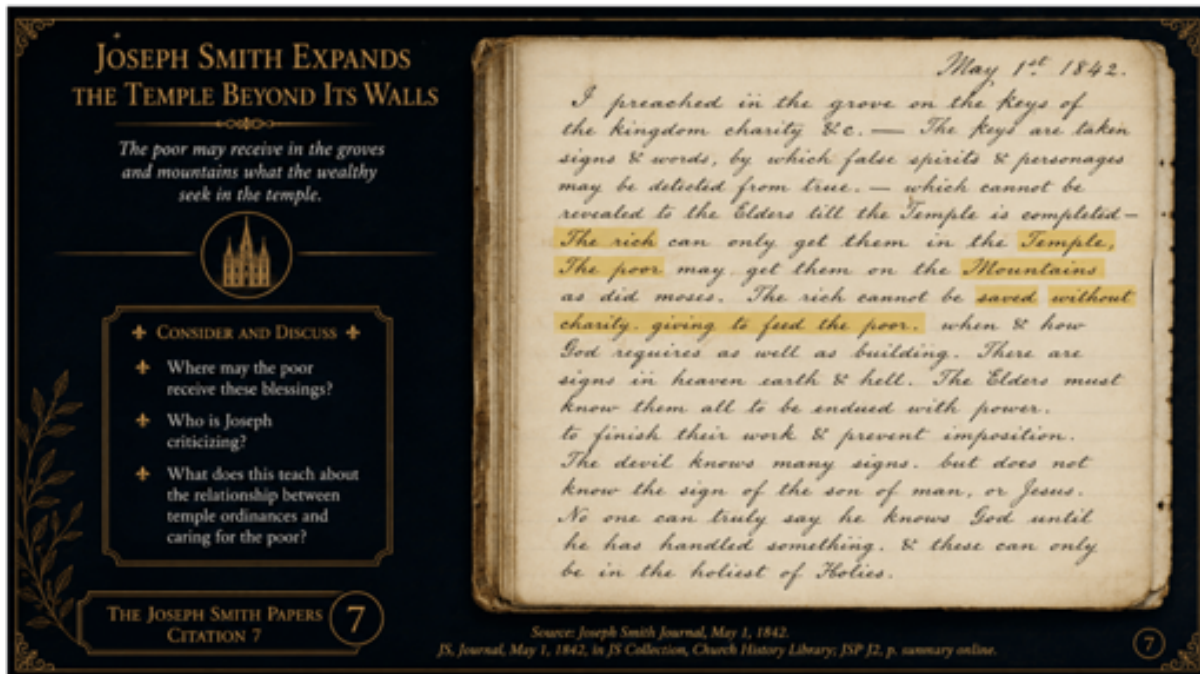


6 1/2 Joseph Smith's Endowment



Joseph Smith's Endowment Before the Completed Temple

Sacred space, keys, signs, charity, and the first Nauvoo endowment



Joseph Smith begins to preach the roles of the temple in the same week. On May 1, 1842, Joseph preached in the grove west of the unfinished Nauvoo Temple and described the keys of the kingdom as sacred signs and words used to discern

true messengers from false spirits. When he said that the rich could receive “them” in the temple while the poor could receive them upon mountains as Moses did, the immediate referent is those keys, signs, and words. Joseph was teaching that a completed temple would provide an ordered setting for sacred instruction, while sacred revelation is available beyond the walls of a building to all of those that have passed through the MRR pattern of bitterness, suffering, and transformation seen in Miriam and Marah, Naomi becoming Mara, and Christ’s bitter cup (Exodus 15:20–27; Ruth 1:20–21; Matthew 26:39; Doctrine and Covenants 19:18; 3 Nephi 11:11). It is also important to point out that Joseph emphasized that the rich could not be saved without feeding and nurturing the poor through their own requirement of sacrifice. Three days later, on May 4, Joseph gathered a small council in the upper room of his red brick store and introduced washings, anointings, endowments, and the communication of keys. The history describes these ordinances as a movement from the Aaronic order toward the highest order of the Melchizedek Priesthood, intended to prepare participants to receive the fulness of the blessings of the Church of the Firstborn and abide in the presence of Eloheim.

Required readings

- [Joseph Smith discourse, 1 May 1842](#) — Read the references to keys, signs, mountains, the poor, and the Holiest of Holies.
- [Joseph Smith history draft, 4–5 May 1842](#) — Read the description of washings, anointings, endowments, keys, and ascent toward Eloheim.

Before the Holy Order: Relief Society Preparation

Presidency, ancient priesthood, healing administration, and keys

READING THE EVOLUTION
OF WOMEN’S RITUAL AUTHORITY
THROUGH THE DOCUMENTS

BEFORE THE HOLY ORDER

*How Emma was prepared to lead
the women who entered the order.*



✦ THE DOCUMENTS SPEAK ✦

Joseph Smith taught women to
preside, follow priesthood order,
and administer by authority
— before the Holy Order began.

