

Come follow me
An Elo Viz production
Week 19- Ex 35-40, Lev 1,16,19

After the children of Israel had been traveling in the wilderness for some time now, and after the dreadful experience with the Golden calf, The people needed to be able to take it slower in their progression. God gave them the 10 commandments and instructed them to obey and prosper. This week we will be studying how God gives them another step in their progression, He instructs them how to build a mobile tabernacle. Essentially a temple that they would take and move around with them in their journey to the promised land.

There are some amazing resources and very smart people that have studied these tabernacles and can tell you all about the symbols and purposes of every part of the complex structure. I however, would like to focus on another aspect this week. This tabernacle was their way to physically go to God and worship him. In our day, this structure would be our amazingly beautiful temples. I'd like to discuss the purpose and importance of temples in our lives. This last General Conference the Prophet announced 17 new temples being built. This will bring the count to 265 temples either announced, under construction or operating in the world. It is pretty obvious that since president Hinckley this has been a focus for the first presidency to bring as many temples as possible to all the members of the church wherever they live in the world. For many members of the church they have sacrificed a great deal to get to the temple.

April 2004 President Holland gave a talk called "Abide in me" and he tells this Story:

The Punta Arenas Chile Stake is the Church's southernmost stake anywhere on this planet, its outermost borders stretching toward Antarctica. Any stake farther south would have to be staffed by penguins. For the Punta Arenas Saints it is a 4,200-mile round-trip bus ride to the Santiago temple. For a husband and wife it can take up to 20 percent of an annual local income just for the transportation alone. Only 50 people can be accommodated on the bus, but for every excursion 250 others come out to hold a brief service with them the morning of their departure.

Pause for a minute and ask yourself when was the last time you stood on a cold, windswept parking lot adjacent to the Strait of Magellan just to sing with, pray for, and cheer on their way those who were going to the temple, hoping your savings would allow you to go next time? One hundred ten hours, 70 of those on dusty, bumpy, unfinished roads looping out through Argentina's wild Patagonia. What does 110 hours on a bus feel like? I honestly don't know, but I do know that some of us get nervous if we live more than 110 miles from a temple or if the services there take more than 110 minutes. While we are teaching the principle of tithing to, praying with, and building ever more temples for just such distant Latter-day Saints, perhaps

the rest of us can do more to enjoy the blessings and wonder of the temple regularly when so many temples are increasingly within our reach.

For many of us temples are very accessible and relatively close. The all important question is why are they important for us and what should we be learning from them?

In relation to what we will be studying this week the temples and their life altering ordinances are more than just the good feelings we feel in the temple. They give us the path to prepare ourselves to one day meet God at the veil and to gracefully step through and come face to face with Him.

The april 2011 General conference President Monson said:

“During the first 150 years following the organization of the Church, from 1830 to 1980, 21 temples were built, including the temples in Kirtland, Ohio, and Nauvoo, Illinois. Contrast that with the 30 years since 1980, during which 115 temples were built and dedicated.”

Since this talk in 2011 this number has doubled. He goes on to say:

“Today most of us do not have to suffer great hardships in order to attend the temple. Eighty-five percent of the membership of the Church now live within 200 miles of a temple, and for a great many of us, that distance is much shorter. If you have been to the temple for yourselves and if you live within relatively close proximity to a temple, your sacrifice could be setting aside the time in your busy lives to visit the temple regularly.”

“Until you have entered the house of the Lord and have received all the blessings which await you there, you have not obtained everything the Church has to offer. The all-important and crowning blessings of membership in the Church are those blessings which we receive in the temples of God.”

“The world can be a challenging and difficult place in which to live. We are often surrounded by that which would drag us down. As you and I go to the holy houses of God, as we remember the covenants we make within, we will be more able to bear every trial and to overcome each temptation. In this sacred sanctuary we will find peace; we will be renewed and fortified.”

I'm sure we have all felt these feelings President Monson described when we went to the temple. I have personally felt the strength that comes from regular temple attendance. I like to think of it as a spiritual charger for my life. I feel as if I can withstand more that the world can

throw at me when I have the protection of the spirit that I get when I go to the temple. Then in time that charge starts to diminish if I don't go back soon and recharge. Some may use the analogy of spiritual Armor.

In April 2016 General Conference Elder Cook said:

“The primary blessings of the temple are the ordinances of exaltation. The gospel plan is about exaltation and encompasses making and keeping sacred covenants with God. Except for baptism and confirmation, these ordinances and covenants are performed and received in the temple for the living. For the dead, all the saving ordinances and covenants are received in the temple.

Brigham Young taught, “There is not one thing that the Lord could do for the salvation of the human family that he has neglected to do; ... all that can be accomplished for their salvation, independent of them, has been accomplished in and by the Savior.”

That is the purpose of the temple, this is the reason it is so important to build so many temples in as many locations as possible around the world. It is a sure way to step out of the world and into His house, to learn about him and his plan of happiness and to commune with Him. There is really no other place where it is as easy to forget the world and focus solely on him and his gospel. And it is essential that we go as often as possible to keep that as the center focus of our lives. Could you imagine how the worries and violence in the world would dwindle and fade away if the men in the church spent as much time in the temple and they do on sports or entertainment? Or if the women of the church spent as much time in the temple as they did on their appearance or social media?

What I'm suggesting is that we focus on those things that bring to pass the purpose of why we are here. To assist the Lord in bringing to pass our immortality and eternal life. And this can only be done through the saving ordinances obtained in the temples.

In reflecting on the ancient tabernacles and the modern temples might we consider the symbolism described by President Gordon B. Hinckley:

“[Jesus Christ] is the chief cornerstone of the church which bears His name, ... There is no other name given among men whereby we can be saved. He is the author

of our salvation, the giver of eternal life. There is none to equal Him. There never has been. There never will be. Thanks be to God for the gift of His Beloved Son, who gave His life that we might live and who is the chief, immovable cornerstone of our faith”

I add my witness to that of president Hinckely’s, That he lives, and that he is our savior and redeemer from the fall and from ourselves. Our savior from the world of distraction and destruction. Our true source of peace and hope for all good things to come. I pray that we might use our time on this earth to accomplish the purpose for our existence here in mortality. To know the one true and living God.

In the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.