

Temple Dedicatory Prayer

November 17, 1964



Other early copies of this prayer have a few minor differences, but we adopted the *Improvement Era* version.

David O. McKay's dedicatory prayer for the Oakland Temple was fairly long. It is reproduced here in its entirety. He introduced the prayer by saying, "It is now my privilege to represent you and all the Church in the giving of your efforts, in giving what you have produced to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ for the glory of his works. If you will bow your heads and join with us, we will now offer the dedicatory prayer."

The prayer continued as follows:



God, our Eternal Father, Creator of the heavens, the earth, and all things therein, we, thy children, assemble here in sacred service with hearts full of gratitude unto thee for thy many blessings unto us.

We are grateful for the knowledge that we have of our relationship to thee; that thou art our Father, to whom we may go for inspiration and guidance and, when in time of trouble and stress, with our hearts full of hope and desire we may go as to our earthly father.

Help us to free our minds from idle thoughts, and our souls from selfish and envious feelings, that in sincerity and truth we may assemble as one in singleness of purpose in love of thee, of one another, and of all sincere people throughout the world.

O Father, wilt thou grant unto us thy guidance and thy Spirit while we are thus assembled, and may we know that the channel of communication between thee and us is now open. May we feel and know that we are partakers in reality of thy divine Spirit.

To that end, let us come before thee in sincerity of heart and purity of life. May what we say and do be wholly in accordance with thy mind and will.

We are grateful that thou didst send thy Beloved Son into the world to reveal unto humanity thine existence and to establish on

earth the way that men should go in order to return into thy presence as thy sons and daughters.

We are grateful that throughout the dark ages, when this light of truth became practically obliterated, that thou didst restore the gospel in this dispensation by thine own appearance, and the appearance of thy Beloved Son to the Prophet Joseph Smith, on which occasion thou didst say, “This is My Beloved Son. Hear Him!” We are thankful for the message which he gave to the whole world that thou dost live; that thou dost hear and answer prayer; that Jesus Christ is the Savior of the world, and that through him death has been conquered and the soul of man set free from death.

We are grateful that under thy guidance and inspiration the Church of Jesus Christ was organized in its entirety, which gives opportunity to every man, woman, and child to render service to humanity in an organized way. We are grateful beyond expression for its influence throughout the world today. Extend this influence, O Father, that peace may soon be established upon the earth.

We are grateful that, following thy glorious revelation to the Prophet Joseph Smith, thou didst in this dispensation restore by heavenly messengers the Aaronic and Melchizedek Priesthoods, and subsequently all the keys of the priesthood ever held by thy prophets from the days of Adam through Abraham and Moses to Malachi, who held the power to “turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers” down to the latest generation. For this completeness and consistency of restoration of authority, we express gratitude today and praise thy holy name.

We are grateful for this land of America, “. . . choice above all other lands . . .” The freedom vouchsafed by the Constitution of the United States, which guarantees to every man the right to worship thee in accordance with the dictates of his own conscience, made possible the establishment of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. O Father, may the American people not forget thee! Help us to see the greatness of this country. We express gratitude for the right of the people to resort to the ballot, and for freedom to meet in legislative halls to settle problems and disputes without fear or coercion of dictators, secret police, or slave camps. Help people everywhere to

sense more clearly that government exists for the protection of the individual—not the individual for the government.

We pray for this country. Bless the President of the United States that he may have wisdom supreme to save the world as well as this nation from devastating war. Bless those associated with him. May they be enlightened and guided by thy Spirit to maintain and uphold the glorious principles of human liberty!

We express gratitude to thee for the men whom thou hast chosen to lead the Church from the Prophet Joseph Smith, his brother Hyrum, and their associates, and their successors through the years down to the present General Authorities—the First Presidency, the Council of the Twelve Apostles, the Assistants to the Twelve, the Patriarch to the Church, the First Council of the Seventy, the Presiding Bishopric. Confer upon each of them a rich endowment of thy Spirit that under their guidance the gospel may go forth to all the nations of the earth.

Bless with health and wisdom thy servant whom thou hast called to lead thy Church in this day. Continue to reveal to him thy mind and will as it pertains to the growth and advancement of thy work among the children of men. Bless abundantly his Counselors. May the First Presidency be united by the Spirit and Power of God in all their labors, and in every thought, word, and act may they glorify thy name. Here in this holy house, with humility and deep gratitude, we acknowledge thy divine guidance and inspiration. Help us to magnify our callings and to preach to all the world the freedom which the gospel gives. For truth is freedom and gives the right to worship, to work, the right to serve. Help us never to lose sight of these blessings.

Bless the presidencies of stakes, high councils, bishoprics of wards, residencies of branches, presidencies of the Melchizedek and Aaronic Priesthood Quorums, presidencies and superintendencies of auxiliary organizations throughout the world. Guide them that they may be equal to the responsibility placed upon them. Keep the officers of the quorums and auxiliary organizations united, we beseech thee. Keep them one as thou and thy Son are one, for unity is a great uplifting principle of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Forget not, we beseech thee, thy servants who preside over the missions of the Church throughout the world, together with all the missionaries who have gone forth to proclaim to the peoples of the world the Restoration of the gospel and the plan of salvation. Protect them from all evil, and bless them with the gifts and powers of their ministry. Bless their families that they may be sustained in peace and comfort.

