"The Fulness of the Priesthood": The Second Anointing in Latter-day Saint Theology and Practice

There is no explanation in the Kingdom of God without the fulness of the priesthood... Every man who is faithful and will reverence these temple ordinances and blessings obtains a fulness of the priesthood, and the Lord has said that "he makes them equal in power, and in might, and in dominion."

Joseph Fielding Smith, 1956
(Doctrines of Salvation, 3:132)

The importance of the endowment and 10th temple ceremonies as wa unintuitively, and saving, has been widely addressed by Church authorities and others in official Church publications. The endowment in particular has been called the temple ceremonies through which all people must pass to achieve exaltation with God the Father and Jesus Christ. Yet despite the attention given to the work in the Church, few Mormons, even faithful temple guests, know what the contents of the endowment are, what the "fulness of the priesthood" through the "second anointing" is, or what the "second anointing," "second endowment," "second blessing," etc. A surprising amount about this little-known ordinance can be learned, however, through a careful examination of these sources published and unpublished, which discuss it. This essay attempts to bring many of these sources together, placing them in the more general context of developing Mormon theology.

The Lord Almighty will continue to preserve me... until I have fully accomplished my mission in this life, and in firmly established the dispensation of the fulness of the priesthood in the last days, that all the powers of earth and hell can never prevail against it.

Joseph Smith, Jr., 1842
(History of the Church, 5:139-40)

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The significance of what follows can best be understood in the context of the changing Latter-day Saint concept of salvation. Prior to mid-1831, Mormon theology was clearly not predestination. The Book of Mormon, for example, contained no mention of terms such as "calling and election," "elect," "predestined," or "prostitute" in respect to mankind's ultimate judgment or salvation. The Doctrine and Covenants' sole reference to the phrase "calling and election" came in a 1816 revelation (JST 5:53, 1:7) that substantially altered its theology of election.

At some point between June and November 1831, however, LDS "salvation theology" changed. A precipitating event seems to have been the 16 June 1831 council of the "High Priesthood" in Church elders. According to testimony in 1831 by Book of Mormon witness David Whitmer, the introduction of high priests, an event considered to be an important revelation from Joseph Smith, "all authorized in the mind of Sidney Rigdon," "received the seal of the high priests, which had such a great power in ancient times, should be in the Church of Christ to-day. He had Brother Joseph inquire of the Lord about it, and they received an answer according to their crying desires." Official Church histories contain no record of disagreement or controversy, and the significance of the event may have been perceived differently at the time. The new office of high priest quickly came to be regarded as different from and greater than that of apostle and elder, but this is a logical extension of the idea that the "high priests, which had such a great power in ancient times, should be in the Church of Christ to-day." The ordination of the High Priesthood is that the office be given to those who shall be "sealed," that is, perform earthy ordinances which were ratified in heaven. Joseph Smith spelled out this crucial function on 25 October 1831, when he is reported to have said at a conference in Far West: "If the rod of the High Priesthood is that the office be given to those who shall be sealed, this is the privilege of every Elder present to be ordained to the High Priesthood." 1


2. I am indebted to Audrey A. Hutchinson for exercising assistance with the following discussion of the evolution of Mormon salvation concepts.

3. History of the Church 1:125-76.


5. See also pp. 62, 63, 64, and 65.

6. "Far West Record," in the Historical Department of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah (hereafter cited as LDS Church Archives).

The significance of such a sealing as a seal is significant to the New Testament, for example, the term "sealed" and its placing, has traditionally alluded to ancient practices of placing a seal or chained seal to close and protect a document from misappropriation. The connotative effort of a "sealing" is seen in several Pauline passages, where God's holy seal is given the Holy Spirit or the Holy Spirit of promise in contrast to future blessings, and promises to one. The Revelation of John's apocalyptic descriptions of God receiving the seal of regenerating the power of God through the apostles. In all this context New Testament references, however, is God who applies the seal, that is, to a human intermediary as part of the "sealing" function.

The sixteenth-century Reformation used many of these "sealing" passages to support a belief in predestination. Liberal reaction to this Calvinist doctrine arose early in the sixteenth century when Arminians rejected this view, asserting that God's sovereignty and mercy for all were compatible, and that such "sealings" depended upon choices of the individual believer. The Arminian doctrines of free will and individual actions continued to be propagated on the American frontier through such sixteenth-century groups as Alexander Campbell's followers and other Primitive Baptists. In 1828, when Joseph Smith was working on the Book of Mormon manuscript, these same issues were discussed throughout the Burned-over District of western New York state.

Aside from obvious xenophobia and fear of the term "sealing," e.g. "sealing up" a book or plates, or hiding an object, the Book of Mormon employs the term much like the New Testament. Matthew 13:15-16 (1st ed., p. 167), for example, closely follows New Testament usage, and extended the meaning by clearly emphasizing works: "I would that you should be sober and tormented always with the fear of God, that Christ, the Lord God Omnigod, would seal you his; that you may be brought to Heaven." Alma 31:39 (1st ed., p. 321) further counters predestination by maintaining: "If ye have persecuted the day of your repentance; and ye have been subjected to the spirit of the Devil, and he doth seal you his; and this is the final state of the wicked."

The most significant development in Book of Mormon sealing theology was God's sealing power granted to Nephi, the son of Helaman: "Whatsoever ye shall seal on earth shall be sealed in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall seal on earth, shall be sealed in heaven." (Hel. 10:5-7, 1st ed., p. 155). This passage parallels Christ's injunction to Peter in Matthew 16:17-19: "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona, ... whatsoever thou shalt seal on earth shall be sealed in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt seal on earth shall be sealed in heaven." The shift from bind to seal — probably to remove "papist" associations with
The School of the Prophets was formally established in late January 1833, and this ordinance was administered as directed. While the revelation did not explicitly state any relationship between the ordinance of washing feet and the ritual of “washing” which had been practiced for over a year, Joseph understood that in addition to bringing them from the blood of this generation, participants in the washing of feet were “washed up unto eternal life.”

Doctrine and Covenants 88:149 had commanded the Saints to “establish a house, even a house of prayer, a house of fasting, a house of faith, a house of learning, a house of prayer, a house of order, a house of God.” Six months later, on 1 June, the Lord rebuked the Prophet for failing to begin construction of a house where He would “renew thy strength” when He has chosen power from on high.)

While work on the Kirtland Temple then proceeded apace, even before the dedication on 27 March 1836 (see D&C 109), Joseph had introduced the promised new ordinances which were to comprise the core of what was later termed the Kirtland endowment. On 21 January, according to Joseph Smith’s account in the History of the Church, the First Presidency

...called the assembly together to receive the seal of all their blessings. The first part of the required order was to be spoken in solemn prayer before God, without any talking or confusion, and the wedding with a solemn prayer by President Young, when all the priest of the order, to receive a solemn seal, were called to the president, standing in solemn prayer, before the altar, in solemn prayer, and took their hands upon his head, bowing at the altar, and then the Lord put upon his head, all blessing upon his head, that the President then took the seal in their turn, according to their age, beginning at the oldest, and each of their sealings and blessings upon the heads of the young men.

After several days of sealings administered to other priesthood holders, the Prophet, on 6 February 1836,
A few weeks later, at the dedication of the temple, Joseph Smith instructed the significance of lay numbers and Church officers on the ordinance of washing of feet. Two days later, on March 29th, the Presidency "proceeded to cleanse our faces and our feet, and they proceeded to wash one another's feet." After this was done, they in attendance "partook of the bread and wine." The next day, a general of about three hundred male Church members met in the temple and, after the administration of the sacrament, received the ordinance of washing of feet as well. The Prophet then announced that he had now completed the organization of the Church, and we had passed through all the necessary ceremonies. It was just four days later, however, again in the Kirtland Temple, that Joseph received a vision recorded in Doctrine and Covenants 110, of the prophet Elijah who gave him the full sealing power of the Melchizedek priesthood—an authority which Joseph Smith did not fully reveal and use until Nauvoo.

