

# Prophets in Mormonism – Part 18

by Marvin W. Cowan

On January 19, 1841 in *Doctrine and Covenants* Section 124 “the Lord” commanded LDS to *build a Temple* as well as the Nauvoo House *in Nauvoo, Illinois*. “The Lord” said,

And again, verily I say unto you, **let all my saints come from afar**. And send ye swift messengers, yea, chosen messengers, and say unto them: **Come ye, with all your gold**, and your **silver**, and your **precious stones**, and with all your **antiquities**...and **build a house to my name**, for the Most High to dwell therein...But **I command you**, all ye my saints, to **build a house unto me**; and **I grant unto you a sufficient time to build a house unto me**; and during this time your baptisms (for the dead) shall be acceptable unto me. But behold, at the end of this appointment your baptisms for your dead shall not be acceptable unto me; and **if you do not these things at the end of the appointment ye shall be rejected as a church**, with your dead, saith the Lord your God...And ye shall build it on the place where you have contemplated building it, for **that is the spot which I have chosen for you to build it**...And again, verily I say unto you, **I command you again to build a house to my name, even in this place**, that you may prove yourselves unto me that ye are faithful in all things whatsoever I command you, that I may bless you, and crown you with honor, immortality, and eternal life (vs. 25-27; 31-32; 43; 55).

“The Lord” is very specific in these instructions: **All** Mormons everywhere are to bring **all** their gold, silver, precious stones and antiquities to pay for building of the temple in Nauvoo. But LDS records show that the temple was built slowly because Mormons **did not** give all their wealth for it. In *An Epistle of the Twelve Apostles to the Saints* on December 13, 1841 they wrote,

The building of the Temple of the Lord in the city of Nauvoo is occupying the first place in the exertions and prayers of many of the Saints at the present time, knowing, as they do, that if this building is not completed speedily, ‘we shall be rejected as a Church with our dead;’ for the Lord our God hath spoken it (*History of the Church*, vol. 4, p. 472).

Yet, that temple was never completed as Brigham Young stated:

Joseph (Smith) located the site for the Temple Block in Jackson County, Missouri, and pointed out the south-east corner of the Temple in the year 1831, —also laid the corner stone for a Temple in Far West, Caldwell County, MO. **These Temples were not built. We built one in Nauvoo.** I could pick out several before me now that were there when it was built, and know just **how much was finished** and what was done. It is true we left brethren there with

instructions to finish it, and **they got it nearly completed before it was burned**, *but the Saints did not enjoy it* (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 18, pp. 303-304).

According to *History of the Church*, the roof of the Nauvoo Temple caught fire November 9, 1846 while the building was still under construction (vol. 7, p. 581). On November 19, 1848, after the LDS moved to Salt Lake, that temple burned to the ground (vol. 7, pp. 617-618).

Were “the Lord’s” commands fully obeyed by the LDS in Nauvoo? Did **all** Mormons come from everywhere bringing **all** their gold, silver, etc. to pay for the Nauvoo Temple? “The Lord” said, “*I grant unto you a sufficient time to build a house (temple) unto me.*” Since the LDS didn’t complete it within that time, were they rejected as a Church? Is “the Lord’s” word trustworthy? The *Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual* says:

The building of the Nauvoo Temple was the **fifth** attempt by the Latter-day Saints to build a house of the Lord. The first attempt was in Jackson County, Missouri; then in Kirtland, Ohio; and then in Far West and Adam-ondi-Ahman, Missouri; and finally in Nauvoo, Illinois. Only the Kirtland Temple was completed before the one in Nauvoo, and it was desecrated...the Temple at Kirtland had fallen into the hands of *wicked men*, and by them been polluted, like the Temple at Jerusalem, and consequently it was disowned by the Father and Son (p. 306).

The “wicked men” who took over the Kirtland Temple was the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, now called the Community of Christ Church, one of the Mormon splinter groups. It is ironic that only **one** out of five LDS Temples the Lord commanded to be built was fully completed and it fell into “wicked” hands soon after it was built! Why did “the Lord” command LDS to build temples that they could not finish or use?

Since the LDS moved to Utah they have built over 120 temples, yet no LDS scripture contains a command by “the Lord” to build a single one of those temples! **But, the five temples that “the Lord” commanded to be built in LDS scripture were not built or used as “the Lord” commanded!** LDS Apostle Bruce R. McConkie said, “The Prophet observes that God is the only supreme governor and independent Being in whom all fullness and perfection dwell; who is *omnipotent, omnipresent, and omniscient*; without beginning of days or end of life” (*Mormon Doctrine*, p. 317). The word “*Omniscient*” means that “He knows all things.” So, did “the Lord” know that the LDS wouldn’t build or use those first five temples He commanded them to build? Or, can man stop God’s plans from being fulfilled?

Our next article will conclude our study of *Doctrine and Covenants* Section 124. Those who want to know more about this section should read it and what LDS history records about the things it mentions along with the chapter in my *Mormon Claims Answered* that covers it.