and principles by which anyone is enabled to secure the fullness of those blessings which have been prepared for the Church of the First Born, and come up and abide in the presence of the Eloheim in the eternal worlds. In this council was instituted the ancient order of things for the first time in these last days." According to Richards, Joseph Smith's instructions "were of things spiritual, and to be received only by the spiritually minded: and there was nothing made known to these men but what will be made known to all the Saints of the last days, so soon as they are prepared to receive, and a proper place is prepared to communicate them, even to the weakest of the Saints; therefore let the Saints be diligent in building the Temple, and all houses which they have been, or shall hereafter be, commanded of God to build, and wait their time with patience, in all meekness, faith, and perseverance unto the end, knowing assuredly that all these things referred to in this council are always governed by the principles of revelation."

Andrew Ehat further explains (A. F. Ehat, *Who Shall Ascend*, pp. 50–51):

As with many other diary entries that [Elder Richards] so seamlessly included in the *History of the Church*, he humbly wrote the record as if it contained the words of the Prophet Joseph Smith. When he could find a diary containing information relating to the Prophet Joseph that was found nowhere else, he benignly revised and inserted into the *History* the words of others as if they

were the Prophet's own. He knew Joseph did not have the time to record these things for himself (see D. C. Jessee, *JS History*, pp. 440, 470, 472–473). In fact, Elder Richards kept the personal diary of the Prophet for the last year-and-a-half of his life. But in the case of the endowment, Elder Richards had been an eyewitness of the events. So the words he would choose for this entry would reflect as much the impact of the events on himself as well as the enlarged understanding of the endowment he had personally gained in the ensuing three years ... [Thus,] Willard Richards' draft for the Prophet's "History" entry for 4 May 1842 is ... actually the most comprehensive statement made by an original participant, providing us Joseph Smith's explanation of the meaning of the endowment.

- 38 See J. M. Bradshaw, *Temple Themes in the Oath*. Section 76 of the Doctrine and Covenants also contains many significant references to temple themes. For a summary, see M. B. Brown, *Exploring*, pp. 87–88. See also D&C 88:34, 36, 121, 123–125 and JST Exodus 34:1–2.
- 39 A. L. Mauss, *Reflections*, p. 80.
- 40 The importance of obtaining these essential keys was felt keenly by the early Saints in Nauvoo. Brigham Young recorded: “[S]uch was the anxiety manifested by the Saints to receive the ordinances of [the] Endowment — and no less on our part to have them get the keys of the Priesthood — that I gave myself up entirely to the work of the Lord in the temple almost night and day” (Brigham Young Office Journal, 1844–1846, Box 71, Folder 4, Brigham Young Papers, 12 January 1846, spelling and punctuation modernized. Compare J. Smith, Jr., *Documentary History*, 12 January 1846, 7:567). To satisfy their eagerness to learn, meetings to explain the priesthood ordinances were scheduled in the temple on Sundays during the month of December 1845, but they had to be discontinued when the attic could no longer bear the weight of the growing audience. At one of these meetings, President Heber C. Kimball expressed the spirit of urgency that attended the work: “We cannot rest day nor night until we put you in possession of the [keys of the] priesthood” (*Heber C. Kimball Journal*, 93, December 21, 1845, as excerpted in H. M. Whitney, *Scenes in Nauvoo*, 12:4, p. 26). Elder



- Amasa Lyman explained that the “portions of the priesthood which [they] had received are all essential matters” (ibid., 12:4, p. 26), providing the keys to unlock the heavens in this life and in eternity. “You have learned how to pray,” said he, “putting you in possession of those keys by which you can ask for things you need and obtain them. This is the key by which to obtain all the glory and felicity of eternal life. It is the key by which you approach God” (ibid., 12:5, p. 34).
- 41 D&C 132:19. See also v. 18. Cf. B. Young, 3 December 1854, p. 139:
- When we talk of the celestial law which is revealed from heaven, that is, the Priesthood, we are talking about the principle of salvation, a perfect system of government, of laws and ordinances, by which we can be prepared to pass from one gate to another, and from one sentinel to another, until we go into the presence of our Father and God.
- See also B. Young, 8 July 1855, p. 315; B. Young, 16 February 1868, pp. 163–164; B. Young, 24 May 1863, p. 172; H. C. Kimball, 22 November 1857, p. 63; O. Hyde, 3 January 1858, pp. 154–155.
- 42 B. Young, Discourses, p. 416; B. Young, 6 April 1853 - B, p. 31, emphasis added.
- 43 See, e.g., S. Mowinckel, *Psalms*, 1:180, 1:181 n. 191; J. H. Eaton, *Psalms Commentary*, 118:19–22, p. 405; J. Gee, Keeper; J. M. Bradshaw et al., Investiture Panel.
- 44 D&C 130:11, emphasis added. Stephens qualifies this reference by noting that although “many attach the new name in this revelation to the new name given in the temple, . . . there is not a reliable source of one who has the right to teach such doctrine” (C. R. Stephens, June 6, 2016).
- 45 R. Guénon, *Symboles*, p. 36.
- 46 Genesis 17:5, 15; 32:28.
- 47 The substance of many of the explanations of this Facsimile can be dated to 1835–1836 (see B. M. Hauglid, *Textual History*, pp. 225–231), although we currently have no specific mention of comments relating to the explanations of Figures 3 and 7 until May 5, 1841 (Report of William I. Appleby in ibid., p. 219). The explanations of Facsimile 2 were first published in the *Times*