In Nauvoo the Prophet Joseph continued to expand Mormon salvation concepts. He defined the principle of "making your calling and election sure" in a June 1839 sermon as a principle which allowed a Church member, after a lifetime of service and devotion, to be "sealed up" in exaltation while yet living, a concept clearly based on 2 Peter 1:10-11: "Wherefore, brethren, be ye perfect, be wholly zealous in your calling and election sure. For if ye do these things, ye shall never fall. For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." This June 1839 sermon has additional importance, for in it Joseph not only linked making one's calling and election sure to sealing theology but also added the notion of a "Covenant" (John 14:26), which he defined as a personal manifestation of Jesus Christ. These ideas were in turn associated with the concept of personal revelation. He urged the Twelve Apostles and all Mormons to follow in his own footsteps and "become perfect in Jesus Christ." There was no reference to the temple in this sermon; indeed there were no functioning temples at this time.

In January 1841, well over two years after the Mormons had abandoned Kirtland and its temple, Joseph announced another revelation. In the Lord

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[4] In addition to the scriptural parallels dealing with Elijah, the vision introducing Elijah in 1839 formed a foundation for further theological innovation. Elijah began to serve as a major symbol in Joseph Smith's vision and in the 1839 account of his early life. No scriptural references from Malachi are cited by the angel in Joseph's 1832 account.


[7] This group was also called the Holy Order of the Holy Priesthood. For a brief discussion of this group, see D. Michael Quinn, "Latter-Day Saint Priesthood," BYU Studies 19 (Fall 1978): 84-96.

[8] History of the Church, 1:1-2. The context of the Nauvoo endowment ceremony is too complex to be fully treated in this short essay. Briefly, one theory is that the gradual introduction into the practice of plural marriage, primarily in the cities of the "Holy Order," although Joseph Smith never taught plural marriage in the endowment ceremony, in the Holy Order itself, "seals" spouses and families forever (again, the absence of a manifest revelation in the prophet Elijah), and progression toward endowment ultimately required a formal ritual to give a sense of permanence and divine sanction to these beliefs. The addition of the "sealing" ritual, in the context of this discussion, of second anniversaries, was added to the 1842 Holy Order ceremony over the next few years. See Lawrence Foster, Religion and Sacraments, Three American Periodical Experiments of the Nineteenth Century (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981), pp. 252-55, 270-71, esp. pp. 273-74. See also-Isaac T. Richardson, "A Study of the Mormon Practice of Plural Marriage Before the Death of Joseph Smith," M.A. Thesis, Purdue University, 1975.

The actual procedures of the endowment ceremony have created much speculation centered on its possible relationship to certain aspects of Masonic ritual. Some scholars have concluded that Joseph Smith relied loosely on various Masonic rituals in forming these endowment ceremonies, but many of the specific details in the endowment ceremonies contain many allusions to such Masonic notions as vows, key words, tokens, degrees, ancient orders, etc. Indeed, Heber C. Kimball, a longtime Mason, wrote to Parley P. Pratt on 13 June 1842: "There is a similarity of exact form in manner. The Joseph Smith Masonery was taken from Freemasonry, but has become distinct.
There are some problems with this account. It is historically interesting that the history notes without law and without marks, who later became disaffected. More significant is the apparent error in the statement that the high order of the Melchizedek Priesthood was conferred upon these men about four months later, in late August 1842. Joseph Smith declared the Female Relief Society to the Lord Almighty, "will continue to preserve me..." until he had fully accomplished his mission in this life, and so firmly established the dispensation of the fulness of the priesthood in the last days, that all the powers of earth and hell can never prevail against it." (locus

But every thing are perfect..." (typescript, original in LDS Church Archives). The introduction of women in the Church has been frequently noted in need to keep knowledge of polygamous practice from uninformed Saints and non-Mormons. Unfortunately, a definitive study of the relationship of Freemasonry and Mormonism has not yet been published. By the same token, a definitive study of the relationship of Freemasonry and Mormonism has not yet been published. By the same token, a definitive study of the relationship of Freemasonry and Mormonism has not yet been published.

In The Return of Love: A Mormon Experience (Salt Lake City: Church History Division, 1979); and in Women in the Church (Salt Lake City: church History Division, 1980). A useful study of the relationship between Freemasonry and Mormonism is Charles A. Hoge, The Origins of Freemasonry and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1986). In The Return of Love: A Mormon Experience (Salt Lake City: Church History Division, 1979), a Mormon Church official notes: "A useful study of the relationship between Freemasonry and Mormonism is Charles A. Hoge, The Origins of Freemasonry and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1986)." In The Return of Love: A Mormon Experience (Salt Lake City: Church History Division, 1979), a Mormon Church official notes: "A useful study of the relationship between Freemasonry and Mormonism is Charles A. Hoge, The Origins of Freemasonry and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1986)."

Prest Young was filled with the spirit of God and revelation when we get our worship and teachings under the hands of the Prophet Joseph at Nauvoo we had only one room to work in, with the exception of a little side room or office where he had performed these ceremonies..." and after a time we went into the main room, the one where Joseph talked up the room the best that he could... his personal interactions..." and after a time we went into the main room, the one where Joseph talked up the room the best that he could... his personal interactions..." and after a time we went into the main room, the one where Joseph talked up the room the best that he could... his personal interactions..."

After we had gone through the temple at Nauvoo I understood and knew how to place them there. we had our ceremonies with our guest. (Lee, Paralel Journal, typescript copy for 7 Feb. 1877, original in Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.)

Helen C. Kimball recorded her part in this event under a miscellaneous 1843 journal manuscript titled "Strange Events." "...I was associated in the assembly, anointed and sealed, and ordained a Priest, and set forth in company with nine others." (LDS Church Archives)


1 A complete list of names is found in Kimball's, "Strange Events." Kimball's 21 Dec. 1843 journal entry includes two main participants in this event, being "more than eight." Law apostle from the Church shortly before Joseph and Hyrum Smith's murders in June 1844. Marks later defended from the Church and, after being excommunicated, ultimately became the second president of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in 1879. D. Michael Quinn, "The Mormon Succession Crisis of 1888," BYU Studies 16 (Winter 1976).
until May 1843 that Joseph taught that the celestial kingdom establishe’d contained gradations, with the highest gradation reserved solely for men and women who entered into the new and everlasting covenant of marriage (see DCC 141:1-14). In July 1843, Joseph warned another revelation since DCC 142 which defined the highest class of gods as "heavenly beings." The importance of this teaching is seen in another Joseph Smith sermon given shortly thereafter on 27 August 1843. Significantly, these comments occurred in a discussion of three orders of the priesthood: the Levitical or Aaronic order, the patriarchal order of Abraham, and the future of the priesthood of Melchizedek which included "kingly powers," or "kingdoms and dominions of heaven." Joseph said, "No man can attain to the joint Priestship with Jesus Christ, with God being manifested to him, nor be having the same power, authority, and glory of Melchizedek." This authority and power came not from "a Prophet nor apostle nor patriarch only, but of [as] King & Priest [of Jesus Christ]."

During this 27 August 1843 sermon the Prophet said, "Abrahams [sic] patriarchal power" was the "greatest yet experienced in this church." His choice of words is particularly revealing, for by this date ten men had received the initiatory endowments and ordinances, as well as the Aaronic and Melchizedek portions of the endowment of the "Patriarchal Priesthood" on 4 May 1842. Many of these had also received the ordinance of celestial marriage, for time and eternity with their wives. Joseph and Emma Hale Smith, for example, were sealed in May 1843, as were James and Harriet Adams, Brigham and Mary Ann Angel Young, Hyrum and Mary Fielding Smith, and Willard and Jeannett Richards Richards. When Joseph said late in

"Although this is the correct interpretation of this verse, some have argued that Joseph Smith was most likely not using the tripartite concept of three degrees of glory as outlined in DCC 141. In other words, the "highest class" spoken of in DCC 141:2 would be synonymous with celestial kingdom, while the "highest order" described in DCC 131:1 would be referring to the "restoration of the Just" described in DCC 76.

