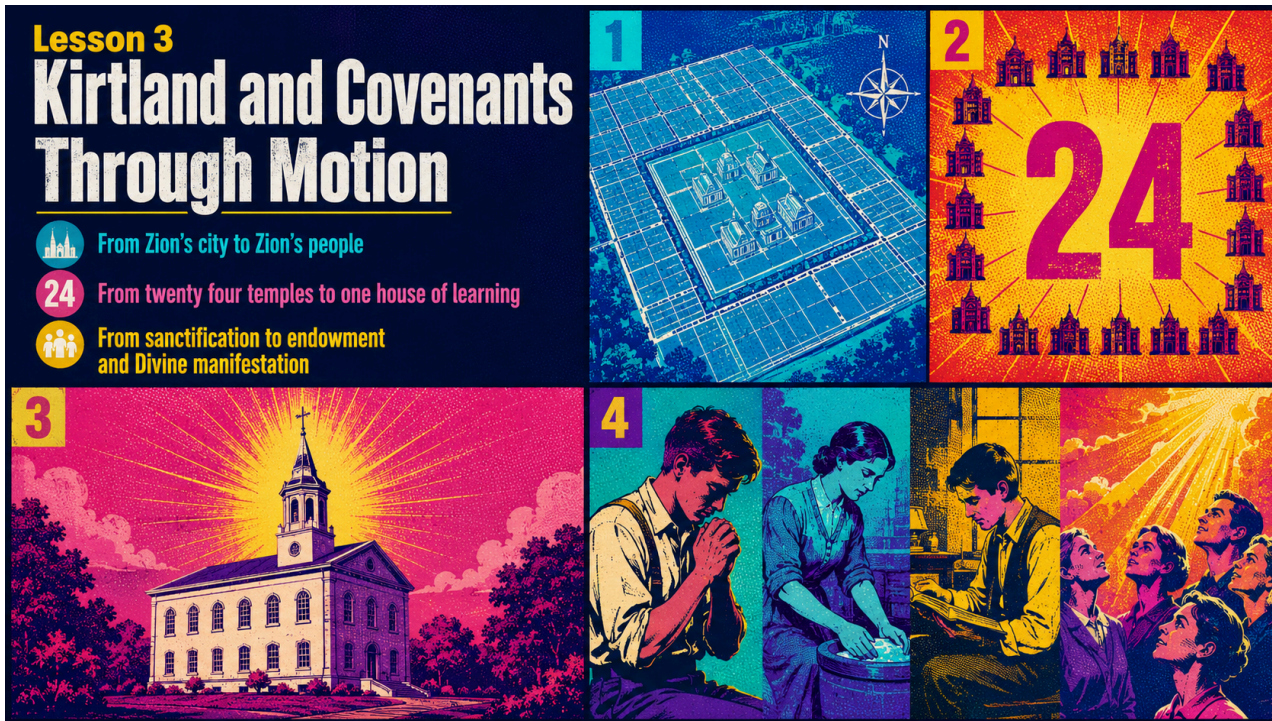


Kirtland and Covenants Through Motion



In this lesson, we will study Kirtland with a new understanding from the previous lessons that Joseph Smith adapted the temple vision of Zion into a lived pattern of covenant preparation. The Plat of Zion imagined a holy city organized around multiple temple spaces, but the Saints lacked the stability, resources, and protection needed to build that vision in Missouri. Kirtland now becomes the place where the focus needed to shift from many sacred buildings teaching line upon line polysemic messages to one house of learning and a sanctified people prepared to receive power from God.

As you read, watch for the repeated pattern of covenant motion. The Saints are asked to gather, organize, sacrifice, study, sanctify themselves, wash, anoint, pray, and prepare for spiritual manifestations. Kirtland teaches us how temples are houses of learning, yes but that we must prepare ourselves first to be able to receive these spiritual lessons and that the endowment of power is something only received by a people who had been made ready.

Readings

[“A House for Our God”](#)

Overview of the Kirtland Temple, the Saints’ sacrifice, and the promise of receiving power from on high.

[Doctrine and Covenants 88](#)

Focus especially on verses 68, 119, and 127 through 141, where the Lord connects sanctification, the house of God, House learning, and the promise of seeing Him.

[Doctrine and Covenants 95](#)

This revelation explains why the Saints were commanded to build the Kirtland Temple and states that the Lord designed to endow His chosen servants with power from on high.

[Doctrine and Covenants 38](#)

This section introduces the earlier promise that the Saints would be endowed with power from on high.

