



# Out of the Petty and Into the Holy

## Understanding the House of the Lord

Covenants, Ordinances, Symbols



“The season of the world before us will be like no other in the history of mankind. Satan has unleashed every evil, every scheme, every blatant vile perversion ever known to the dispensation of the fulness of evil. Just as this is the dispensation of the fulness of times, so it is also the dispensation of the fulness of evil. ... There is no safety in the world, wealth cannot provide it, enforcement agencies cannot assure it, membership in the Lord's church alone cannot bring it. As the evil night darkens upon this generation, we must come to the temple for light. In our temples we find quiet, sacred havens where the storm cannot penetrate to us.”



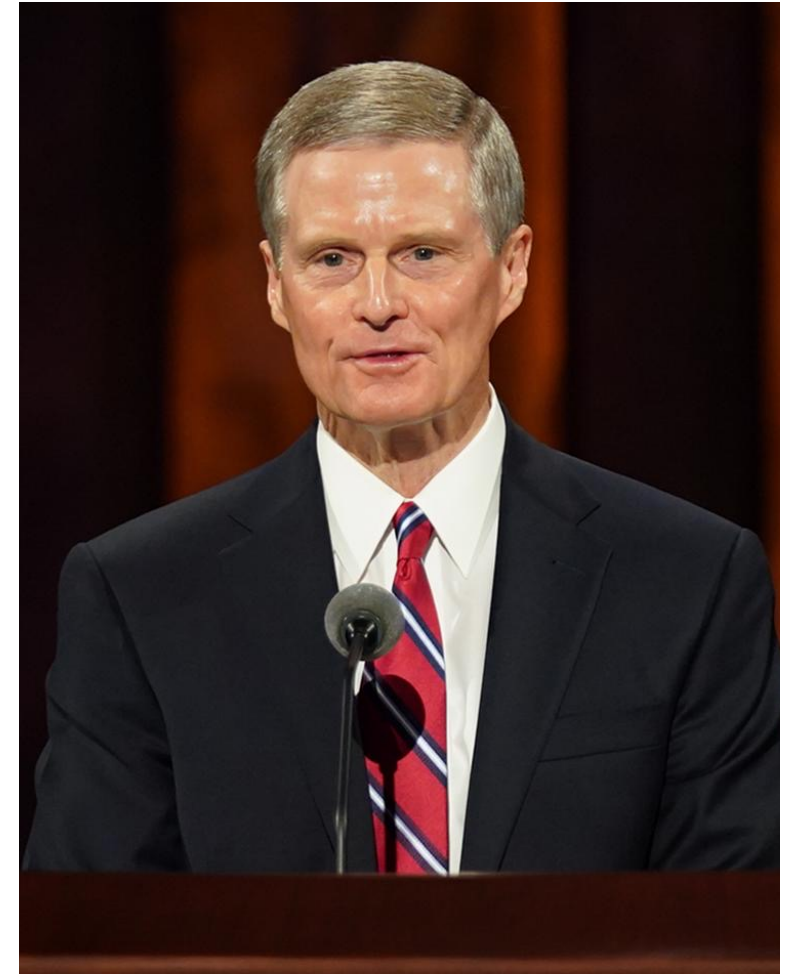
Elder Vaughan J. Featherstone,  
Manti Temple, April 1987

“Our garments, worn as instructed will clothe us in a manner as protective as temple walls. The covenants and ordinances will fill us with faith as a living fire. In a day of desolating sickness, scorched and barren wastes, sickening plagues, disease, destruction and death, we as a people will rest in the shade of trees, we will drink from the cooling fountains. We will abide in places of refuge from the storm, and mount up as on eagle's wings, we will be lifted out of an insane and evil world. We will be as fair as the sun, and clear as the moon. The Savior will come and will honor His people. Those who are spared and prepared will be a temple-loving people. They will know Him. They will cry out, ‘Blessed be the name of Him that cometh in the name of the Lord, thou art my God and I will bless thee, thou art my God and I will exalt thee’.”