An early letter written by W. W. Phelps, "Manager & Advocate" (June 1838) 3:5, suggests that Joseph Smith may have taught a variation of this doctrine eight years prior to DCC 131:1. "We have been told by the Lord, "...we will reveal unto you a law concerning the celestial kingdom, which is not a law concerning the terrestrial kingdom, or the spiritual kingdom.""

Although the doctrine and formal practice of plural marriage had been extant for several years prior to the 17 July 1843 dictation of DCC 132, the revelation of this important scripture introduced several central ideas which we believe to have been taught prior to the 17 July 1843 dictation of DCC 131:1. See Robert J. Woodford, "The Development of the Doctrine and Covenants," "The Historical Development of the Doctrine and Covenants," vol. 173, vol. 174, 175, and 176, "The Mormon Practice of Priestly Marriage."

Joseph Smith, Diary, LDS Church Archives, as cited in WJS, p. 218.

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Compare Joseph Smith's sermon of 27 June 1839, cited n. 22.

Joseph Smith, Diary, 29 May 1843, LDS Church Archives. I am indebted to Andrew T. Elrod for sharing his transcription of this entry which was originally made in Taylor Samuels.

At half past eleven, a.m., a council convened over the state, consisting of myself, my brother Hyrum, Uncle John Smith, Newell K. Whitney, George Miller, Willard Richards, John Taylor, Anson D. Lyman, John M. Kendrick, and Joseph Smith and, at seven in the evening we met at the first upper room of the Mansion, where William Law and William Richards held council. In the common council and among those of the council, I was chosen president of the special council.

The president led in prayer that his days might be prolonged until his mission on the earth was accomplished, have duration, even to eternity, all their households be blessed, and all the church be blessed." Joseph Smith's journal, the original source, gives a fuller account: "Barrack Ale [a code name for Joseph Smith] was by common consent, & unanimously was chosen president of the quorum, & assumed & ordained to the highest and holiest order of the priesthood (Elder) for the church. His "companion" was his wife, Emma, to whom he had been sealed for time and eternity from the month before, earlier on May 28. Willard Woodruff's record of this event, found in his HJS.

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Historian's Private Journal, was equally explicit: "Then by common consent Joseph Smith, the Prophet received his second Anointing of the Highest & Holiest Order."

During the next few months this higher priesthood ordinance of the second anointing was conferred upon at least twenty men and the wives of sixteen of these men. At the accompanying figure shows, fulness of priesthood blessings during Joseph Smith's lifetime were reserved primarily for Church leaders. An apparent reason for the Prophet's concern to complete the temple and administer the fulness of the priesthood to the Twelve was that these leaders must "rend up their shoulders and hear it [the kingdom] off," and, said Joseph, "the kingdom will be established, and I do not dare what shall become of me." As George Q. Cannon noted in 1869, "It was by the dictate of this authority [i.e., "endowment" and "baptism of the dead"]," on the death of Joseph Smith, that President Young, as President of the quorum of the Twelve, presided at the Church."

In an important discourse on priesthood on 16 March 1844, the Prophet Joseph was saying: "The spirit power & calling of Elijah is that we have power to hold the keys of the celestial ordinances, oricles powers & endowments of the Melchizedek Priesthood & of the Kingdom of God on the earth & to receive, obtain & perform all the ordinances belonging to the Kingdom of God even unto the sealing of the hearts of fathers unto the children & the hearts of the children unto the fathers even those who are in heaven."

Formerly conferring the fulness of this, the sealing power of Elijah, completed the basic form of the priesthood endowment. In a real sense, however, the constant reshuffling and recombining of theological and scriptural images during these early years could hardly be termed "the fulness that was never full." At each step of the way, Joseph Smith proclaimed he had "completed the organization of the Church," and "power through all the necessary ceremonies," or restored the "highest order of the Melchizedek Priesthood," only to introduce more revelations and theological innovations creating new layers of ritual.

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**Table 1 is based upon independent research by Late G. Brown, especially with respect to both the entry in the table above and the section in the Church's History." "Endowment Date Summary," cited in his "Joseph Smith's Introduction of Temple Ordinances and the 1844 Mormon Successsion Question" (MA thesis, Brigham Young University, 1982), pp. 92-98, provides most of the data, and my own research. The listing contains only names and dates, for which documentation is fairly certain. Some of the names included are documented as having received one or more of these ordinances, but no proven date has been located.

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*Note: "died before introduced"; "died - did not receive during Joseph Smith's lifetime; nd = "no data" available, but probably received during Joseph Smith's lifetime; dash - nothing known, or received after Joseph Smith's death. Some of the seals represent plural marriages.

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TABLE 1. KNOWN ENDOGRAPHIES, SEALS, AND SECOND ANOINTINGS, DURING JOSEPH SMITH'S LIFETIME

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Anointing Date</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Sealing Date</th>
<th>Females</th>
<th>Ordinance</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Anointing Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alma Adams</td>
<td>4 May 1839</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>May 1840</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>19 Oct</td>
<td>Harriet Adams</td>
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<td>13 Oct</td>
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<td>75</td>
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<td>17 Sep</td>
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<td>William Marks</td>
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don't attempt to become "guardians" of the Church failed in August 1844, he
tried to undermine the authority of the Quorum of the Twelve by adminis-
trating his own ceremony of washing and anointing to a group of dissidents.
Primarily due to this action, Rigdon was excommunicated from the Church on
6 September 1844.

"Little actual ordinance work was done for a year or more after Joseph
Smith's death. The Saints donated money, time, art, furnishings, and other
material to make the temple attire ready for use," and in late 1845, Church
leaders began to prepare to administer the initial endowment to members. On
10 December 1845 the endowment was given for the first time in the temple.
Its first recipients were members of the "Holy Order," who desired "to go
through with our washings and anointing again in the Temple of our God."
Between this date and 7 February 1846 when Brigham Young officially closed
the temple, approximately 5,000 members were endowd.

"The endowment that these initiates received, as described by Heber C.
Kimball's journal for the period, describes a sequence of ceremonial rituals,
expiation, and words taking place within the framework of a process-
ional movement from room to room to symbolize progression from birth to
exaltation."

A special altar for sealing ordinances was dedicated on 7 January 1846.
On January 8 the fulness of the priesthood was then administered for the first
time in the Nauvoo Temple. Once again, among the earliest to receive the
second anointing were those who had already received it from Joseph Smith.
The first were Heber C. Kimball and his wife, Vilate Murray. Brigham Young,
who performed the ordination, and eight other observers gathered in Brigham's
Room No. 1, adorned special temple clothing, sang a hymn, and proceeded with
the ordination which included anointing and the pronouncement of a blessing
by Brigham Young. Among other things, he promised Heber C. Kimball


17 For details concerning the construction of the Nauvoo Temple, including the adminis-
tration of ordinances in 1843 as well as December, 1845-February, 1846, see Brown, "The
Sacred Departments for Temple Work in Nauvoo;" and Eaton, "They May Have Known That He Was Not a False Prophet."


19 History of the Church, 2:543-380; the last entry on page 580 gives the possible figures
for the final day's ordinance count: the Seventy's Record would bring the cumulative total to
5,210; George A. Smith's estimate would bring that to 5,034 endowments. The lower figure is
probably more representative, however, for use by a third source (Heber C. Kimball, Journal,
7 Feb. 1846) the cumulative total would be 5,054.