*and Seasons* 3/10 (15 March 1842), p. 724 (*ibid.*, p. 222). For translations and commentary on these Figures, see R. D. Draper et al., *Commentary*, pp. 291–292; M. D. Rhodes, *Hypocephalus Translation*; M. D. Rhodes, *Twenty Years*.

- 48 See, e.g., D. A. Bednar, *Power to Become*, pp. 9–10.
- 49 H. W. Nibley, *Message* (2005), p. 451.
- 50 Mosiah 5:10, 12.
- 51 Mosiah 5, verses 11 (“take heed that ye do not transgress, that the name be not blotted out of your hearts”) and 13 (“For how knoweth a man the master whom he has not served, and who is a stranger unto him, and is far from the thoughts and intents of his heart?”).
- 52 See, e.g., L. M. Hilton, *Hand*; J. M. Bradshaw, *Ezekiel Mural*.
- 53 D. R. Seely, *Raised Hand*; D. Calabro, *Stretch Forth*; D. Calabro, *When You Spread*; D. Calabro, *Body Symbolism*.
- 54 H. W. Attridge et al., *Hebrews*, p. 236. Cf. Exodus 25:16; Hebrews 9:4. For more about the symbolism of these and other ancient temple objects as they related to the higher priesthood, see J. M. Bradshaw, *God’s Image 1*, pp. 658–660, 679–681.
- 55 Hebrews 9:4.
- 56 For more about the symbolism of these and other ancient temple objects as they related to the higher priesthood, see J. M. Bradshaw, *God’s Image 1*, pp. 658–660, 679–681.
- 57 For more on the Eleusinian Mysteries, see *ibid.*, pp. 675–679.
- 58 T. M. Compton, *Token*. For a shorter version of this study, see T. M. Compton, *Handclasp*.
- 59 See D. Calabro, *When You Spread*, pp. 23–27.
- 60 Noting the “many continuities between the [Greek/Hellenistic] mystery religions and early Christianity,” Todd Compton studied parallels in “the climax of the recognition scene [of Greek recognition dramas], with its crucial tokens, and the climax of the mystery ritual, with its tokens.”

For more on the Greek Mysteries and a more complete summary of Compton’s comparative study, see J. M. Bradshaw, *God’s Image 1*, pp. 675–679. For more on the ancient use of the handclasp as a religious symbol, see *ibid.*, pp. 681–686.

61 Rhoda Richards Diary, 16 April 1843, cited in J. Smith, Jr., *Words*, p. 199. Rhoda was a sister to Willard Richards, who recorded the most complete account of the Prophet's sermon.

62 See J. M. Bradshaw, *What Did Joseph Smith Know*, pp. 21–23.

63 J. Smith, Jr. et al., *Journals: 1841–1843*, 16 April 1843, p. 360, spelling and punctuation modernized, emphasis added. Cf. J. Smith Jr., *Words*, 16 April 1843, pp. 195–196.

64 B. Witherington, III, *Conflict*, p. 449.

65 2 Corinthians 11:14.

66 D&C 128:20. See also 2 Nephi 9:9; D&C 129:4–7; J. Smith, Jr., *Spirits* (cf. J. Smith, Jr., *Teachings*, 1 April 1842, pp. 204–205).

67 Joseph Smith—History, 1:69; D&C 13:1.

68 Cf. J. F. McConkie et al., *Revelations*, p. 1040. Alternatively, A. L. Baugh, *Parting the Veil*, p. 273 argues that “Satan’s appearance also seems to be associated with the restoration of the Melchizedek Priesthood since [in D&C 128:20] Joseph refers to Peter, James, and John’s appearance on the Susquehanna in the very next sentence.”

69 Stephens cautions that since there is “no historical or doctrinal evidence to tie the event mentioned in D&C 128:20 to the coming of John the Baptist” and the date of 15 May 1829, this connection can only be made speculatively rather than definitively (C. R. Stephens, June 6, 2016).