Elder Vaughan J. Featherstone,  
Manti Temple, April 1987

“We cannot expect simply to attend Church meetings and participate in programs and thereby receive all of the spiritual edification and protection that will enable us ‘to withstand in the evil day.’”



Elder David A. Bednar  
April 2019 General Conference

# What can we discuss?

“Temple covenants and ordinances are sacred. The symbols associated with temple covenants should not be discussed outside the temple. Nor should we discuss the holy information we promise in the temple not to reveal. However, we may discuss the basic purposes and doctrine of temple covenants and ordinances and the spiritual feelings we have in the temple.”

General Handbook of Instructions 27.0

“A loving Heavenly Father has provided a Gospel structure that has many layers. One for every level of student and disciple. There is the outer layer that the world can readily see (and misinterpret). It is easy, simple and quickly consumed. Many stop their search for knowledge with the first layer – for it is all they currently see. ... For those who desire it, they are invited to look and to peel off the first layer. It is in so doing they will delightfully find additional layers – kept for those who seek and pay the price for truth and knowledge. In my family, I refer to that joyous process as ‘peeling the onion.’”



Kevin Ball,  
Temple Preparation  
Study Manual, 2022

# Exterior Temple Symbols

## Salt Lake Temple Symbols

- East Towers higher than West Towers
- 5 windows on East Towers, 4 windows on West Towers
- Big Dipper on West Tower
- 40 Star stones on the East Towers, none on the West Towers
- 2 Moonstones depicting early April on the East Towers
- 2 Moonstones depicting October on the West Towers
- Earthstones, Moonstones, Sunstones, Starstones - from the bottom upwards
- "Rotating" Earthstones and phases of the moon on the lower panels of the temple sides depict an "axis mundi" (connects the center of the earth to the center of the heavens). Depicts temple as the center of the earth. The place where heaven and earth meet



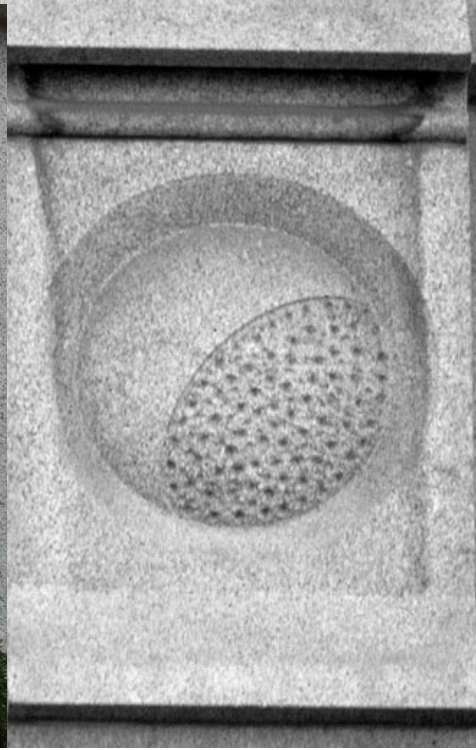




- East Towers: Melchizedek Priesthood
- West Towers: Aaronic Priesthood
- East Windows: Offices in the Melchizedek Priesthood
- West Windows: Office in the Aaronic Priesthood