Doren's account, "Proficiency Two: A Dialogue Between Adam and Eve, the Lord and the Devil,
Called the Endowment" (Albany: C. Kolmer, 1877).

21 History of the Church, 2:566. In addition to journal accounts, another published
description of this altar dedication is in Helen Mar Whitney, "Secrets in Nauvoo, and Inci-
dents from H. C. Kimball's Journal," Women's Expositor 12 (1 July 1883): 16. These
descriptions were taken from Helen C. Kimball, Journal, 7 Jan. 1846.
deposited on or integrated with the lid. Centrally embedded in the evolution of the ancient ritual at early Mormon history (including passages from the Book of Mormon) was the theme of leadership. As the ritual evolved, lay members of the Church advanced into the "inner circle," receiving ordinances and exorcises formerly held only by Joseph Smith and his immediate circle, while Joseph and his associates moved on to higher kingdoms, more sure promises, and more secret rituals. Although change in the fundamental framework of ritual was frozen by Joseph Smith's death in June 1844, theological perceptions dealing with certain aspects of the endowment—and, more particularly, the second anointing—underwent further modification.

II

Every man that gets his endowment...has been ordained to the Melchizedek Priesthood, which is the highest order of Priesthood...those who have come in here and have received their washings and anointings will be ordained Kings and Priests, and will then have received the fulness of the Priesthood, all that can be given on earth, for Brother Joseph said he had given us all that could be given to men on earth.

Brigham Young, 1845

(Heber C. Kimball, Journal, 26 Dec. 1845)

Many aspiring to take control of the Church came to Nauvoo during the summer of 1844. One of these was Sidney Rigdon, formerly a counselor to Joseph Smith in the First Presidency. Although Rigdon had received his endowment on 11 May 1844, he had not received his second anointing. Indeed, none of the major counselors to Brigham Young and the Council of the Twelve—Sidney Rigdon, William Smith, James Jesse Strang, Lyman Wight, and later Joseph Smith III—had received this higher ordinance. After Rigdon's death, his followers attempted to become "guardian" of the Church. The Church leaders, including Brigham Young, were excommunicated from the Church on 8 September 1844. Rigdon's followers soon fell into disarray. The Saints donated money, time, art, furnishings, and other material to make the temple attic ready for use, and in late 1845, Church leaders began to prepare to administer the initial endowment to members. On 10 December 1845 the endowment was given for the first time in the temple. Its first recipients were members of the "Holy Order," who desired "to go through with our washings and Anointings again in the Temple of our God." Between this date and 7 February 1846 when Brigham Young officially closed the temple, approximately 5,200 members were endowed.

The endowment that these initiates received, as described by Heber C. Kimball in his journal, describes a sequence of ceremonial rituals, exorcises, and words taking place within the framework of a procession from room to room in symbolic progression from birth to exaltation. A special altar for second anointings was dedicated on 7 January 1846.

On January 8 the fulness of the priesthood was then administered for the first time in the Nauvoo Temple. Once again, among the earliest to receive the second anointing were those who had already received it from Joseph Smith. They included Heber C. Kimball, his wife, Eliza R. Burton, Brigham Young, who performed the ordinance, and eight other observers gathered in Brigham's Room No. 1, donned special temple clothing, sang a hymn, and proceeded with the ordinance which involved anointing and the pronouncement of a blessing by Brigham Young. Among other things, he promised Heber C. Kimball:

"To live a Godly life in Nauvoo," unpublished manuscript, pp. 12-17; copy in my possession.

For details concerning the construction of the Nauvoo Temple, including the administration of endowments in 1842 as well as December 1845-February 1846, see Brown, "The Sacred Departments for Temple Work in Nauvoo," and that, "They Must Have Known That He Was Not a False Prophet."


"History of the Church," 5:743-580; the last entry on page 580 gives two possible dates for the first ordination: the first is in the summer of 1845, which would bring the cumulative total to 5,219; George A. Smith's estimate would bring the cumulative total to 5,254 endowments. The latter figure is probably more representative, however, for he was a close friend (Heber C. Kimball, Journal, 7 Feb. 1846). The cumulative total would be 5,254.


59 For the relationship of these counselors to the second anointing and the succession issue, see Andrew F. Khat, "Joseph Smith's 'Introduction of Temple Ordinances and the 1841 Mormon Succession Question'" (M.A. thesis, Brigham Young University, 1992), pp. 1998, esp. 1.11
the "blessing of the Holy Priesthood, even to the Eternal Godhead." Helo's wife was then anointed "as Queen & Priestress unto her husband," and received the same blessing as he did.  

Within the next few days, other leading brethren and their wives also received their second anointing. When the temple was closed on 7 February 1846, every two thousand couples had been sealed for time and eternity, and just under six hundred persons had received the fulness of the priesthood through their second anointing. In addition to Brigham Young, at least nineteen other men were delegated authority to perform second anointings. 12 On a typical day, six to twelve couples received this ordinance. A few women were sealed to their current husband for time but are a queen to a deceased man (usually Joseph Smith) for eternity. For the first time several polygamous second anointing ceremonies were also performed. 13

In actual practice the second anointing was performed for couples by an officiant as the first of two parts comprising the fulness of the priesthood ceremony. The second part was private, without witnesses, and involved only the husband and wife. Its significance related to the resurrection of the dead as Helo C. Kimball notes: 14 In this part of the ordinance, the wife symbolically prepared her husband for his death and resurrection, a ceremony that gave the wife a claim on her husband for himself in the resurrection. 15

Kimball's journal

12 Book of Anointings, 8 Jan. 1846, pp. 3-4, photoreprint of holograph, original in LDS Church Archives. The "Book of Anointings," a special record, lists all recipients of the second anointing in the Nauvoo Temple, including that of several of the personal blessings received with the anointings (LDS Church Archives). Kimball and his wife, Valoe, originally received the second anointing on 20 Jan. 1844, and the second part of the fulness of the priesthood ceremony on 1 April 1844. Based on our discussion at the end of part 3 of this essay, it is possible that Kimball's delegation to the "Eternal Priesthood" was an intentional substitution for this early Mormon leader's second anointing, which normally amounted to a receipt to godhead. Brigham Young also was blessed, in his second anointing by Helo C. Kimball, to "attain unto the Eternal Priesthood," as was his wife, Mary Ann. Aside from these references, no other evidence is presently known to support this supposition. It is noteworthy that no week prior to the commencement of second anointing conferences in the Nauvoo Temple, Helo C. Kimball recorded a "premise wedding," between William A. Young and Adelia C. Clark wherein Brigham Young "preannounced them husband & wife, and sealed them together as much for time and all eternity, and also sealed them up to eternal life, against all sin, except the sin against the Holy Ghost, which is the shedding of innocent blood, & pronounced various blessings upon them." (Helo C. Kimball, Journal, 1 Jan. 1846; the Book of Anointings contains no record of a second anointing for William A. Young and Adelia C. Clark.)


14 Book of Anointings, transcript

15 Helo C. Kimball, Journal, "Strange Events"

Compare the meaning Hyrum Smith gave John Taylor on 23 July 1843, that "shall be sealed upon you & lead in the day that you shall be anointed & your body prepared for its

BEUTLER, "Meridian of the Priesthood"

refers to Mary washing and anointing Jesus' feet and may be derived from a speculative belief taught by some early Mormons that Jesus Christ marries Mary and Martha, the sisters of Lazarus. 6

A number of historical records indicate that the anointed husband and wife might perform the second part of the fulness of the priesthood ordinance for a few years as such a few years after an officiant performed the second anointing. 17

These brief weeks in Nauvoo and its temple represent a unique confluence of second anointings. Although the endowment was specifically administered after the Saints left Nauvoo, no reliable records or diaries noted that the higher ordinance of fulness was given for over two decades.