We are thankful that thou didst inspire thy Prophet Brigham Young to prophesy to the Saints who had come around Cape Horn under the presidency of Samuel Brannan in 1847 that “in the process of time, the shores of the Pacific may yet be overlooked from the Temple of the Lord,” and that later, in 1924, Elder George Albert Smith of the Council of the Twelve envisioned that one day “a Temple would surmount the East Bay hills, one that would be visible as a beacon to ships as they entered the Golden Gate from the far flung nations of the earth.” We are grateful, also, for the foresight of the faithful men who were appointed as a committee in 1934 to locate a site for a temple and were inspired of thee to choose this glorious site upon which this temple now stands. We are grateful that through thy divine intervention the site was made available and that thy servant, President Heber J. Grant, authorized its purchase, and that in 1961 the decision was made to build this holy house.

We are especially grateful, O Heavenly Father, for the committee of stake presidencies who have had general charge of the organizing and building of this temple. Bless them for their devotion and unselfish service.

This temple, the fifteenth, which has now been erected to thy holy name, is a monument testifying to the faith and loyalty of the members of thy Church in the payment of their tithes and offerings. We are grateful that the members of the Church recognize that the payment of tithes and offerings brings blessings and makes possible the proclamation of truth and contributes to the carrying out of thy purposes through the building of chapels, tabernacles, and eventually temples wherever the Church is organized.

We invoke thy blessing particularly upon thy people in this temple district who have so willingly and generously contributed their means, time, and effort to the completion of this holy temple.

We are grateful for the spirit of cooperation that has influenced the men and women in this city and surrounding towns. We thank thee for the co-operation of the mayor, the city council, the Chamber of Commerce, and the united action of all who have seen in vision the value of the house of God.

We thank thee for every effort that has been put forth by the members, from every sacrifice that has been made by the young boys and girls who have given of their dimes and dollars, to the millionaire who gave of his thousands. Accept, O Father, of the contributions from the widow, from the boys and girls who denied themselves some dress or some pleasure in order to make possible this edifice. May the Spirit that prompted them to give, to serve, be with them throughout their lives, for only by service may they obtain that happiness which passeth understanding.

Our Father, we pray thee to bless all those who have labored in the erection of this temple, or who have, in any way, by their means or influence, aided in its completion. May peace abide in the homes of thy people everywhere, and may sickness and disease be rebuked from their midst.

May each contributor be comforted in spirit and prospered a hundredfold! May all be assured that they have the gratitude of thousands, perhaps millions, on the other side for whom the prison doors may now be opened and deliverance proclaimed to those who will accept the truth and be set free.

While his body lay in the tomb, Christ, thy Beloved Son, preached to the spirits in prison who once were disobedient in the days of Noah, thus evidencing that those who have passed beyond the veil must also hear the word of God and obey the eternal principles of life and salvation.

Temples are built to thy holy name as a means of uniting thy people, living and dead, in bonds of faith, of peace, and of love throughout eternity.

Help all, O Father, to realize more keenly and sincerely than ever before that only by obedience to eternal principles and ordinances of the gospel of Jesus Christ may loved ones who died without baptism be permitted the glorious privilege of entrance into thy

kingdom. Increase our desire, therefore, we pray thee, to put forth even greater effort towards the consummation of thy purposes to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of all thy children.

With these, and many other glorious principles in mind, we have met to render unto thee the thanks and gratitude of our hearts.

And now, Father, as thy servant, holding the Holy Melchizedek Priesthood, I dedicate this the Oakland Temple of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and consecrate it for the sacred purposes for which it has been erected. We dedicate it unto thee, with all pertaining thereto, as a house of prayer, a house of praise, a house of worship, a house of inspiration and communion with thee.

We pray thee, Heavenly Father, to accept this building in all its parts, and to guard it from foundation to the towers which stand aloft. Protect it from earthquakes, hurricanes, tempestuous storms or other devastating holocausts. May the baptismal font, the ordinance rooms, and especially the sealing rooms be kept holy, that thy Spirit may be ever present to comfort and to inspire. Protect all the mechanical parts pertaining to lighting, heating, ventilating system, elevators. Bless the persons who are charged to look after all such installations and fixtures that they may do so faithfully, skillfully, and reverently.

We dedicate the grounds upon which the temple stands and by which it is surrounded; the walks, ornamental beds, the trees, plants, flowers, and shrubbery that grow in the soil; may they bloom and blossom and become exceedingly beautiful and fragrant, and may thy Spirit dwell in the midst thereof, that this plot of ground may be a place of rest and peace for holy meditation and inspired thought.

Bless the president of the temple, and his wife, as matron. Let humility temper their feelings, wisdom and kind consideration guide their actions. May they, and others who will be appointed as assistants, sealers, and custodians, maintain an atmosphere of cleanliness and holiness in every room. Let no unclean person or thing ever enter herein, for "my spirit," saith the Lord, "will not dwell in unclean tabernacles"; neither will it remain in a house where selfish, arrogant, or unwholesome thoughts abide. Therefore, may all who seek this holy temple come with clean hands and pure hearts, that thy Holy Spirit may ever be present to comfort, to inspire, and to bless.

May all who come within these sacred walls feel a peaceful, hallowed influence. Cause, O Lord, that even people who pass the grounds, or view the temple from afar, may lift their eyes from groveling things of sordid life and look up to thee and thy providence.

Now, O God, our Heavenly Eternal Father, the faithful membership of thy Church through love for thee and thy children, have erected to thee by tithes and offerings this holy house in which shall be performed ordinances and ceremonies essential to the happiness, salvation, and exaltation of thy children living in mortality and in the spirit world. Accept of our offering, hallow it by thy Holy Spirit, and protect and guard it by thy power.

With this prayer, we dedicate our lives to the establishment of the kingdom of God on earth for the peace of the world and to thy glory forever, in the name of thy Beloved Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.

(Marba C. Josephson, "Oakland Temple Dedication," *Improvement Era*, January 1965, 18–21; compare *Church News*, November 21, 1964, 4)