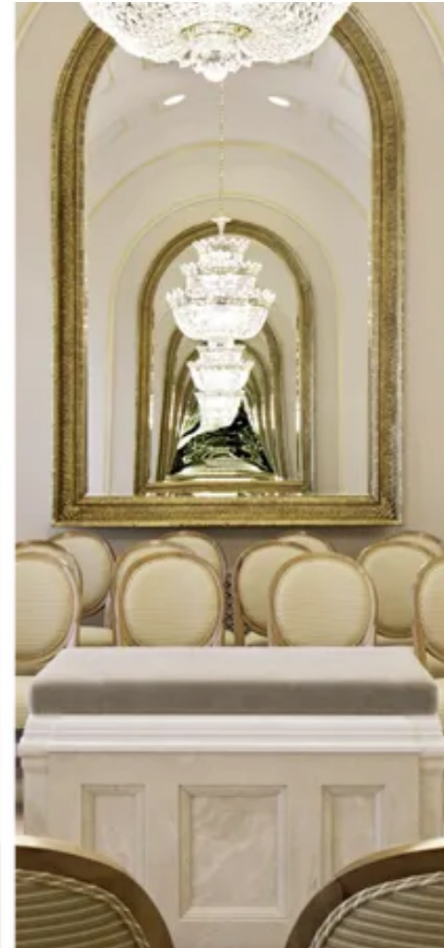




# Interior Temple Symbols

“Each temple is a house of learning. There we are taught in the Master’s way. His way differs from modes of others. His way is ancient and rich with symbolism. We can learn much by pondering the reality for which each symbol stands. Teachings of the temple are beautifully simple and simply beautiful. They are understood by the humble, yet they can excite the intellect of the brightest minds.”

Elder Russell M Nelson “Personal  
Preparation for Temple Blessings”  
Ensign, May 2001



# Interior Temple Symbols

- Recommend Desk
  - Always someone there
  - They stand when a patron walks in
- Baptistry
  - 12 oxen
- Initiatory
  - Washings
  - Anointings
  - Garments
  - New Names
- Endowment Room
  - Veil
  - Altar
  - Covenants and Symbols
  - Movement between rooms
  - Temple clothing
- Sealing Room
  - Altar
  - Mirrors
- Celestial Room
  - Peace, Stillness
  - Chandeliers
  - Flowers on a table
  - Columns
  - Shapes
  - Vines and leaves
  - Stained glass windows

- Oxen are established types for God and His righteous followers.
- To the ancients' oxen represented power, patience, and sacrifice, as well as Christ or deity.
- They also suggest images of royalty, divinity, power, sacrifice, atonement, and Jehovah.
- As the initiate was washed in the font or laver, symbolically he was taught who it was that supported him in this new relationship-namely God and His righteous disciples.





- “The number 12 symbolizes priesthood authority, including its power and right to govern
- One becomes part of the twelve tribes of Israel, through “a ritual washing or baptism”
- The number four symbolizes geographic completeness or totality. All must be cleansed
- The font's placement on the back of twelve oxen facing north, south, east, and west implies enthronement, and the promise that those who overcome all things will be given the right to preside over all things.



- Oxen are “clean” or “kosher” animals and, as such, have a parted hoof (Leviticus 11:3; Deuteronomy 14:6).
- One modern source states: “Cloven-hoofed animals which part their hooves symbolize that all our actions must betray proper ethical distinction and be directed toward righteousness.”
- The twelve oxen, therefore, were an invitation to those washed therein to live a life of proper ethical and moral conduct.
- By being washed in the unique font, the initiate was, in a very real sense, saying he would live as God and His Christ would live-as faithful followers of the Messiah should live. ”