III

It would seem to be necessary that there should be more care taken in the administration of the ordinances to the Saints in order that those who have not performed themselves worthy might not partake of the fulness of the ordinances until they have proven themselves worthy thereof, upon being faithful to the tenets principles, as great and religious as the most

appreciation were manifested by many who had partaken of the sacred ordinances.

John Taylor, 12 Oct. 1844

(Salt Lake School of the Prophets Minute Book)

As the Church and its members adjusted to their new environment, much emphasis on physical survival shifted to more spiritual activities such as completing personal and Church histories and doing temple work. The Endowment House was dedicated by Helo C. Kimball and endowments were performed.

beneath." (typescript from Patriarchal Blessing Book 3, p. 113, original in LDS Church Archives). For biblical accounts of Jesus Christ's anointing for his burial see Matt. 26:6-10; Mark 14:3-9; John 12:1-8.

6 See Ogden Kraus, Jesus Was Married Too, 1905) for a compilation of early LDS citations on this belief. A more scholarly analysis of this question is William E. Phillips, "Jesus Married?" (New York: Harper & Row, 1979), and William E. Phillips, "The Case for Married Jesus." (Dedrick, A Journal of Mormon History 27 (1993): 10-171 Some journal entries which document this time specification between the first and second parts of the fulness of the priesthood ordinance include: Helo C. Kimball (cited in above), Priscilla Richards, Journal, transcript entries for 22 Jan. 1846, 1 Feb. 1846, entries in LDS Church Archives; Robert McQuarrie, Journal, transcript entries for 15 Nov. 1846; 1 June 1844, original in LDS Church Archives; William H. Smart, Diary, transcript entries for 31 May 1901, 20 June 1901, Western Americans, Mormon Library, University of Utah Salt Lake City, Utah; and Sylvester C. Murrey, Journal, transcript entries for 23 Sep. 1843 and 29 Oct. 1844, original in LDS Church Archives.)
Another decade would pass, however, before several amendments were to be made. The explanation for this continued hiatus is unknown. Unquestionably the general subject continued to be discussed. On 26 November 1865, for example, Wilford Woodruff recorded in his diary that, “In company with G. A. Smith I called upon President Brigham Young and asked counsel about publishing the endowments or an outline of it telling the time when the Twelve received their Second Anointing & about the organization of the Council of 50. He gave his consent for us to publish an account of it so that the Saints might understand it.” A few weeks later, on 1 December, as he worked to update the official history of the Church, Woodruff recorded a few relevant procedural comments by George A. Smith who noted that Joseph taught that only one King & Priest could be anointed at one meeting in a private room dedicated by permission to anoint in, but one person could be anointed in a day but in the Temple several could be anointed in a day but at each anointing the meeting was dismissed and then came together.” In Brigham Young’s view, however, “When the Temple is finished & a place duly prepared we should not be confined to any particular number in waiting and anointing.”

Whether President Young initially intended to anoint the completion of a new temple before resuming second anointings is not clear. However, by early January 1867, ten years before the Saint George Temple was dedicated, he decided to resume this highest ordinance of Mormonism. On 26 December 1866 President Young met in council with the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve in a session which touched on the subject of endowments and second anointings. In this meeting he clarified several points and ordered President Young again received the anointing of the second anointing. Wilford Woodruff’s diary for that procedural meeting on 26 December reports that President Young described “the order of the 2nd Anointings,” the initiates would be dressed in temple clothes while the “the Administrator” would wear street clothing. A month later he reported that President Young again received the second anointing.

Furthermore, “there should be but one man anointed in any one meeting if more than one man is anointed in a day. They should come together and open by Prayer as though their had not been any meeting before and thus continue to the end.” Wilford Woodruff’s journal continues: “President Young said when a woman was anointed a Queen to a good man and the deed & the woman was sealed to another man for time it was not necessary for her to be anointed a Queen again but if she was anointed a Queen to a man who was not worthy of a wife & she is sealed to another man she should be anointed a Queen unto him. When a good man dies & his wives have not been anointed Queens until he dies they may be anointed Queens by Proxy.” The last comment suggests that the second anointing was at least during Brigham Young’s administration, the only previous ordinance wherein a living proxy was not always required.

The next day, the First Presidency and most of the Twelve consecrated olive oil for use in administering the second anointing. And on 31 December 1866, Daniel H. Wells and his four wives received their second anointing from Brigham Young who had performed the consecrated oil for this ordinance. As Wilford Woodruff recorded, “The brethren repaired at the commencement of the administration of these ordinances which had not been administered since they were in the Temple at Nauvoo.”

This event marked the beginning of a new period of conducting the fulness of the priesthood. George Q. Cannon and his three wives received their second anointing the next day, on 1 January 1867, Joseph F. Young received his on January 2, Brigham Young, Jr. on January 3, Joseph F. Smith and his two wives on January 4, and many others followed from January through June 1867. Brigham Young’s views about the number of persons to receive the second anointing on a single day apparently changed slightly during the initial week, for on 2 January 1867, “it was decided by President Young that we should & offer up the signs of the Holy Priesthood before we give the 2nd anointing & only one man & his wives in one day at one place.” Eight weeks later, on 1 March 1867, President Young again received the second anointing. President Young clearly had deliberated about the matter of the second anointing, for he wrote in his journal: “There should be only one man & his family at one meeting, if any other women are to be anointed to another man it must be a separate meeting, there may be two meetings in a day at one place.”

After the ceremony was recorded in written form, President Young then in the last year of his life, appointed Woodruff to preside over the Saint George...
Temple which had opened earlier that year and take charge of its affairs. In so doing, Woolsey recorded that the President gave “one power and authority to give... Second Anointings, and all... every one of us... by the Spirit of God.” Consistent with Woolsey’s emphasis on vicarious work for the dead, various second anointings were conducted in the Saint George Temple.

Six years later on 26 April 1883, Church President John Taylor announced the revelation reestablishing the School of the Prophets for “all such as are worthy...” and thereby raised several interesting questions. At a preliminary organizational meeting on 25 July 1883, George Q. Cannon, counselor in the First Presidency, and George Reynolds, secretary to the First Presidency, were appointed to “get together all papers and information that they could obtain relating to the former Schools of the Prophets that were organized under the direction of the Presidents Joseph Smith and Brigham Young, so that the School might be properly organized in accordance with the designs of the Almighty.”

They presented their findings to the First Presidency and the Twelve on 2 August 1883. Understandably, in view of the time elapsed and complexity of the intervening history, there was confusion about how all the previous initiation rites and ordinances fit together. The August 2 minutes taken by John Irvine record George Q. Cannon’s remarks:

Now, whether the washing of feet [as the original Kirtland School] was suspended by the Enowment of Power or is a question in my mind, and probably, in all our minds. But it seems to me clear that after Peter, at least, had received an unusual bestowal of power, at the Transfiguration, that the Savior even after that washed his feet and the feet of the rest and commanded them that as they saw him do so they do to one another. It was one of the last ordinances to be performed in their minds. Brother Nlstiel, who was one of those who are so dear to all of us, that in the washing that takes place in the last endowment, they are washed that they might become clean from the blood of this generation—that is, I suppose, in the same way they are ordained to be Kings and Priests—that ordinance does not make them clean from the blood of this generation anymore than it makes them Kings and Priests. If they fully received of another endowment [i.e., the second anointing], a follow up of that power, and the promises are fulfilled in the bestowal of the power upon them. (Emphasis in original.)

Further discussion led to the conclusion that the original School in Kirtland had not used the “greeting” outlined in Doctrine and Covenants 88. Moreover, it was decided that the Kirtland School’s washing ceremony was not intended to be a preparatory ordinance for the Kirtland Temple. Apostle Erastus

———. Typo copy of signed statement by Wiltford Woolsey, 26 March 1883, microfilm in James G. White Papers, Lee Library.