70 D&C 128:20. Cf. 2 Corinthians 11:14; 2 Nephi 9:9; D&C 129:8; Moses 1:2, 9, 11–25.

71 J. F. McConkie et al., *Revelations*, p. 1040. Considering the similarity of language used in 2 Nephi 9:9 to describe Satan’s efforts to deceive Adam and Eve, these same authors conjecture that Adam “came to aid the Prophet ... on this occasion” “by virtue of his own experience in such things” (*ibid.*, p. 1035).

Ehat and Cook relate that: “George A. Smith, who ... was a witness to all the dimensions of Joseph’s teachings on this subject, later said, ‘There was no point upon which the Prophet Joseph dwelt more than the discerning of Spirits’” (J. Smith, Jr., *Words*, p. 21 n. 21. The source for George A. Smith’s statement can be found in “Minutes of Meetings held in Provo City,” 28 November 1869, Church Archives). However, as with most other sacred incidents of

his early ministry, the Prophet was at first reticent to speak openly about these keys.

For more on Joseph Smith's teachings and experiences on the detecting of evil spirits, see A. F. Ehat, *Ordinances.*, pp. 33–35.

- 72 See Moses 1. For a detailed commentary on this chapter, including a comparison with the pseudepigraphal *Apocalypse of Abraham*, see J. M. Bradshaw, *Moses Temple Themes* (2014), pp. 23–50. See also J. M. Bradshaw, *God's Image 1*, pp. 32–81, especially pp. 53–58.
- 73 R. O. Barney, *Joseph Smith's Visions*; R. Nicholson, *Cowdery Conundrum*; A. F. Ehat, *Who Shall Ascend*, p. 49.
- 74 J. M. Bradshaw, *Freemasonry*.
- 75 M. B. Brown, *Gate*, p. 307.
- 76 P. P. Pratt, *Proclamation*, p. 151.
- 77 P. P. Pratt, 6 April 1853, p. 44.
- 78 “It was during the time we lived at the Brick Store that Joseph received the revelation pertaining to celestial marriage; also concerning the ordinances of the House of the Lord. He had been strictly charged by the angel who committed these precious things into his keeping that he should only reveal them to such persons as were pure, full of integrity to the truth, and worthy to be trusted with divine messages” (E. A. Whitney, *Leaf* (15 December 1878), p. 105). From the statement, it seems, however, that Whitney was referring specifically to the ordinances of sealing associated with celestial marriage.
- 79 According to Richard L. Bushman (R. L. Bushman, *Joseph Smith and the Creation of the Sacred*, p. 104), the Kirtland Temple “ceremonies were derived from the Exodus instructions for consecrating priests, involving washings with water, anointing with oils, and sealings (Exodus 30:22–30; 40: 12–15).”
- 80 Elder Orson Pratt later explained (O. Pratt, 20 May 1877, p. 16):
- When the Temple was built, the Lord did not see proper to reveal all the ordinances of the Endowments, such as we now understand. He revealed little by little. No rooms were prepared for washings; no special place prepared for the anointings, such as you understand, and such as you comprehend at the period of the history of the Church! Neither did we know the necessity of the washings, such

as we now receive. It is true, our hands were washed, our faces and our feet. The Prophet Joseph was commanded to gird himself with a towel, doing this in the Temple. What for? That the first Elder might witness to our Father and God, that we were clean from the blood of that wicked generation, that then lived. We had gone forth according to our best ability, to publish glad tidings of great joy, for thousands of miles, upon this continent. After this we were called in, and this washing of hands and feet was to testify to God that we were clean from the blood of this generation. The holy anointing was placed upon the heads of his servants but not the full development of the Endowments in the anointing. These administrations in the Kirtland Temple were revealed, little by little, corresponding with what I have already been saying, that the Lord does not give the fullness at once, but imparts to us according to his own will and pleasure. Great were the blessings received. We were commanded to seek to behold the face of the Lord; to seek after revelation; to seek after the spirit of prophecy, and the gifts of the Spirit; and many testify to what they saw. But yet they were inexperienced; they had not proven themselves in their religion long enough. They obtained blessings greater than some of them were prepared to receive. They perhaps might have been faithful if they had exercised the agency which God gave them. But how easily are mankind toppled first this way, then that way, and are led astray, even after the heavens were opened and chariots and horses of fire as well as angels were seen: still many of these brethren apostatized.

