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# Dedication of the Kirtland Temple

Some of the most memorable spiritual experiences occurred on the day the temple was dedicated—Sunday, 27 March 1836. Hundreds of Latter-day Saints came to Kirtland anticipating the great blessings the Lord had promised to bestow upon them. Early on the morning of the temple dedication, hundreds of people gathered outside the temple hoping to attend the dedicatory service. The doors were opened at 8:00 a.m., and the First Presidency assisted in seating the congregation of nearly a thousand people, but many were left outside. When the leaders of the Church were seated at the elevated pulpits and benches at each end of the hall and when all the available seats in the temple were filled, the doors were closed. This left hundreds of people still outside, including many who had sacrificed tremendously for the temple's construction and had come long distances to attend the dedication. Sensing their disappointment, the Prophet directed them to hold an overflow meeting in the schoolhouse just to the west. The dedicatory service was repeated a second time the following Thursday for their benefit.

After the choir's opening number, President Sidney Rigdon spoke for two and a half hours declaring that the temple was unique among all the buildings of the world because it was built by divine revelation. After a brief intermission, the officers of the Church were sustained. The climax of the day was the dedicatory prayer, which had previously been given to the Prophet by revelation. He expressed gratitude for God's blessings and asked the Lord to accept the temple which was built "through great tribulation ... that the Son of Man might have a place to manifest himself to his people" (D&C 109:5). He petitioned that the blessings promised in the Lord's initial command to build the temple (see D&C 88:117–21) might now be realized, and he prayed that Church leaders, members, and the leaders of nations would be blessed, and that the promised gathering of the scattered remnants of Israel would be accomplished (see D&C 109:60–67). This prayer became a pattern for other temple dedicatory prayers.

Following the prayer, the choir sang the hymn "The Spirit of God." It had been written especially for the dedication by W. W. Phelps. The sacrament was then administered and passed to the congregation. Joseph Smith and others testified that they saw heavenly messengers at the service. The congregation concluded the seven-hour service by standing and rendering the sacred "Hosanna Shout": "Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna to God and the Lamb, amen, amen, and amen," repeated three times. Eliza R. Snow said the shout was given "with such power as seemed almost sufficient to raise the roof from the building."

That evening over four hundred priesthood bearers met in the temple. While George A. Smith was speaking, "a noise was heard like the sound of a rushing mighty wind which filled the Temple, and all the congregation simultaneously arose, being moved upon by an invisible power; many began to speak in tongues and prophesy; others saw glorious visions; and I beheld the Temple was filled with angels." David Whitmer bore testimony that he saw three angels passing up the south aisle. "The people of the neighborhood came running together (hearing an unusual sound within, and seeing a bright light like a pillar of fire resting upon the Temple)." Others saw angels hovering over the temple and heard heavenly singing.

