

## New Name

Another unique aspect of the Mormon temple ritual are the special names given to patrons. All men participating in the temple on a given day are given the same name. The same is true for the women. Normally they are names found in either the Bible or *Book of Mormon*. Historically, Mormon leaders have taught that the husband has the ability to call his wife from the grave on the resurrection day by using this special name. According to Charles Penrose, who later became a First Counselor to President Heber J. Grant, "In the resurrection, they stand side by side and hold dominion together. Every man who overcomes all things and is thereby entitled to inherit all things, receives power to bring up his wife to join him in the possession and enjoyment thereof" (*Mormon Doctrine Plain and Simple*, 1888, p.51). You might wish to ask your tour guide what happens to the wife should the husband forget her temple name.

## Endowment Room

Your temple tour will include a stop in one of several ordinance rooms. These have the appearance of a mini-movie theater. Here patrons watch a film on the Mormon view of the creation and fall of man. It is in one of these rooms where patrons will be taught secret handshakes and passwords known as "tokens" and "keywords." It is very necessary that the Mormon memorize these handshakes and passwords, otherwise they will not be able to gain entrance into the presence of their God. Second LDS President Brigham Young taught, "Your endowment is, to receive all those ordinances in the house of the Lord, which are necessary for you, after you have departed this life, to enable you to walk back to the presence of the Father, passing the angels who stand as sentinels, being enabled to give them the key words, the signs and tokens, pertaining to the holy Priesthood, and gain your eternal exaltation in spite of earth and hell" (*Discourses of Brigham Young*, p.416).

You may wish to ask your tour guide to explain to your group the use of these tokens and keywords. You might also ask your guide where in the Bible it teaches that entrance into heaven depends on secret handshakes or passwords. Isn't faith in Christ enough?

## Sealing Room

Marriage is very important in Mormon theology. In fact, it is only by being married that a Mormon can hope to get the best his religion has to offer. Brigham Young taught that if a man wishes to be saved, "he cannot be saved without a woman by his side" (Cited in Kimball's *The Miracle of Forgiveness*, p.245). However, a marriage that ends at death is unacceptable to most

Mormons since they are taught to believe that marriage can extend beyond the grave by being sealed together for "time and eternity." This ritual takes place in what is known as a "sealing room." Sealing rooms are rather small in comparison to some of the other rooms in Mormon temples. They consist of several chairs surrounding a kneeling bench in the middle of the room. You will also notice mirrors on the walls that are strategically placed to give the effect of "eternity."

One of the primary desires of faithful Mormons is to be sealed to their families for eternity. However, this is a conditional promise based on individual faithfulness. If a family member leaves the Mormon Church, or does not keep all the laws and ordinances, they will not achieve exaltation in the Celestial Kingdom. This holds true for husbands and wives. Despite the fact that they have been sealed in a Mormon temple, this ability to be married in eternity is only on condition of complete obedience to God's laws.

According to the *Encyclopedia of Mormonism* (2:479), "Exaltation is the greatest of all the gifts and attainments possible. It is available only in the highest degree of the Celestial Kingdom and is reserved for members of the Church of the Firstborn. This exalted status, called eternal life, is available to be received by a man and wife... Blessings and privileges of exaltation require unwavering faith, repentance, and complete obedience to the gospel of Jesus Christ."

## Conclusion

It should be clear that the Mormon Church is very misleading when it draws a comparison between their temples and the Old Testament tabernacle and the Jerusalem temple. There is actually no comparison. Instead, much of what goes on in Mormon temples more closely resembles the ceremony common in Freemasonry. This would make perfect sense since Joseph Smith became a Mason on March 15, 1842 (*History of the Church* 4:550-551). Shortly after his initiation into Masonry he instituted the Mormon temple endowment ceremony.

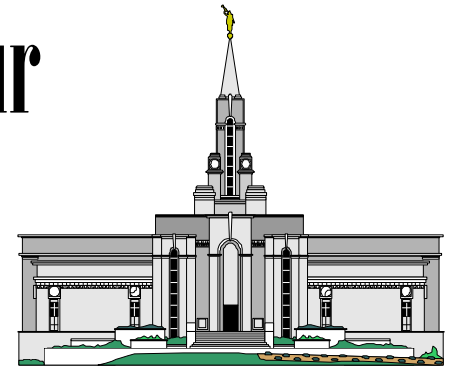
Please be advised that there is much to Mormonism you will not be told on your temple tour. Be wise and examine this religion very closely. Not all groups that claim to be Christian actually are Christian.

Should you have further questions, please contact:

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# Preparing for your Temple Tour



The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (the Mormons) places a big emphasis on its temples. The importance of these buildings cannot be overstressed, for it is only by participating in the temple ritual that a faithful Mormon hopes to achieve exaltation or godhood.

Though the Jews recognized only the Jerusalem temple as being God-ordained, the Mormons have built dozens of these special buildings throughout the world. However, unlike LDS chapels that are open to the public, entrance into a Mormon temple is reserved only for members who follow a strict code of conduct and are deemed *worthy*. The only time the general public is invited to see the inside of a Mormon temple is during a brief "open house" which usually precedes the dedication of the building.

This pamphlet is specially prepared for those who may be interested in the Mormon temple ritual and its purpose, as well as for those who plan to visit a temple open house in their area.

### **Before You Enter**

Prior to your tour, you will be shown a brief presentation (usually on video or DVD) on the purpose and history of LDS temples. It is not uncommon for these presentations to give you the impression that modern Mormon temples serve the same function as the Old Testament tabernacle in the wilderness (Exodus 25ff) or the temple in Jerusalem. The problem with this comparison is that it is not reasonably close to the truth. Both the tabernacle and the Jerusalem temple were used primarily for animal sacrifice. When given the opportunity you might ask your tour guide why, if the LDS ceremony is really related to the ancient temple in Jerusalem, sacrifices are not performed.