The first ordinances of the Kirtland endowment were administered on 21 January 1836. The ordinances of that endowment were apparently completed by 30 March 1836. On that date Joseph Smith said to the brethren, “that I had now completed the organization of the Church, and we had passed through all the necessary ceremonies, that I had given them all the instruction they needed, and that they now were at liberty, after obtaining their licenses, to go forth and build up the Kingdom of God” (J. Smith, Jr., et al., *Journals, 1832-1839*, 30 March 1836, 1:215. Cf. J. Smith, Jr., *Documentary History*, 30 March 1836, 2:432). Stephen Post, a

recipient in the final ordinance of washing of feet on 30 March 1836 said that it was, “The last ordinance of the endowment.” Four days later, the Lord confirmed that the endowment had indeed been given. He declared, “The hearts of thousands and tens of thousands shall greatly rejoice in consequence of ... the endowment with which my servants have *already* been endowed ... in this House” (J. Smith, Jr., et al., *Journals, 1832-1839*, 3 April 1836, 1:222, emphasis added). This wording is as it appears in the original record. ... The language makes clear that the endowment had been given before April 3, 1836, adding the word “already” to the text found in Doctrine & Covenants 110:9.

81 M. B. Brown, *Gate*, pp. 209–210, 221–232.

82 D&C 109:5. Such a manifestation had been promised three years earlier in D&C 94:8–9, and five years earlier in D&C 36:8 and 133:2. See also J. Smith, Jr., Letter to William W. Phelps, 11 January 1833, p. 367. Cf. J. Smith, Jr., *Writings* (2002), To William W. Phelps, 11 January 1833, p. 293; J. Smith, Jr., *Documentary History*, 11 January 1833, 1:316.

83 D&C 109:15.

84 In his moving discourse at the 27 March 1836 Kirtland Temple dedicatory services, Sidney Rigdon had anticipated this requirement, though perhaps not fully realizing its implications (O. Cowdery, 27 March 1836, pp. 275–276. Cf. J. Smith, Jr., *Documentary History*, 27 March 1836, 2:414, 415):

[President Rigdon] assumed as a postulate that in the days of the Savior there were synagogues where the Jews worshiped God, and in addition to them, the splendid temple at Jerusalem, yet, when on a certain occasion, one proposed to follow Christ, whithersoever He went, He, though the heir of all things, cried out like one in the bitterness of His soul in abject poverty — “The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head” [Matthew 8:20. Cf. Luke 9:58]. This, said the speaker, was evidence to his mind, that the Most High did not put His name there, and that He did not accept the worship of those who paid their vows and adorations there. ...

This brought him to the inevitable conclusion, that the various sects of the present day, from their manifesting the same spirit, rested under the same condemnation, with those who were contemporary with the Savior. He admitted there were many houses, many sufficiently large, built for the worship of God, but not one except this, on the face of the whole earth, that was built by divine revelation; and were it not for this the dear Redeemer might in this day of science, this day of intelligence, this day of religion, say to those who would follow Him: “The foxes have holes, the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head.”

Similarly, Brigham Young later taught in the Salt Lake Valley (B. Young, 6 April 1853 - B, p. 30, emphasis in original):

From the day the children of Israel were led out of Egypt to the days of Solomon, Jehovah had *no resting place* upon the earth, (and for how long a period before that day, the history is unpublished,) but walked in the tent or Tabernacle, before the Ark, as it seemed Him good, *having no place to lay His head*. ... Why, then, did Jesus exclaim to the man who volunteered to follow him wheresoever he went, that “the Son of Man hath *not where to lay his head?*” [Matthew 8:20. Cf. Luke 9:58]. Jesus knew the pretended Saint and follower to be a hypocrite, and that if he told him plainly that he would not fare as well as the birds and foxes, he would leave him at once, and that would save Him much trouble.

But how could Jesus’ saying, that he had “*not where to lay his head,*” be true? Because the house which the Father had commanded to be built for his reception, although completed had become polluted, and hence the saying, “My house is the house of prayer: but ye have made it a den of thieves” [Luke 19:46. Cf. Matthew 21:13; Mark 11:17], and he made a scourge of cords, and drove the money-changers and dove-sellers, and faro-gamblers, all out of his house, and overthrew their tables; but that did not purify the house, so that he could not sleep in it, for an holy thing dwelleth not in an unholy Temple.

