

LET THE WORK OF MY TEMPLE **Not** Cease

D&C 127:4



Top: View of Nauvoo, with the partially destroyed temple, about 1859, by John Schroder. **Center:** Engraving of the Nauvoo Temple, 1870, courtesy of the Church History Museum.

The baptismal font was built in the basement of the unfinished temple and dedicated on November 8, 1841, by Brigham Young.

On August 15, 1840, in Nauvoo, Illinois, USA, the Prophet Joseph Smith delivered a powerful sermon at the funeral of Seymour Brunson. He read much of 1 Corinthians 15, including verse 29 which refers to the practice of baptism for the dead. Then he revealed that the Lord would permit the Saints to be baptized for their

deceased ancestors. The first proxy baptisms were done in the Mississippi River.

A few months later, on January 19, 1841, the Lord commanded the Saints to build a temple with a baptismal font (see D&C 124:29–31). The Prophet directed that the font rest on the backs of twelve oxen, as did the font King Solomon built for his temple anciently (see 1 Kings 7:23–25).

Concerning baptism for the dead, the Lord, speaking through the Prophet Joseph, said to the Saints on September 1, 1842, “Let the work of my temple, and all the works which I have appointed unto you, be continued on and not cease; and let your diligence, and your perseverance, and patience, and your works be redoubled, and you shall in nowise lose your reward” (D&C 127:4).

**LET US BE A
TEMPLE-ATTENDING
PEOPLE**



*“Let us
hasten
to the
temple as
frequently*

*as time and means and
personal circumstances
allow. Let us go not only
for our kindred dead,
but let us also go for
the personal blessing
of temple worship, for
the sanctity and safety
which is provided within
those hallowed and
consecrated walls.”*

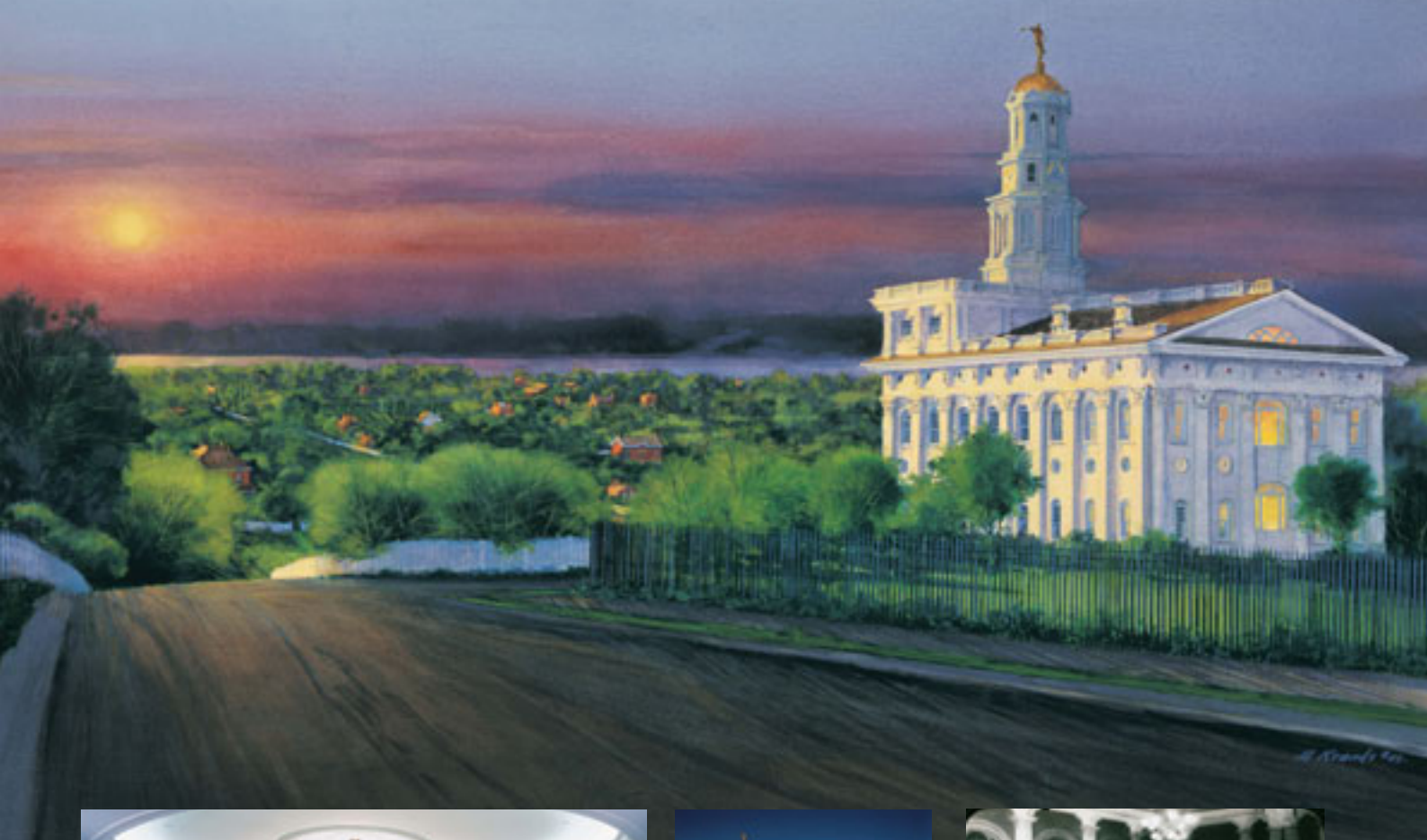
President Howard W. Hunter (1907–1995),
“The Great Symbol of Our Membership,”
Tambuli, Nov. 1994, 6; *Ensign*, Oct. 1994, 5.



Above: An early cross-stitch sampler created by Ann Eckford to commemorate the building of the Nauvoo Temple.

Left: Early architectural drawing of the elevation of the temple.

The subject of baptism for the dead occupied the mind the Prophet Joseph in 1842. He said that a recorder was to witness ordinances and then make a precise record so that “whatsoever you bind on earth, may be bound in heaven” (see D&C 127:6–7; 128:1). Elder Orson Hyde publicly dedicated the Nauvoo Temple on May 1, 1846.



PHOTOGRAPH BY WEIDEN C. ANDERSEN



PHOTOGRAPH BY JOHN LUKE



COURTESY OF THE CHURCH HISTORY MUSEUM



SEVENTH INTERNATIONAL ART COMPETITION, COURTESY OF THE CHURCH HISTORY MUSEUM.



Top: *Nauwoo, the Beautiful*, by Al Rounds.

This painting portrays the peace and spiritual splendor of the past Nauvoo era artfully blended with the present-day Nauvoo Illinois Temple.

Center, left to right: *The baptismal font in the Nauvoo Illinois Temple; the Nauvoo Illinois Temple; an early font in the Salt Lake Temple.*

The twelve oxen holding up the font represent the twelve tribes of Israel.

Left: *Think Temple, Think Family*, by Richard Olagunju, Nigeria.

Latter-day Saint families worldwide continue to perform temple ordinances—first for themselves and then for their deceased ancestors—including baptism for the dead.