School of the Prophets

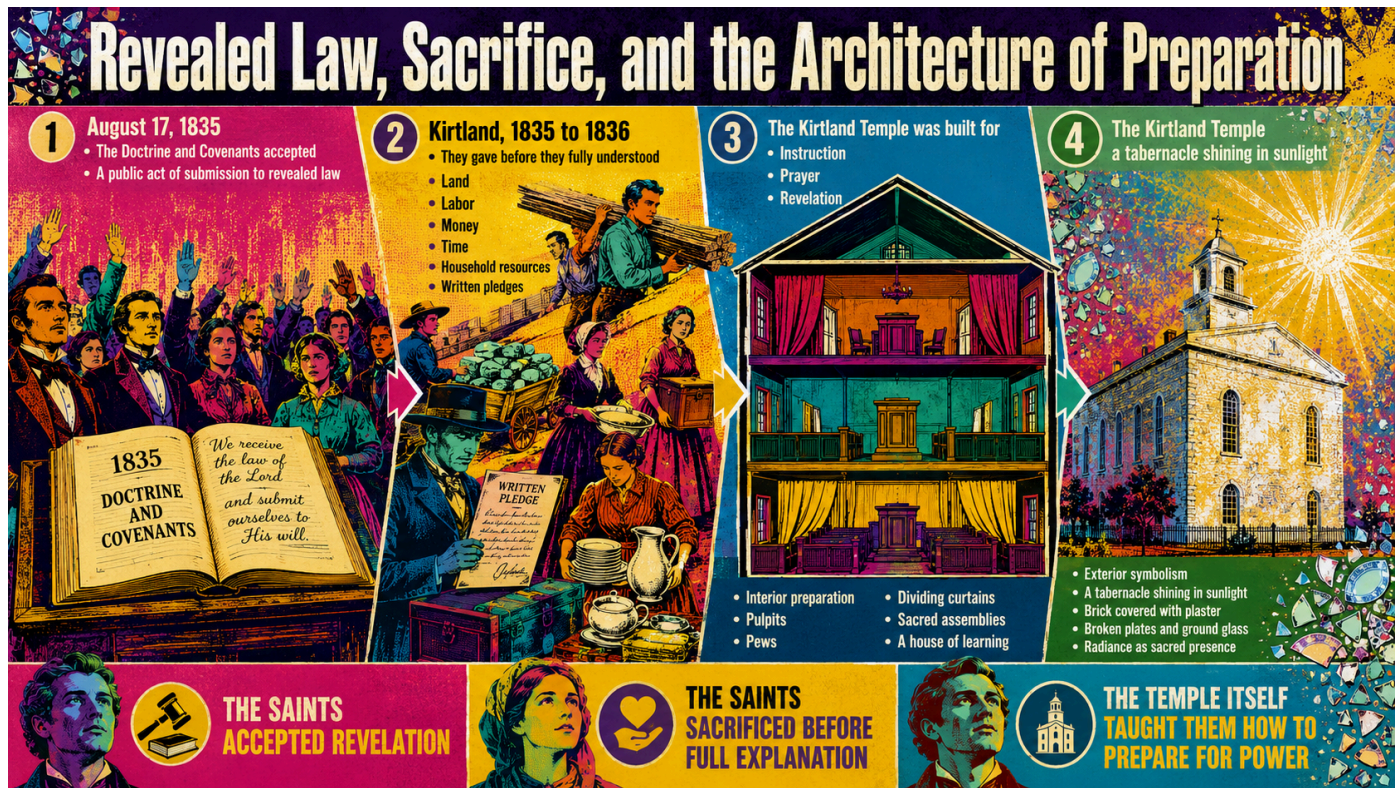
This Joseph Smith Papers overview explains how temple preparation began in the upper room of Newel K. Whitney's store before expanding into the Kirtland Temple.

Doctrine and Covenants 109

This dedicatory prayer shows what the Saints believed the Kirtland Temple was meant to accomplish through glory, protection, angelic ministry, priesthood power, and Divine presence.

Doctrine and Covenants 110

This vision records the appearance of Christ, Moses, Elias, and Elijah in the Kirtland Temple and functions as the culminating answer to the dedicatory prayer.