- 85 It seems reasonable to interpret this as meaning that the Savior appeared repeatedly during the period mentioned, not that He was present continuously (C. R. Stephens, June 6, 2016).
- 86 L. A. H. Paul, Luna A. Paul Letter, 15 May 1922, p. 3, spelling and punctuation modernized.
- 87 For descriptions of the Kirtland endowment, see, e.g., K. R. Anderson, *Joseph Smith's Kirtland*, pp. 185–188; M. B. Brown, *Gate*, pp. 209–210.
- 88 My appreciation to Mark L. Staker for highlighting the possibility of this alternate approach to dating the events in the letter.
- 89 M. L. Staker, May 17, 2016. For the descriptions of this period in Joseph Smith's journal, see J. Smith, Jr. et al., *Journals, 1832–1839*, 17 January–6 February 1836, pp. 160–182. For convenient summaries including additional sources describing these events, see, e.g., K. R. Anderson, *Joseph Smith's Kirtland*, pp. 169–177; S. C. Harper, Pentecost; M. V. Backman, Jr., *Heavens*, pp. 286–294.
- 90 For example, after concluding a spirit-filled meeting on 22 January 1836 at 2:00 AM, Joseph Smith recorded in his journal that “the spirit & visions of God attended me through the night” (J. Smith, Jr., et al., *Journals, 1832–1839*, 22 January 1836, p. 172). On 28 January 1836, he likewise wrote: “I retired to my home filled with the spirit ... while my eyes were closed in sleep the visions of the Lord were sweet unto me & his glory was round about me” (J. Smith, Jr., et al., *Journals, 1832–1839*, 28 January 1836, p. 175).
- 91 Heading to section 110 in the 1981 edition of the Doctrine and Covenants.
- 92 See D&C 110:4–10.
- 93 J. S. Thompson, June 6, 2016.
- 94 M. B. Brown, *Gate*, pp. 211–212.
- 95 O. Pratt, 9 April 1871, p. 273.
- 96 F. D. Richards, *Early Church Experiences*, p. 17.
- 97 According to R. J. Woodford, *Historical Development.*, 3:1458: “This section is not a revelation in the sense that the words are necessarily inspired of God. It is, however, a description by Joseph Smith of what happened at the time he and Oliver Cowdery were visited by four heavenly beings on April 3, 1836.”



- 98 Editorial note in J. Smith, Jr. et al., *Journals, 1832–1839*, p. 223. The editors further note (*ibid.*, p. 217):

The journal ends with two entries penned by Warren Cowdery, a scribe who had been writing history for [Joseph Smith]. Unlike Warren Parrish and other scribes in this journal, who referred to themselves in the third person and JS in the first, Warren Cowdery referred to JS in the third person. Cowdery's work on JS's 1834–1836 history also produced third-person accounts. In that endeavor, he had before him a first-person text (the earlier entries of this journal), which he changed to third person as he copied them into the history.

The first of Cowdery's entries and the opening of the second read as if Cowdery were an observer of what he described. The account of the 3 April vision of Jesus Christ, however, reports details and a long direct quotation that only the two participants — JS and Warren's younger brother Oliver Cowdery—could have known. For this material, Warren Cowdery must have relied on another original text—no longer extant — or on oral reports from either or both of the participants. If Warren Cowdery was working from a prior text, that would directly parallel the method that produced the third-person 1834–1836 history. This account of the vision was later recast in first person as part of the history JS began in 1838, and in that form it was incorporated into the published Latter-day Saint canon (D&C 110) in 1876.

Unfortunately, because Wilford Woodruff was serving a mission until November 1836, we lack the detailed, daily accounts that he otherwise would have recorded about the events in Kirtland earlier that year.

- 99 See, e.g., M. V. Backman, Jr., *Heavens*, pp. 303–308.
- 100 Editorial note in J. Smith, Jr. et al., *Journals, 1832–1839*, p. 223. The quote from Eliza R. Snow is taken from E. W. Tullidge, *Women*, p. 99.
- 101 D&C 110:8.
- 102 L. A. H. Paul, Luna A. Paul Letter, 15 May 1922, p. 3, spelling and punctuation modernized.