Elephants  
protecting  
their young in  
a circle

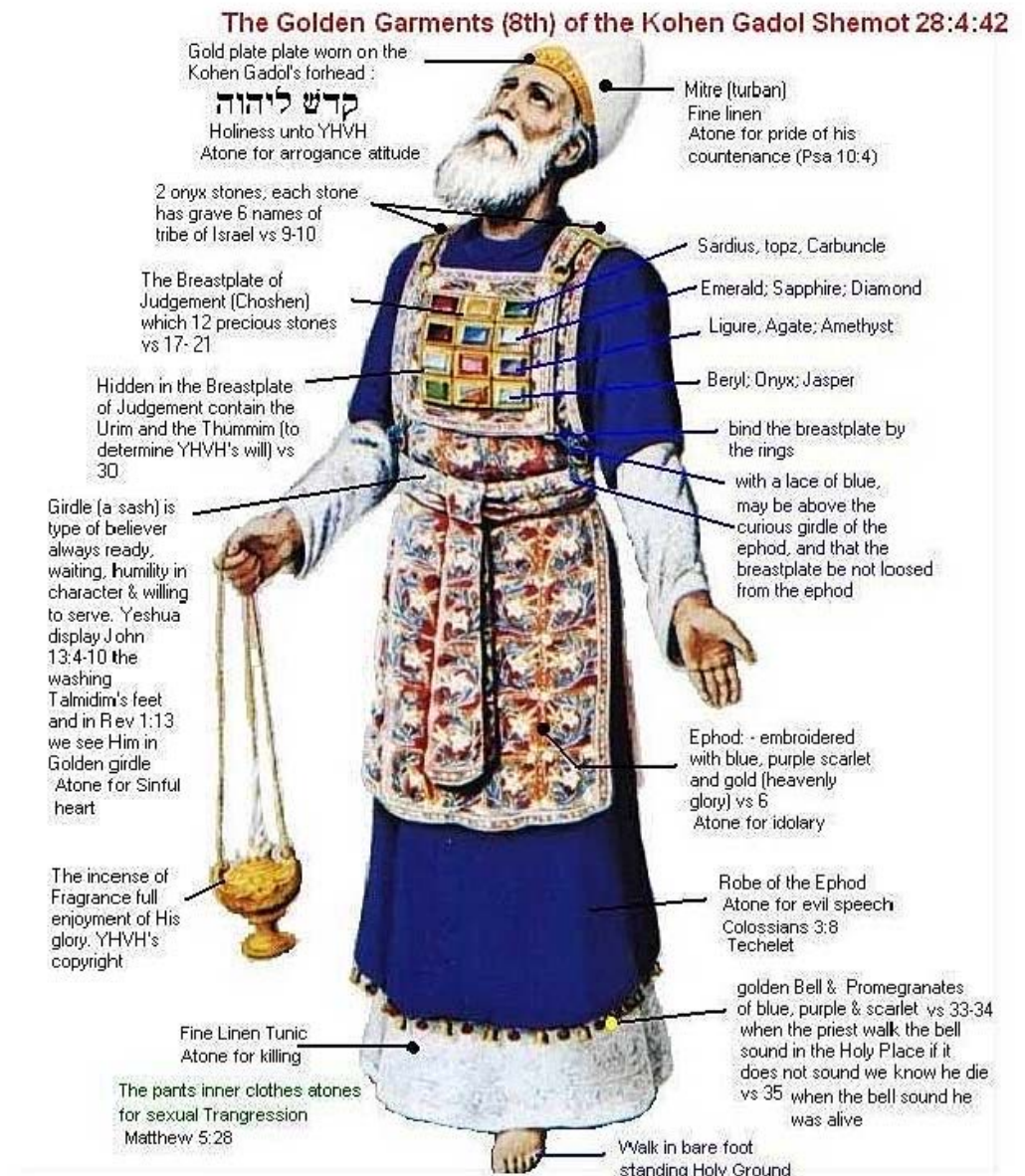




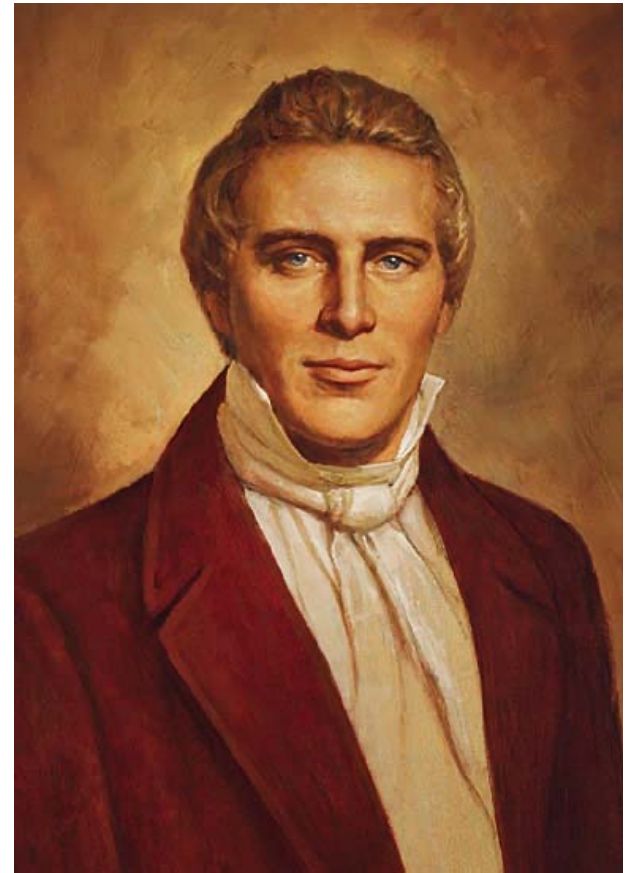
And thou shalt make holy garments for Aaron thy brother for glory and for beauty. And thou shalt speak unto all that are wise hearted, whom I have filled with the spirit of wisdom, that they may make Aaron's garments to consecrate him, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office. And these are the garments which they shall make; a breastplate, and an ephod, and a robe, and a broidered coat, a mitre, and a girdle: and they shall make holy garments for Aaron thy brother, and his sons, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office. And they shall take gold, and blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen. And they shall make the ephod of gold, of blue, and of purple, of scarlet, and fine twined linen, with cunning work.

It shall have the two shoulderpieces thereof joined at the two edges thereof; and so it shall be joined together. And the curious girdle of the ephod, which is upon it, shall be of the same, according to the work thereof; even of gold, of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen.

Exodus 28:2-8



“There has been a great difficulty in getting anything into the heads of this generation. It has been like splitting hemlock knots with a corn-dodger [a piece of corn bread] for a wedge, and a pumpkin for a beetle [a wooden mallet]. Even the Saints are slow to understand. “I have tried for a number of years to get the minds of the Saints prepared to receive the things of God; but we frequently see some of them, after suffering all they have for the work of God, will fly to pieces like glass as soon as anything comes that is contrary to their traditions: they cannot stand the fire at all. How many will be able to abide a celestial law, and go through and receive their exaltation, I am unable to say, as many are called, but few are chosen [see D&C 121:40].”