The Kirtland Temple was built inside a pattern of revealed law and real sacrifice. On August 17, 1835, the Saints accepted the Doctrine and Covenants in a public assembly, which means they were publicly submitting themselves to revealed law before they fully understood where that law would take them. At almost the same time, they were giving land, labor, money, time, household resources, and written pledges toward a temple whose full meaning was still unfolding. Kirtland teaches us how revelation requires movement and response before full explanation. This is the pattern of the Shema. The Saints accepted the law, then they sacrificed into the unknown, and the temple itself became the place where they learned what that sacrifice was preparing them to receive.

Joseph's sacrifice theology gives the spiritual logic behind the whole Kirtland project. In the Sixth Lecture on Faith, published with the 1835 Doctrine and Covenants, the Saints were taught that "a religion that does not require the sacrifice of all things" cannot produce the faith necessary for salvation. The Kirtland Temple was a school of faith. The Saints gave before they ever fully understood, and the architecture taught them as they moved. The interior was built for instruction, prayer, revelation, pulpits, pews, dividing curtains for a Holy of Holies, and intended sacred assemblies. The exterior was made to shine like sacred presence that would be found inside, with plaster, broken plates, and ground glass catching the light. Kirtland shows the pattern again and again: sacrifice prepares faith, faith prepares power, and the house itself teaches the people how to receive.

Readings

[Joseph Smith Papers, “Sixth Theological Lecture on Faith”](#)

This is the sacrifice reading. It includes the line that “a religion that does not require the sacrifice of all things” cannot produce the faith necessary for salvation.

[Joseph Smith Papers, “Minutes, 17 August 1835”](#)

This is the source for the public acceptance of the 1835 Doctrine and Covenants. It shows the Saints formally receiving the revelations as binding instruction.

[“A House for Our God,” Revelations in Context](#)

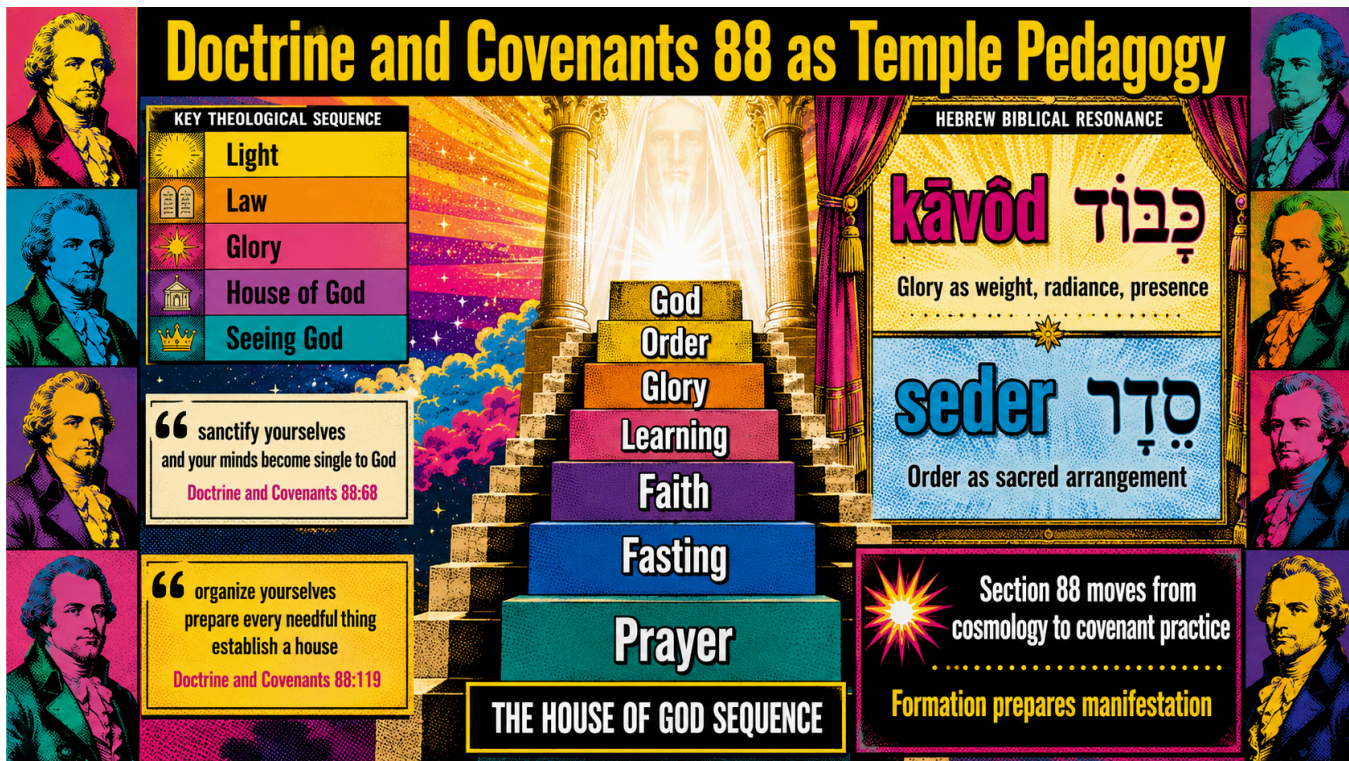
This gives the Kirtland Temple background. It explains the command to build, the sacrifice of the Saints, and why the temple became central to receiving power from on high.