- 103 J. Smith, Jr. et al., *Journals, 1832–1839*, 12 April 1838, pp. 250–255; D. Q. Cannon et al., *Far West*, 12 April 1838, pp. 162–171.
- 104 B. C. Hales, *Joseph Smith’s Polygamy*, 1:160.
- 105 *Ibid.*, 1:137. For an extended discussion of Cowdery’s accusations and their aftermath, see *ibid.*, 1:136–144. For an extensive discussion of Joseph Smith’s relationship with Fanny Alger and evidence that a marriage ceremony occurred, see *ibid.*, 1:85–126. For a thorough review of evidence regarding Cowdery’s authorship of the article on marriage that appeared in the 1835 Doctrine and Covenants, see *ibid.*, 1:153–182. See J. M. Bradshaw et al., *God’s Image 2*, Excursus 1: Revelatory Experiences of Oliver Cowdery, pp. 441–448 for a summary of controversies between the Prophet and Oliver Cowdery regarding translations, revelations, and the early history of the Church.
- 106 See S. H. Faulring, Return of Oliver Cowdery.
- 107 For a brief summary of some of these manifestations, see the short biography of Zebedee Coltrin given below.
- 108 C. R. Stephens, Life and Contributions, pp. 21–28, 34–35; *School of the Prophets*, 3 October 1883, pp. 53–55; 11 October 1883, pp. 62–63; 5 February 1878, p. 102; 28 January 1836, p. 106; J. Smith, Jr. et al., *Journals, 1832–1839*, 28 January 1836, pp. 174–175. Cf. J. Smith, Jr., *Documentary History*, 28 January 1836, 2:386–387. See also Jennifer Mackley’s transcription of the High Priests’ Record of Spanish Fork Branch, 5 February 1870.
- 109 C. R. Stephens, Life and Contributions, p. 30.
- 110 C. R. Stephens, June 6, 2016. See “Kirtland Council Minute Book” or “Kirtland High Council Minutes” for March 1, 1835, p. 178 (<http://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paperSummary/minute-book-1?p=182>), where Zebedee was promised in his ordination as a member of the Seventy by the First Presidency: “You shall have heavenly visions and the ministry of Angels shall be your lot.” Our thanks to Karl Ricks Anderson for pointing us to this source (K. R. Anderson, July 23, 2016).
- 111 L. A. H. Paul, Luna A. Paul Letter, 15 May 1922.
- 112 Information in this biography of Dell Paul is gleaned from personal knowledge of K-Lynn Paul and other family sources, including a

brief biography written by Dell Paul's daughter-in-law, Grace Paul (G. Paul, Luna Ardell Hinckley Paul).

- 113 K.-L. Paul, 2015.
- 114 See L. J. Nuttall et al., *In the President's Office*, 17 May 1884, pp. 138–141 for an account of the dedicatory services.
- 115 K.-L. Paul, April 29 2016.
- 116 Ezra Potter.
- 117 Ezra Potter, Aged 75, dies.
- 118 C. R. Stephens, *Life and Contributions*, p. 7, citing the minutes of a high priests meeting held at Spanish Fork, Utah, February 5, 1878. See also *School of the Prophets*, p. 100, which lists the year of the high priests meeting, mistakenly, as 1875.
- 119 D&C 52:29.
- 120 See Jennifer Mackley's transcription of the High Priests' Record of Spanish Fork Branch, from April 29, 1866 to December 1st 1898.
- 121 C. R. Stephens, *Life and Contributions*, pp. 21–28; *School of the Prophets*, 3 October 1883, pp. 53–55, 11 October 1883, pp. 62–63, 5 February 1878, p. 102; W. Woodruff, *Woodruff*, 8:200–201. See also Jennifer Mackley's transcription of the High Priests' Record of Spanish Fork Branch, from April 29, 1866 to December 1st 1898.
- 122 C. R. Stephens, *Life and Contributions*, pp. 45–47; *School of the Prophets*, 5 February 1878, pp. 102–103, 11 October 1883, p. 64; W. Woodruff, *Woodruff*, 8:201. See also Jennifer Mackley's transcription of the High Priests' Record of Spanish Fork Branch, from April 29, 1866 to December 1st 1898.
- 123 C. R. Stephens, *Life and Contributions*, pp. 34–35; *School of the Prophets*, 11 October 1883, p. 63, 28 January 1836, p. 106; J. Smith, Jr. et al., *Journals, 1832–1839*, 28 January 1836, pp. 174–175. Cf. J. Smith, Jr., *Documentary History*, 28 January 1836, 2:386–387. See also Jennifer Mackley's transcription of the High Priests' Record of Spanish Fork Branch, 5 February 1870.
- 124 C. R. Stephens, *Life and Contributions*, p. 30. For the promise that he would have heavenly visions, see “Kirtland Council Minute Book” or “Kirtland High Council Minutes” for March 1, 1835, p. 178 (<http://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paperSummary/minute-book-1?p=182>). Zebedee gave the following account of his

ordinations to Melchizedek Priesthood offices (Jennifer Mackley's transcription of the High Priests' Record of Spanish Fork Branch, 5 February 1870):

I was ordained an Elder under the hands of John Whitmer, and ordained a High Priest on the 22nd day of July 1832 under the hands of Hyrum Smith and Reynolds Cahoon, Hyrum Smith being mouth. I was ordained one of the Seventies under the hands of father Joseph Smith, his two sons, Joseph and Hyrum, Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer, F. G. Williams and Sidney Rigdon. Sidney being mouth, he ordained me to all that could be places upon man upon the earth, and last of all that it should ever be by my desire to preach the Gospel to all the eternities of God. This being sealed by all the Brethren by a Hearty Amen. I sit [Is it] anything to [be] wondered at that I always want to preach.