———. Samuel Hollister Rogers, Journal, typescript entry for 1 Feb. 1878, original in Lee Library.

———. Salt Lake City, School of the Prophets Minute Book, typescript entry for 2 Aug. 1883, original in Lee Library.

Thayer, Times and Seasons, 20 April 1833. bold, 22 Sept. 1883.

Thayer, 26 Dec. 1883.

This requirement would have been consistent with a revelation received by President John Taylor on 13 Oct. 1882 that all Church leaders, both local and Churchwide were to obey “my law” - i.e., the law of plural marriage - or they would not be considered worthy
President Taylor, reflecting on some of the foregoing uncertainties, explained at a meeting of the school on 12 October 1885:

"The problems that were in the laps of men are because Joseph felt called upon to make an ordinance which was accepted by the people of the Church. He felt in a hurry to account to an exalted personage for his own conduct; that he had committed his death, and was very anxious to accept the commandments and all the commandments which he had received during his lifetime, and he thought it necessary that there should be a more careful examination in the administration of the ordinances to the Saints in order that those who had not done their part in the matter might not partake of the fruits of the commandments until they had done their part in the matter, and he expected that, upon being faithful to the essential principles, some great conferences and a lack of stipulations had been manifested by men who had partaken of these sacred ordinances."

He concluded, "That Joseph Smith lived, he would have had much more to say on many of these points which he was prevented from doing by his death."

The President concluded, "That Joseph Smith lived, he would have had much more to say on many of these points which he was prevented from doing by his death."

IV

No man receives a fulness of the Melchizedek Priesthood till he has received his second anointing. Men recommended for the sacred ordinance should be men of God whose faith and integrity are unquestioned.

Joseph F. Smith
(in Anthony W. Ivins, Diary, 8 April 1901)

Once the basic format was established, the second anointing was regularly administered in the temples at Saint George and Logan, and later at Salt Lake City and Manti; the ordinance typically was performed by the temple president, who, with the exception of Wilford Woodruff at Saint George for some years, was not an apostle. During the 1813 discussions in the school of the Prophet, President Taylor indicated that too many members had received the higher ordinances of the temple before they had themselves worthily. He and George Q. Cannon felt it would be advisable for the endowment to be administered in separate stages, with the fulness of the priesthood given only after the candidate had proven himself or herself of the higher blessing. Because of the purification of second anointings, the First Presidency issued, over the next few decades, several procedural requirements.

On 7 October 1889, six months after he was sustained as president of the Church, Woodruff spoke in regard to second anointing [sic] and said the Presidents of States were to be judges of who were worthy to receive them. He also indicated that "it was an ordinance of the eternal world which has nothing to do with our church."

Although state presidents were sometimes given final authority for general temple recommendations, a 6 November 1891 First Presidency directive indicated that second anointings were still to be given final approval only by the president of the Church. In 1901, Lorenzo Snow, fourth Church president, stated "that persons who are recommended for second anointings should be those who have made an exceptional record, that they are persons who will never apostatize..." Other early-twentieth-century First Presidency writings and correspondence indicate that at various times the following criteria of worthiness were applied:

1. Unquestionable and unshaken integrity to the work of the Lord.
2. Valiant in the defense of the truth, "active in all good works," have borne "the heat and burden of the day, and endured faithfully to the end."
3. Obedience to commandments such as tithing, laws of chastity, honesty, etc.
4. Age was to be considered, but a member did not need to be "old" to receive the ordinances; "50 or 60 years of age is not a criterion of worthiness."
5. Candidates had to have "gathered with the body of the Church." Faithful "non-gatherers" would be "dealt with by the authority on the other side of the veil."
6. Candidates could not be guilty of any major sins -- e.g., a man who committed adultery after receiving his endowment would not be recommended, even after full repentance.

[Notes and references not transcribed]
The recommend itself was usually initiated by a candidate's stake president. It is not known to what extent stake presidents were encouraged to submit recommendatons for second anointings to the Church president. Evidence suggests that some men and women had requested second anointings prior to the 1890s. One letter from Wilford Woodruff to Salt Lake Stake President Angus M. Cannon suggests that local initiator was occasionally exercised. Bishops, however, were discouraged from submitting such recommendations. If a stake president felt a couple worthy of the ordinance — almost precluding that all stake presidents had previously received the second anointing — they filled out an ordinary temple recommend without indicating on it that it was for a second anointing. They then submitted the recommend together with a short biographical summary of the candidates directly to the Church president, a procedure followed for both the living and the dead. Only after the Church president returned the signed recommend would the stake president then contact the candidates, who usually knew nothing of their candidacy. Recommended candidates were instructed not to discuss their second anointing with anyone outside the temple, and stake presidents were directed not to send more than one family per week to the temple for completion of the ordinance to maintain this confidentiality.

available to designate their worthiness. See Smith, Winder, and Land to Owen N. Stoddard, 22 May 1888, Confidential Research Files.

For example, see John Taylor to Eliza Perry Benson, 9 March 1898, John Taylor Letters Manuscript Book, 1886-1892, LDS Church Archives; John Harmer to John Taylor, 5 June 1886, John Taylor Letter File, LDS Church Archives; Benjamin F. Johnson to First Presidency, 5 Dec. 1886, Office of the First Presidency Journal, 1 John Nuttall Papers, LDS Church Archives; Eliza R. Snow to First Presidency, 27 Dec. 1886, ibid.; and Wilford Woodruff to M. W. Merrill, 20 March 1888, LDS Church Archives. (Note: most of the letters cited throughout this essay are in restricted files with various titles. These are cited from a compilation of extracts of First Presidency letters entitled "Historical Department Confidential Research Files, 1950-1974," LDS Church Archives vault, copy in Archives and Manuscripts, Lee Library.) One request from Reuben F. Johnson to John Taylor, 29 Jan. 1907, LDS Church Archives (Aff 6-2) the privilege of "agreeing to my son James Francis, who is the present Bishop at Temple... He is 25 years of age and spiritually one of the cream of our young men of Zion." (Confidential Research Files).

Wilford Woodruff to August M. Cannon, 21 Jan. 1888, ibid. See letter from Smith, Winder, and Land to James W. Taylor, 4 Jan. 1892: "We wish to say that it is not expected that people shall be found asking that the most sacred ordinance shall be administered to them, but you should take pains to find out the worthy people under your jurisdiction, and this be means of your counselors and Bishops." ibid.


Smith, Winder, and Land to Thomas H. Barstow, 4 Feb. 1902; Smith, Winder, and Land to C. R. Hays, 1 Apr. 1902; Smith, Winder, and Land to J. P. Pate, Jr., 22 Sept 1931; George J. Cartwright to Alfred Merrill, 14 Jan. 1893; Winder and Land to David C. Walker, 24 March 1939; and "Special Instructions to the Stake President," 1918-1931, ibid.
Conceivably, it is neither precisely what long-term effect the second
anointing had upon the lives of its recipients, nor for that matter is it known
what degree the ceremonial of oiling by the second anointing was held to be
regulative or unregulative. Most of the earliest-twentieth-century
churchmen explicitly dealing with the second anointing clearly imply that the
ordinance was then held to be unregulative. As early as August 1843
Joseph Smith had expanded in his Calvinist doctrine of the elect in a sermon
concerningSecond Samuel, where he wrote:

"And when a seal is put upon the father and mother it secures their posterity
so that they cannot be lost but will be saved by virtue of the covenant of their
father."

Another report recorded:

"The Covenant sealed on the forehead of the Parents secured the children from falling that they shall all sit upon thrones as one with the Godhead joint Heirs of God with Jesus Christ."[55]

This promise seems to have been invoked in Heber C. Kimball's personal
account on 6 January 1845 of the power he claimed to have been given by
Brigham Young.