[“The Kirtland Temple,” Church History Topics](#)

This is the short overview of the temple itself. It covers construction, dedication, spiritual outpourings, and the role of the temple in Kirtland worship.

[Steven C. Harper, “Joseph Smith and the Kirtland Temple, 1836,” Religious Studies Center](#)

This is an article which dives into the types of sacred motions Joseph would have the saints go through to prepare for the outpouring of the spirit.



Doctrine and Covenants 88 is built like temple pedagogy. It begins with cosmic doctrine and then the revelation moves from **light**, to **law**, to **glory**, to **sanctification**, to the command to establish a **house of God**. Section 88 teaches that glory is received through ordered transformation. The clearest sentence is Doctrine and Covenants 88:119: “Organize yourselves; prepare every needful thing; and establish a house, even a house of prayer, a house of fasting, a house of faith, a house of learning, a house of glory, a house of order, a house of God.” This is synthetic parallelism. Each phrase repeats the structure, but each line adds another layer. Prayer opens the pattern. Fasting disciplines the body. Faith gives the covenant posture. Learning prepares the mind. Glory comes through Divine illumination. Order arranges the whole life toward God. Then the sequence culminates in the house of God. The verse is an ascent.

That is why the language of **glory** is so important. In Hebrew, **kāvôd** means weight, honor, radiance, the manifest presence of God and Knowledge. Doctrine and Covenants 93 says, “The glory of God is intelligence, or, in other words, light and truth,” and it defines truth as “knowledge of things as they are, and as they were, and as they are to come.” So when Doctrine and Covenants 88 moves from light and law toward glory, learning, order, and seeing God, it is teaching the same pattern. Divine glory is not only brightness. It is light filled knowledge. It is the ordered reception of truth. Section 88 therefore becomes a temple text because it teaches the Saints how to become capable of Divine presence. Formation prepares manifestation.

Readings

[Doctrine and Covenants 88](#)

Read verses 6 to 13 for light, verses 34 to 40 for law and glory, verse 68 for sanctification, and verse 119 for the house of God sequence.

[Doctrine and Covenants 93](#)

Read verses 24, 28, and 36. This is the cleanest Restoration scripture for glory as intelligence, light, truth, and knowledge.

[Proverbs 3:13 to 20, Bible Hub](#)

This gives the Wisdom background. Wisdom is a tree of life, and the Lord creates by wisdom, understanding, and knowledge.

[“Historical Context and Background of Doctrine and Covenants 88.” Doctrine and Covenants Central](#)

This is a helpful overview of section 88 as a temple revelation that moves the Saints toward light, glory, resurrection, and the presence of God.

[“Why Is Doctrine and Covenants 88 Called the Olive Leaf?” Scripture Central](#)

This explains the Olive Leaf title and connects the revelation to peace, covenant preparation, and the command to build a temple.

To see how glory is written as knowledge, follow this scripture chain: [Exodus 33:18 to 23](#), [Exodus 34:5 to 7](#), [Isaiah 40:5](#), [Isaiah 6:3](#), [Habakkuk 2:14](#), [Proverbs 25:2](#), [Psalm 19:1 to 14](#), [Daniel 12:3](#), [Jeremiah 9:23 to 24](#), [Hosea 6:3](#), Doctrine and Covenants 88:40, and Doctrine and Covenants 93:36.