- 125 Ibid., p. 31. For Coltrin's prophetic blessing of Wilford Woodruff when the latter was ordained a Seventy, see W. Woodruff, 3 January 1837, 1:118. See also 1:216. Woodruff received the "ordinance of anointing under the hands of Zebedee Coltrin in the house of the Lord in Kirtland" on 4 April 1837 (ibid., 1:216).
- 126 C. R. Stephens, *Life and Contributions*, p. 31; J. Smith, Jr., *Documentary History*, 6 April 1837, 2:476.
- 127 C. R. Stephens, June 6, 2016, pp. 36–38, 57.
- 128 Ibid., pp. 57–58.
- 129 Ibid., p. 58.
- 130 Ibid., pp. 61–63.
- 131 Ibid., p. 10; D. S. Anderson et al., *Endowment*, 22 December 1846, pp. 126, 128, 132, 137, 20 January 1846, p. 438. Zebedee's first wife, Julia, died in Kirtland on 24 April 1841. He married Mary Mott on 5 February 1843 (C. R. Stephens, *Life and Contributions*, p. 10). They received the fulness of the priesthood on the same day as their sealing, 20 January 1846 (D. S. Anderson et al., *Endowment*, p. 437). Mary was a proxy for Julia when she was sealed to Zebedee on 20 January 1846 (L. W. Cook, *Nauvoo Marriages*, 20 January 1846, p. 97). On 6 February 1846, he was also sealed for time to Sarah Oyler Mackley (divorced) (ibid., p. 97 n.; 6 February 1846, p. 209) and Hannah Husted Marsh (ibid., p. 97n.). He was sealed

- for time and eternity to Lavina Elizabeth Fullmer Coates on 25 February 1857 (subsequent divorce) (*ibid.*, p. 97n.).
- 132 C. R. Stephens, *Life and Contributions*, pp. 66–69.
- 133 *Ibid.*, pp. 74–78.
- 134 *Ibid.*, pp. 79–80.
- 135 *Ibid.*, pp. 85–89.
- 136 W. Woodruff, *Woodruff*, 31 May 1873, 7:140.
- 137 C. R. Stephens, *Life and Contributions*, p. 83.
- 138 *School of the Prophets*, 5 February 1878, pp. 100–104.
- 139 *Ibid.*, p. 1.
- 140 *Ibid.*, p. 108, citing the *Journal of Henry Eyring*, 12 October 1883, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Brigham Young University.
- 141 *Ibid.*, 3 and 11 October 1883, pp. 53–63.
- 142 W. Woodruff, *Woodruff*, 12 October 1883, 8:201.
- 143 L. J. Nuttall et al., *In the President's Office*, 2 February 1884, p. 117.
- 144 *Ibid.*, 14 May 1884, p. 134. Nuttall records that Zebedee Coltrin's son accompanied him on the train. According to <http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GRid=11174973> Zebedee had three sons: John Graham Coltrin (1843–1905), Zebedee Coltrin, Jr. (1851–1918), and Heman Coltrin (1854–1932). All three sons were buried in the Spanish Fork City Cemetery, Spanish Fork, Utah.
- 145 *Ibid.*, 14 May 1884, p. 134.
- 146 C. R. Stephens, *Life and Contributions*, p. 83 n. 50.
- 147 *Ibid.*, pp. 83–85; L. J. Nuttall et al., *In the President's Office*, 14 May 1884, p. 134.
- 148 L. A. H. Paul, *Luna A. Paul Letter*, 15 May 1922, p. 2, spelling modernized. See also the High Priests Record of Spanish Fork, April 29, 1866 to December 1, 1898, February 7, 1884, cited in C. R. Stephens, *Life and Contributions*, p. 83 n. 50.
- 149 M. M. B. Shurtliff, *Brief Sketch*. This characterization of the purpose of Coltrin's visit to the temple in this account would have most likely originated with Coltrin himself, corroborating the similar description given in the Luna Paul letter.

150 Understandably, a wagon trip all the way from Spanish Fork to Logan would have been a hardship for a man of Zebedee Coltrin's age. Perhaps Coltrin rode his buggy to Ogden each time, and then through the kindness of President Taylor was provided with a ticket to ride the train from Ogden to Logan. According to Stephens (C. R. Stephens, *Life and Contributions*, p. 90):

At his age and unable to ride from Spanish Fork to Logan in his buggy, he wrote [a letter on 2 November 1885] and asked President John Taylor to let him have the sum of twenty dollars so that he could take the train to Logan and do temple work.