Indeed, even the promise of godhood outlined in Joseph Smith's revelation
on celestial marriage (see DCC 132) seemed unconditionally dependent
upon having received the key ordinances of celestial marriage and being "sealed
by the Holy Spirit of promise, through him whom I have appointed and
appointed unto this power."[56] In 1844, Joseph explained this "sealing" as the
"Holy Spirit of promise" in the context of the sealing of the Elect from
Elijah. He then explained, "To obtain this sealing is to make our calling and
election sure."[57] The power of Elijah to seal was not sufficient to make our
calling and election sure. This sealing power of Elijah to seal on earth and in
heaven, even the "Holy Spirit of promise," was bestowed "by revelation and
confirmation through the medium of me anointed, whom I have appointed on
the earth to hold this power, and I have appointed unto my servant Joseph
to hold this power in the last days, and there is never but one on the earth at
a time upon whom this power and keys of the priesthood are conferred"[58].

The unconditional promise of salvation in the highest degree of the celestial
kingdoms as gods and goddesses inherent in this priesthood sealing ordi-
nance of Elijah was unconditionally held, yet so was the sole penultimate
alternative: damnation as sons and daughters of perdition for whom there is no
remission in this life or in the hereafter. The sealing of the Holy Spirit of promise
seemingly did not leave recipients of the second anointing eligible for the saved
degrees of judgment outlined in Doctrine and Covenants 76; they would be
either gods or devils.

Doctrine and Covenants 132:26-27 implies that such persons would be de-
prived of godhood only if they committed the unpardonable sin: "Whoever
shall commit the unpardonable sin, i.e., whoever shall shed innocent blood, and
be cast unto destruction;"[59] this would seem to place Brigham on a median
with the majority of Saints including those in church, who also held the
same view. Yet, there are indications that even those who have been sealed
by the spirit of promise through the ordinances of the house of God, those
things which have been sealed upon their heads will be realized by them in
the opening of the resurrection.[60]

Parrish's September 1846 account on this subject were given in the same vein:

"This would seem to be as near as an unconditional promise as can well be
made mortal. But this is not altogether unconditional, for there are some excep-
tions, but it would seem near as anything we have ever read of."[61] And in

The two great admonitions of all Christian preachers, papists and
protectors; see Susan Curtis Minutes, "Preparatory Record," pp. 33-35.


[56] It is possible that some early Mormons may have extended the description of godhood
to anyone who committed the unpardonable sin. John D. Lee's depiction of the delibera-
tions preceding the Mountain Meadows massacre describes the concern of those involved
that by killing the women and children, they might be guilty of shedding innocent blood.
This task was left to the Indians so that "it would be certain that on Mormon would be guilty
of shedding innocent blood -- if it should happen that there was any innocent blood in the
company that were to die." John D. Lee, Memoirs Unedited: The Life and Confessions of
the Late Mormon Butcher, John D. Lee (St. Louis: Brand & Company, 1877), p. 260;
reprint in original. Lee received his second anointing 1 Jan. 1840. John D. Lee, ibid., note
115, p. 259 for same date, original in LDS Church Archives.

[57] This passage of scripture has provided some theoretical basis for the latter-day doctrine
of blood atonement preached by several nineteenth-century Church leaders.


[59] 16 Sept. 1860, JD, 8:311-312.
November 1867, Brigham Young affirmed, "When men and women have traveled to a certain point in their labors in this life, God sets a seal upon them that they never can breach the God or His kingdom; but rather they should do this, He will allow them to inherit.

Young's achievement of unconditionalness, however, often were concerned that those who had received the second anointing might see it as an effect to commit an sin short of the unpardonable one. These later expressions concerning the second anointing's conditional nature were not only more frequent than comments about its unconditional nature, but those conditional expressions implicitly or explicitly indicated that the second anointing could be invalidated by actions less severe than the sin against the Holy Ghost. Heber C. Kimball, for instance, graphically stated:

Some will come with great zeal and activity, saying, "I want my endowment, I want my revelations, I want my lifetime, I wish to be sealed in eternal life, I wish to have my wife sealed in eternal life, and I wish to have all the blessings that were sealed upon me, and to be sealed upon children, and to be sealed upon nations, and to be sealed upon the earth, and to be sealed upon this or that thing, and so forth."

Eighteen months later, Kimball further explained, "You must spiritually and justly say, 'I want it, yes, I desire it, I want it; but if the church deems it necessary for the good of the church, I will not do it, and I will not have it, I will not be sealed.'"

Young echoed this idea: "If we have the blessings of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob after they are sealed upon them, no blessing that is sealed upon us will do us any good, unless we live for it.

This pragmatic emphasis on salvation through works was also preached by George Q. Cannon:

When men are sealed in eternal life, they are sealed upon the blessings coming to them, and to the church, or when they are sealed to others, so that the blessing of the one would extend the blessings to the others. The blessings that were sealed upon us, I suppose, that were sealed upon those who were sealed to us were not sealed to be handed down in the family, and so forth, but they became part of the reserved work. People are not sealed, it is impossible to be sealed, it is impossible to be sealed by the church.

Indeed, the conditional nature of the second anointing has become even more pronounced within the last two generations, due to an apparent misinterpretation of the "Holy Spirit of promise." Brigham Smith, in his "Elders' Manual," noted that the second anointing was "not a sign of the Holy Ghost, but a sign of the Holy Spirit of promise, or Holy Ghost, who has now become a "divine power" which guarantees the seals and ordinances of the church and the church's salvation." The expression "sealing" in the latter case is applied to the condition under which one is sealed and this condition must be fulfilled by the recipient.

V

It is not customary now for presidents of stakes, as you know, to recommend people for higher blessings.

Heber J. Grant, 1927

At the turn of the century the Church had 264,009 members and about fifty stakes; by 1920 there were 558,000 members; in 1928 the one-hundredth stake was organized. The present Heber J. Grant became president of the church in 1918, and over 40,000 new members had been received for both living and deceased members. In the midst of this growth, President Grant issued a

George Q. Cannon, 15 Aug. 1883, JD, 24:578. See also Charles W. Penrose, 2 Jan. 1881, JD, 24:158.

See Joseph Fielding Smith's comments on this question in "Doctrines of Salvation," 2:241-43. Bruce R. McConkie echoes this idea in "Doctrines of Salvation," 2d ed., p. 76. McConkie's "The Seven Deadly Heresies," a lecture delivered at Brigham Young University, 1 June 1960, should also be understood in light of this chapter: BYU Bookman, September-October 1960, pp. 22-23.


The figure is based on the Salt Lake Temple Ordinance Book, LDS Church Archives, as well as J. D. T. MacAlister's "Total for year ending Dec. 31, 1988" for the Saint George, Logan, and Salt Lake temples. LDS Church Archives, MacAlister was at the time, the president of the Manti Temple.
policy change which had altered the frequency of second-announcing administrations to this day.

The records which indicate the precise date of this policy change are not presently available, but on 29 January 1927, President Grant wrote: "Second Announcements only given by the President of the Church upon recommendation of a member of the Council of the Twelve." This change was made in response to a stake president's inquiry, the president continued: "At some time in the past, the Apostles have, it is known, felt to properly recommend Brother... the matter will then be taken under advisement."

The implied decision to discontinue receiving recommendations from stake presidents for second-announcing candidates was reiterated by President Grant on 6 April 1927: "It is not customary now for presidents of stakes, as you know, to recommend people for higher blessings. That matter should be taken up by the visiting apostle at your quarterly conference, and all recommendations of this kind should come direct from the apostles."

While figures are not available for each president, averages projected in their office would indicate that Wilford Woodruff assisted nearly 20,000 in an average of about 300 each year in the Salt Lake Temple during his administration. Lorenzo Snow apparently authorized about 2,000 second-announcing candidates in his first year as president of the Twelve. He and his successors told their brethren that they all should have their Second Blessings. Of course, that was a serious infraction of the charge which he received when he had his Second Announcing; but I have never learned of any serious consequences to follow, except the action of the President of the Twelve, disallowing the administration of these blessings in the Church."