The Olive Leaf
Doctrine and Covenants 88

DECEMBER 27 to 28, 1832 JANUARY 3, 1833 JANUARY 14, 1833

“I send you the olive leaf which we have plucked from the Tree of Paradise”
Joseph Smith to church leaders in Missouri

PEACE OFFERED
UNITY REQUIRED
SANCTIFICATION COMMANDED

“sanctify yourselves”
Doctrine and Covenants 88:68

“organize yourselves prepare every needful thing establish a house”
Doctrine and Covenants 88:119

THE REVELATION OFFERED PEACE
THE REVELATION REQUIRED COVENANT ORDER
THE WORK WOULD MOVE TOWARD THE PREPARED

Joseph's title for Doctrine and Covenants 88 is called "the Olive Leaf" plucked from the "Tree of Paradise," which means the revelation is not only using the image of peace from Noah's story. The olive leaf points to the peace that comes from God, but the Tree of Paradise points us back to Eden, the Tree of Life, and the larger wisdom tradition of scripture. In Proverbs 3:18, Wisdom is called "a tree of life." In Hebrew, Wisdom is **ḥokmāh**, a feminine noun, and the verse speaks of Wisdom as "she." The phrase "tree of life" is **ʿēṣ ḥayyīm**. So the biblical pattern is very clear: feminine Wisdom is described as the Tree of Life. That gives us a powerful way to read Joseph's phrase. The Olive Leaf comes from the Tree of Paradise, and that tree is sourced in the revelation to the feminine Wisdom, life, peace, and return to Divine presence. While this does not mean Joseph understood these connections, you have to ask why they are being used by God in the revelation to begin with. Every word matters in the revelations given so why is Doctrine and Covenants 88 filled with the same wisdom language. Why not avoid it all together if it means nothing. It teaches light, law, glory, learning, order, sanctification, and the establishment of a house of God. That is exactly the work of Wisdom in scripture. Wisdom teaches a people how to live in Divine order. Wisdom builds Her house. Wisdom gives Her children life. Wisdom prepares Her children to return to God. So when Joseph restores the language of the Olive Leaf, the Tree of Paradise, learning, order, and the house of God, these phrases cannot be accidental decorations. They belong together. The revelation is a message of peace, but it is also a restoration of the wisdom pattern. It teaches the Saints how to become a sanctified people who can receive Her Divine presence.

Readings

[Samuel Morris Brown, "The Olive Leaf and the Family of Heaven," Religious Studies Center](#)

This is the best reading for Doctrine and Covenants 88 itself. Brown explains Joseph's "Olive Leaf" language and shows how the revelation restores a larger cosmic family and heavenly order.

[Daniel C. Peterson, "Nephi and His Asherah," BYU ScholarsArchive](#)

This is the best LDS scholarly bridge between the Tree of Life and the divine feminine. Peterson connects Nephi's Tree of Life vision with Asherah, motherhood, and ancient sacred tree imagery.

[Margaret Barker, "Wisdom, the Other Tree"](#)

This gives the broader temple theology background. Barker connects Wisdom, Eden, the Tree of Life, and the feminine presence in the ancient temple world.

Women in Kirtland
 Women were central to the Restoration's lived spirituality
 The record is **thinner** than the reality

July 1830
 "an elect lady"
 Doctrine and Covenants 25:3

March 8, 1831
 "to some is given one, and to some is given another"
 Doctrine and Covenants 46:11

Kirtland, 1831 to 1836

- ★ Women gathered
- ★ Women testified
- ★ Women healed
- ★ Women spoke in tongues
- ★ Women received dreams and visions
- ★ Women helped shape covenant community

Lucy Mack Smith
 Emma Hale Smith
 Eliza R. Snow
 Sarah Granger Kimball and other Kirtland women

Women did not simply receive the Restoration
They helped form its spiritual culture

Women were integral to the work in Kirtland, even though the surviving records usually place them at the edge of the formal story. The minutes were usually written by men, about male offices, male meetings, and male

administrative structures, so women often appear only briefly or indirectly. But they were there, and they were active. The clearest example is the opening meeting connected to the School of the Prophets on January 22, 1833. The Joseph Smith Papers explains that “other members of the church, including women,” gathered in the upper room of Newel K. Whitney’s store, and the minutes record that the Spirit was poured out until “several of the members of the Church both male & female” exercised the gift of tongues. So while women were not official members of the later School, they were present at its opening spiritual outpouring and found in the periphery of other meetings held there. Kirtland women are often unvoiced in the record, but they were very vocal in action through worship, testimony, tongues, spiritual gifts, labor, and the lived formation of the covenant community.

Readings

[“A School and an Endowment,” Revelations in Context](#)

This explains the School of the Prophets, D&C 88, and the promise of an endowment of power. It also states that both men and women attended the January 22 portion of the meeting.

[Joseph Smith Papers. “Minutes. 22 to 23 January 1833”](#)

This is the primary source. It records that the Spirit was poured out and that members of the Church “both male & female” spoke in tongues.