151 L. A. H. Paul, Luna A. Paul Letter, 15 May 1922, p. 2, spelling modernized.

152 C. R. Stephens, *Life and Contributions*, p. 90.

153 The information about Ezra Potter in this section has been gleaned from Ezra Potter, aged 75, dies; Ezra Potter; Louisa Festersen Rohwer Potter; Ezra Potter.

154 B. A. Kartchner, *History of John & Matilda Douglass*, pp. 30–44. Thanks to Jennifer Mackley for making me aware of this journal and to Glenn Kartchner for providing pages to me from his mother's book, which contained a typescript of Ezra Potter's journal and other information about him. Bertha A. Kartchner was a granddaughter of Ezra Potter through his daughter Katherine. Her book says that she borrowed the original journal from her aunt, Matilda Potter Hayes, a daughter of Ezra. Glenn Kartchner does not know the whereabouts of the original copy of the journal and I have been unable to find it in either the archives of the Church History Library or in the catalogue of L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Brigham Young University.

155 C. R. Stephens, *Life and Contributions*, p. 30.

156 J. Smith, Jr. et al., *Journals, 1832–1839*, 17 January–6 February 1836, pp. 160–182. See convenient summaries including additional sources describing these events in K. R. Anderson, *Joseph Smith's Kirtland*, pp. 169–177; S. C. Harper, *Pentecost*; M. V. Backman, Jr., *Heavens*, pp. 286–294.

157 J. Smith, Jr. et al., *Journals, 1832–1839*, 27–31 March 1836, pp. 200–216. See convenient summaries including additional sources describing these events M. V. Backman, Jr., *Heavens*, pp. 294–302;

- S. C. Harper, Pentecost; K. R. Anderson, *Joseph Smith's Kirtland*, pp. 179–191.
- 158 B. C. Hales, *Joseph Smith's Polygamy*, 1:160.
- 159 J. Smith, Jr. et al., *Journals, 1832–1839*, 12 April 1838, pp. 250–255; D. Q. Cannon et al., *Far West*, 12 April 1838, pp. 162–171.
- 160 Regarding the circumstances of Joseph Smith's departure from Kirtland, see A. L. Baugh, *Joseph Smith in Northern Missouri*, pp. 291–294.
- 161 C. R. Stephens, *Life and Contributions*, p. 83.
- 162 *School of the Prophets*, 5 February 1878, pp. 100–104.
- 163 Ezra Potter, aged 75, dies.
- 164 *School of the Prophets*, p. 108, citing the *Journal of Henry Eyring*, 12 October 1883, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Brigham Young University.
- 165 *Ibid.*, 3 and 11 October 1883, pp. 53–63.
- 166 L. J. Nuttall et al., *In the President's Office*, 2 February 1884, p. 117; C. R. Stephens, *Life and Contributions*, p. 83 n. 50, citing the High Priests Record of Spanish Fork, April 29, 1866 to December 1, 1898, February 7, 1884.
- 167 L. J. Nuttall et al., *In the President's Office*, 14 May 1884, p. 134.
- 168 K.-L. Paul, 2015 explains this reference to cyclones: “In her letter my grandmother refers to a fear of cyclone(s) that my father had mentioned to her (presumably in a prior letter.) My father had moved to Fergus Falls, Minnesota where a tornado (called a cyclone back then) had destroyed much of the town in 1919, so the people there would still have had a considerable fear in 1922.”
- 169 It seems reasonable to interpret this as meaning that the Savior came repeatedly during the two weeks mentioned, not that He was there continuously during that period.
- 170 M. B. Brown, *Gate*, pp 216–217.
- 171 D&C 51:16.
- 172 See D&C 64:21.
- 173 See D&C 64:33.
- 174 J. F. Smith, Jr., *Doctrines*, 2:242.

- 175 G. A. Smith, 18 March 1855, pp. 214–215.
- 176 B. Young, 6 April 1853 - B, pp. 31–32.
- 177 See D&C 115: 7–16.
- 178 J. Smith, Jr., To Presendia Huntington Buell. Cf. J. Smith, Jr., *Writings* (2002), To Presendia Huntington Buell, 15 March 1839, p. 427; J. Smith, Jr., *Documentary History*, 15 March 1839, 3:286.
- 179 J. M. Bradshaw, What Did Joseph Smith Know.
- 180 J. M. Bradshaw, *Temple Themes in the Keys and Symbols*.
- 181 L. A. H. Paul, Luna A. Paul Letter, 15 May 1922. The reproduction here of the original color scan has been converted to grayscale, and the contrast has been increased for better readability.
- 182 The omitted portion of the letter contains a private response from the Church Historian.