1941 are not presently available to historians. But 1911, a total of 6,000 second announcements for the living and over 2,000 for the dead had been administered in the Salt Lake Temple during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Thousands of the total were for the living, and a few for the dead. Some of these blessings were performed for the living but not for the dead. During the period of declining administrations of higher blessings, George F. Richards, single-handedly, to revive this practice. An apostle from 1906 to 1947, he was also president of the Salt Lake Temple from 1921 to 1937 and chaired a special apostolic committee which made extensive procedural changes in the endowment ceremony. As a 1934 letter to President Grant, he listed five General Authorities who had not received second announcements and wrote, "I understand that it is in order for a member of the Council of the Twelve to recommend worthy members to the President of the Church to receive their Second blessings. Accordingly, I recommend that these brethren and their wives be invited to receive their blessings."

111 At least one of these candidates was not approved until December 1947 when he received in his journal, "I have anxiously looked forward to this act. The record shows that there have been 12,495 such blessings administered in the Church and that during the last 40 years there have been but 8 administrations. Thirteen of the 32 General Authorities have not had their and at least two others who have had them with their first wives have later wives not yet married in their husbands."

A few days later he wrote in another journal entry: "This has been a wonderful year for me and my family... I have been instrumental in re-energizing the Church's practice of administering Second Announcements."

112 At 1909 and statistical reports in The Ensign: A Journal of Mormon Thought.
to faithful members, the practice having gone practically into disuse ... I am sure that the Lord has inspired what I have been able to do along these lines.

Judging from his remarks seven years later, however, in a 1919 letter presented to the Council of the First Presidency and the Twelve, Richards still expressed frustration: "For a long time I have felt that I would like to express to you the disappointment I feel in that we have practically discontinued the administration of Second Anointings in the Church ... I have not been able to bring myself to feel that the Lord is pleased with us in neglecting such an important and sacred endowment. Thousands of good and faithful men and women are dying without receiving a fulness of the promise made them in connection with the temple ceremonies." After citing various statistics and the Idaho incident discussed above, Richards concluded:

It appears to me that the mistake made by the good brothers in Idaho was not so serious as to possibly bring these sacred ordinances into disuse in the Church. I think now is the time to act, with such modifications as to details as the brethren might feel to make, making that these blessings be administered to those who are worthy to receive them.

If there is condemnation wording upon us for our neglect, the longer we delay the greater will be our condemnation.

Temples under construction now, and in the future should be provided with a room for the administration of these blessings, or, the Holy of Holies, for if we do not move in this matter before us, some other action after in will do to let it must be done, and temples should be designed and constructed with that thought in mind.

It is to be hoped that that communication will not be shelved and forgotten without full consideration by the Council. For several years these matters have given me a great deal of anxiety and spiritual concern, and last for want of courage I would have worked on opportunities to be had years ago. I do not want to lose the office without evidence to support our indifference and neglect.

The results of this advice are not presently available, Richards did note in his journal that day: "The paper and other statements made by me in connection therewith were accepted 100%,"

Aside from a few letters and other fragmentary bits of information, very little is known of recent LDS practice regarding second anointings. One person recalled that when he was a young man in a rural Utah town this century, "second anointings [i.e., second anointing] were spoken of rather frequently." 39 Richards, however, members typically do not understand such ordinances, even those of the ordinance. Nonetheless, occasional instances of present-day anointings have occurred. 40 Various second anointings are also performed, but are less frequent. Recently the Church president delegated authority to perform second anointings to General Authorities and temple presidents; today it is understood that if the Church president does not perform the ceremony, he ordinarily must be present in the room while it is done by a designated individual, although his presence has not always been possible. The policy of the Church president calling up candidates to receive the second anointing still continues. In the past the ordinance was held in a special room called the Holy of Holies, a room with which all temple area were equipped. At present, any room in a temple specifically set apart for the purpose will suffice.

However, a more perplexing doctrinal question remains without a clear answer presently available: In Mormon theology, must a faithful member receive the second anointing for exaltation in the highest degree of the celestial kingdom? The record of former LDS practices, both for the living and the dead, seems to say yes. Yet, the current official policy initiated by Heber J. Grant suggests that Church authorities now feel that the second anointing is not required for exaltation. 41 However, the fact that the ordinance continues to be performed — albeit on a small scale — seems to signal some importance. While it current limitations may have partially stemmed from anxiety to prevent this ritual from being conferred upon people who might later fall from faithfulness, it is more likely that the Church's current posture resulted from the second anointing becoming a conditional ordinance rather than an "unconditional" one. As a conditional ordinance, it becomes a "special blessing" for a limited number of proven, trustworthy, older men and women or for the upper levels of a highly exalted and hierarchal hierarchy.

In such a light, much of the significance of the ordinance is reduced. 42

39 For example, see L. M. Shelden, A Life of Colonel John... (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1957).
40 This procedural information was relayed to me by President Joseph F. Smith, 1926, and by Apostle Elbert L. Lee, 1927. 41 The policy of the Holy of Holies in the Salt Lake Temple was published in Patriarchal Ordinances (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1957).
42 When John A. Yordes, for instance, asked Apostle Howard B. Lee in a Salt Lake Temple missionary question-and-answer session, if the second anointing was required and, so, what connection does it have with the Holy Spirit of Power, and who receives it and who is authorized to administer it? Lee answered, "You don't have to worry. You're already under the endowment you need to be exalted." John A. Yordes, Journal, 28 June 1951, recovered by permission.
The early Mormons who received the second anointing recorded the event in their diaries with great joy. Abraham O. Smoot wrote that it was a day of great enjoyment for men to give birth to the greatest blessings and an higher exaltation in the Priesthood than ever had been anticipated by me. 17 John D. Lee, called by Brigham Young to keep records of the anointings, wrote in his diary, "We received our anointings via Holy anointings in the Temple of the Lord... under the hands of Elder Oronson Hyde... this certainly produced more joy, comfort and pleasure & reconnection of feelings... than could possibly have been imagined." 18 For them, the event clearly had theological significance as well. Theoretically the blessing of the fulness of the priesthood is still attainable. 19

As Bruce R. McConkie of the Quorum of the Twelve has noted:

"Hebdomas of the Melchizedek Priesthood have power to prefix formal righteousness, being by every word that proceeds forth from the mouth of God, magnifying their sacrifices, going from grace to grace, until the fulfillment of the ordinances of the temple they receive the fulness of the priesthood and are ordained kings and priests. Those so anointing shall have exaltation and be kings, priests, rulers, and lords in their respective spheres in the eternal kingdom of the great King who is God our Father." 20

Whether, as Joseph Fielding Smith asserted, "There is no exaltation in the kingdom of God without the fulness of the priesthood," 21 remains to be seen.

I know where the bodies are buried in my house and can whistle past indefinitely before I must die and rest.

Almost at once, the remains of a girl scout at nine, her green uniform folded more neatly than it was worn, the sturdy body quite gone.

A turquoise bib recalls the chubby boy with oatmeal around the mouth that opened, swallowed, despite the sound asleep eyes.

Lost her baby, I heard then, in between those I kept; only to find the more they survive, the more I love them again.

What do I do now with this doll dress my fashion were worn for ten minutes months?

How do I greet these ghosts who haunt the rooms of the children? The young mother who dressed each child in red.

In this photo? The scrawny one who rocks and dives? The yellowed newspaper girl smiling like a bride? Under the most that

I find the diary kept from twelve to sixteen about boys, often as not keeping for them as if nothing mattered but counting out love

There is nothing here I can keep or discard I'm putting it all back, sprinkling dust over the top and closing the closet door as if, in the dark, the ghosts will rest.