[Church History Topics. “School of the Prophets”](#)

This is the short student friendly summary. It says women attended the first meeting and participated in the spiritual outpouring, including manifestations of the Holy Ghost and speaking in tongues.

Women's Spiritual Gifts

- ★ Kirtland's spiritual culture included women's gifts
- ★ Temple preparation grew within a charismatic community

Gift	Illustration	Date	Description	Reference
1 Seership	Woman looking at a glowing orb	March 8, 1831	to some is given one, and to some is given another	Doctrine and Covenants 46:11
2 Visions	Woman looking up at a bright light	March 8, 1831	to some is given by the Holy Ghost to know	Doctrine and Covenants 46:13
3 Dreams	Woman sleeping with a temple in a dream bubble	March 8, 1831	to others it is given to speak with tongues	Doctrine and Covenants 46:24
4 Tongues	Woman speaking with tongues	March 8, 1831	to another is given the gift of healing	Doctrine and Covenants 46:19
5 Blessings	Woman placing hands on another's head	March 8, 1831	to some is given one, and to some is given another	Doctrine and Covenants 46:11
6 Healings	Woman holding hands with another	March 8, 1831	to another is given the gift of healing	Doctrine and Covenants 46:19

Women helped create the spiritual atmosphere in which Kirtland temple preparation could flourish

Women’s spiritual gifts were part of the Kirtland story from the beginning, but the record usually preserves them only when their actions created a question for male leadership. Emma Smith is the first major example. In 1830, before Kirtland, Joseph received a revelation calling her an “Elect Lady” and appointing her to “expound Scriptures & exhort the Church,” select hymns, write, learn, and help shape the worship life of the Saints. When Joseph arrived in Kirtland in 1831, questions about spiritual authority became immediate. A woman known as Mrs. Hubble claimed to be a prophetess and said she had revelations for the Church. Joseph inquired of the Lord, and the answer became Doctrine and Covenants 43, which clarified how revelation for the

whole Church would be received. Around the same period, Joseph also faced intense charismatic meetings in Kirtland, with tongues, visions, bodily manifestations, and concerns about false spirits. Doctrine and Covenants 46 and 50 gave the Saints language for spiritual gifts and discernment. Women were inside that world, even when they were rarely named. On January 22, 1833, women were present at the opening meeting connected to the School of the Prophets, and the minutes record that members “both male & female” spoke in tongues. Later, Emma’s concern about tobacco in the schoolroom helped prompt Joseph’s inquiry that became the Word of Wisdom. By 1835, Elizabeth Ann Whitney publicly sang in tongues and Parley P. Pratt interpreted. These sources show that women in Kirtland were not passive observers. They were often unvoiced in the record, but their actions forced questions about revelation, worship, spiritual gifts, discernment, bodily holiness, and the shape of sacred community.

Readings

[Doctrine and Covenants 25, Joseph Smith Papers](#)

This is the first major revelation to a woman in the Restoration. Emma is called an “Elect Lady” and appointed to expound scripture, exhort the Church, select hymns, write, and learn.

[Doctrine and Covenants 43, Joseph Smith Papers](#)

This gives the Mrs. Hubble context in Kirtland. A woman claimed to be a prophetess and receive revelations for the Church, and Joseph inquired of the Lord about how revelation should be governed.

[“Gifts of the Spirit,” Church History Topics](#)

This explains Joseph’s concern in Kirtland over charismatic meetings and how to distinguish true gifts from false displays. It is the best short reading for D&C 46 and D&C 50.

[“Gift of Tongues,” Church History Topics](#)

This gives a clean example of Elizabeth Ann Whitney singing in tongues in 1835, with Parley P. Pratt interpreting. It shows women openly participating in charismatic worship.

[Joseph Smith Papers. “Minutes. 22 to 23 January 1833”](#)

This is the primary source for women at the opening meeting connected to the School of the Prophets. The minutes say the Spirit was poured out and members “both male & female” spoke in tongues.

[“The Word of Wisdom,” Doctrine and Covenants Stories](#)

This gives the Emma Smith schoolroom context in very simple language. Emma cleaned the room after School of the Prophets meetings and talked to Joseph about the tobacco mess.

[“Sweet Counsel and Seas of Tribulation,” BYU Studies](#)

This is the best focused article on women’s religious life in Kirtland. Use it to show that women were active in spiritual gifts, devotion, sacrifice, and community formation.