### **Building Design**

As you approach the temple you may notice its unique design. Your tour guide may emphasize that only the finest products are used in the construction of their temples. For the most part this is true, however, many times interior columns are made of plastic or wood and painted to appear like marble. If you're curious, simply tap them with your finger.

### **Angel Moroni**

You may be directed to look atop the steeple to the gold-plated angel. Your guide may tell you that this is the angel Moroni (ma-roan-eye) who appeared to Joseph Smith, Mormonism's founder, in 1823. Mormons believe it was Moroni who directed Joseph Smith to the gold plates that were eventually "translated" into the *Book of Mormon*. The *Book of Mormon* states that Moroni is the son of a Nephite prophet/general named Mormon (from which the book gets its name). What may be overlooked is the fact that Smith originally claimed that the angel who visited him was not called Moroni, but instead a being who called himself *Nephi* (See volume 3:753 of the Mormon periodical *Times and Seasons* and the 1851 edition of the *Pearl of Great Price*). Nephi was a completely different character in the *Book of Mormon* narrative. When the opportunity is available, you may wish to ask your guide why the discrepancy in the angel's name.

### **Recommend Desk**

One of the first items you will see on your tour is the "recommend desk." It is here that Mormons entering the temple, known as "patrons," must provide their "temple recommend." This is an identification card that demonstrates that the member has passed an examination by his local church leader and, among other things, has paid a full tithe, does not drink alcohol or coffee and tea, and abstains from tobacco products.

What makes the concept of temple worthiness so unusual is that in Bible times, people did not go to the temple because they were "worthy." They went because they knew they were *unworthy*. Israelites saw the temple as a place where they could offer sacrifice on behalf of their sins. They realized all too well that they were unworthy sinners that needed God's forgiveness. Based on this concept of worthiness, you might want to remind your guide about the story Jesus told in Luke 18:10ff. Here Jesus speaks of two men, a Pharisee and a tax collector, who entered the temple to pray. In Jesus' story which of the two men more fits the example of the Mormon?

### **Baptism for the Dead**

As you progress on your tour you will be shown a large font on the back of twelve oxen. It is here that Mormons participate in proxy baptisms on behalf of deceased relatives and friends. Mormons believe that this act gives the deceased an opportunity to accept Mormonism in the spirit world but they concede that they have no way of knowing if the dead accept or reject the vicarious work they perform.

This font resembles King Solomon's "molten sea" or "brazen sea," mentioned in 2 Chronicles 4:2. However, this font was never used for baptisms but rather, it was used by Jewish priests for ceremonial cleansings. What you won't be told is that this design was used only for a very short time. According to 2 Kings 16:17 King Ahaz removed the font (or laver) from the backs of the oxen and placed it on stones. Even though you may be given the impression that this font was used during New Testament times, it was actually destroyed by the Babylonians when they captured Jerusalem in 589 B.C. 2 Kings 25:13 states that after it was destroyed, the remaining pieces were carried off to Babylon. This design was never used again.

It is not unusual for the Mormons to place a sign next to the baptismal font that cites 1 Corinthians 15:29. While scholars have debated as to what exactly the apostle Paul was referring to in this passage, one thing is certain: Paul clearly separated himself from such a practice when he said, "Else what shall THEY do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? Why are THEY then baptized for the dead?" If baptism for the dead was in fact the "most glorious of all subjects belonging to the everlasting gospel" (D&C 128:17), it seems odd that Paul would not include himself as a participant.

The fact is, there is absolutely no evidence to suggest that baptisms for either the living or the dead ever took place in the tabernacle or the Jerusalem temple. You might also find it interesting that Mormons have been

vicariously baptized for such people as John Wesley, Martin Luther, Abraham Lincoln, William Shakespeare, Albert Einstein, Christopher Columbus, and yes, even Adolph Hitler!

You may wish to ask your guide why modern LDS temples have a replica of the molten sea when no such edifice was ever used in the New Testament.

### **Locker Rooms**

Tours often allow the public to view the locker rooms. There are separate facilities for men and women. Here patrons change from street clothes into temple clothing. When allowed, you might ask your tour guide why temple worthy Mormons are supplied with locks for their locker.

### **Washing and Anointing rooms**

What you probably won't be permitted to see are the washing and anointing rooms. These special cubicles are used in the temple to ceremoniously "wash and anoint" temple patrons who are entering the temple for the first time. Wearing nothing but a poncho-like "shield," a temple worker ceremoniously "washes" and blesses the patron, making reference to various parts of their body. Prayer is offered on behalf of the patron and the ritual is repeated with the anointing of olive oil. Perhaps you can ask your tour guide why you bypassed the washing and anointing rooms.

### **Temple Garments**

During the ritual patrons put on what is called the "garment of the holy priesthood." Sewn into this garment are special markings. Over the right breast is a mark that resembles a backwards L, and over the left breast is a mark that resembles a capital V. Sewn over the abdomen and over the knee is another marking that looks like an ordinary buttonhole.

Mormons are told in the ceremony that this garment can actually protect them. 12th President Spencer Kimball taught, "I am sure one could go to extreme in worshiping the cloth of which the garment is made, but one could also go to the other extreme. Though generally I think our protection is a mental, spiritual, moral one, yet I am convinced that there could be and undoubtedly have been many cases where there has been, through faith, an actual physical protection, so we must not minimize that possibility" (*Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, p.539).

You may wish to inquire of your tour guide why Mormons seem just as vulnerable to deaths in car accidents, etc, as those who do not wear this special piece of clothing. You might also ask where in the Bible Christians are told to expect protection from mere cloth.