History of the Church, 6:184–85;  
from a discourse given by  
Joseph Smith on Jan. 21, 1844,  
in Nauvoo, Illinois; reported by  
Wilford Woodruff.





# Everything in the temple testifies of Jesus Christ

It is up to us to learn and  
understand these symbols and  
their meanings

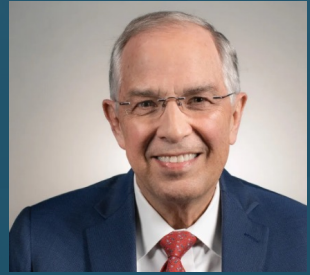


# Doctrine and Covenants 109:38

Put upon thy servants the testimony of the covenant, that when they go out and proclaim thy word they may \*seal up the law, and prepare the hearts of thy saints for all those judgments thou art about to send, in thy wrath, upon the inhabitants of the earth, because of their transgressions, that thy people may not faint in the day of trouble.

\* Finish communicating the laws of the gospel to the people because the judgments of God are coming

“The sacrament is a beautiful time to not just renew our baptismal covenant, but to commit to Him to **renew all our covenants**, all our promises, and to approach Him in a spiritual power that we did not have previously as we move forward.”



*Elder Neil L. Andersen  
Quorum of the Twelve Apostles  
General Conference Leadership Training  
April 2015*



# Summary

- “Temples are the greatest university of learning known to man.”  
(Robert D. Hales)
- In the Temple, the Holy Ghost is the teacher
- Symbols allow all of us to learn at our own pace. We discover more symbols and their meaning as our spiritual maturity increases
- The greatest mysteries of the Kingdom of God are revealed in the Temple
- We must have eyes to see, ears to hear, and hearts that desire to understand
- We can only receive these mysteries by keeping our covenants and living with open palms