BEFORE THE HOLY ORDER

Joseph prepares women to administer before Emma leads in the Holy Order.

<i>17 March 1842</i> EMMA IS SET APART TO PRESIDE “Let them preside just as the Presidency preside over the Church.” <i>Nauvoo Relief Society Minute Book, 17 March 1842</i> <i>Emma and her counselors are organized as a governing female presidency.</i>	<i>31 March 1842</i> THE SOCIETY MOVES ACCORDING TO PRIESTHOOD ORDER “The Society should move according to the ancient Priesthood.” “a kingdom of priests as in Enoch’s day, as in Paul’s day.” <i>Nauvoo Relief Society Minute Book, 31 March 1842</i> <i>Joseph links the Society to an ancient sacred order.</i>	<i>28 April 1842</i> JOSEPH AUTHORIZES ADMINISTRATION “to administer in that authority which is confer’d on them” “I now turn the key to you in the name of God.” <i>Nauvoo Relief Society Minute Book, 28 April 1842</i> <i>Women are authorized to act, bless, and lead within the order God established.</i>
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PRESIDE → ANCIENT
PRIESTHOOD → ADMINISTER → HOLY ORDER

✦ These documents show that Emma’s
later temple role did not appear suddenly.
Joseph had already taught women to
preside, move according to priesthood
order, and administer through
conferred authority.

✦ Nauvoo, 1842 • Relief Society Teachings of Joseph Smith ✦

READING THE EVOLUTION OF
WOMEN'S RITUAL AUTHORITY
THROUGH THE DOCUMENTS

19 APRIL 1842

THE HEALING OF ELIZABETH DURFEE

Women are already administering before the Holy Order.

✦ THE DOCUMENT SPEAKS ✦

- Emma Smith, Sarah Cleveland, and Elizabeth Ann Whitney administered to Elizabeth Durfee.
- Durfee testified that she was healed.
- The sisters then administered again to Abigail Leonard.

WHO IS ADMINISTERING?
What kind of authority is already being practiced?

Mrs. Durfee said Elder Mother Smith and Mrs. Cleveland had administered unto her after the last meeting and she never realized more benefit through any administration — said she was heal'd, and thought the sisters had more faith than the brethren.

At the close of the meeting Sarah Cleveland and Eliza Ann Whitney administered to Abigail Leonard for the restoration of health.

Source: Nauvoo Relief Society Minute Book, 19 April 1842, Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

HEALING ADMINISTRATION → TEMPLE PREPARATION

On March 17, 1842, Emma Smith was elected president of the Relief Society, with authority to choose counselors, appoint officers, make governing decisions, and establish precedents through the recorded minutes. On March 31, Joseph instructed the Society to move according to the ancient priesthood and said it would become a kingdom of priests, while Lucy Mack Smith described its responsibility to expose iniquity and remove reproach from the leadership of the Church. Given the attempts of Joseph to incorporate women in to the creation of the sacred motions of the temple before it is clear to see the trajectory of this calling. On April 19, Elizabeth Durfee testified that Emma Smith, Sarah Cleveland, and Elizabeth Ann Whitney had administered to her and that she had been healed; Cleveland and Whitney then administered to Abigail Leonard for the restoration of her health. On April 28, Joseph defended women laying hands upon the sick, taught that those appointed and set apart could administer through conferred authority, and declared, “I now turn the key to you in the name of God.” From all of these sources we can see how Emma and her counselors were learning to preside, govern, discern, bless, heal, and experiment with sacred motions within a sacred order before Emma later washed and anointed women entering the Holy Order incorporating those same motions.

Required readings

- [Relief Society minutes, 17 March 1842](#) — Emma is elected to preside; decisions and minutes become law and precedent.
- [Relief Society minutes, 31 March 1842](#) — The Society is told to move according to the ancient priesthood, A major role for the Organization is to detect iniquity in the heads of the church, and become a kingdom of priests.
- [Relief Society minutes, 19 April 1842](#) — Elizabeth Durfee reports healing; Cleveland and Whitney administer again.
- [Relief Society minutes, 28 April 1842](#) — Joseph teaches administration through conferred authority and turns the key to the Society.

Women Enter the Holy Order

Emma moves from recipient to officiator

**EMMA OFFICIATES
IN THE HOLY ORDER**

Contemporary witness of Emma
actively washing and anointing
women received into the Holy Order.

THE DOCUMENT SPEAKS

"My wife Vilate and
menny feemales was
received in to the Holy Order,
and was washed
and inointed by Emma."

SOURCE: HEBER C. KIMBALL JOURNAL
1 NOVEMBER 1843

7

1843 Nov: the 1. Friday cloudy.

Oct. 30. I visited Joseph + Hyrum in the Temple.

Oct. 31. I visited them in the Temple this day again.

Nov. 1. My wife Vilate and menny feemales was received in to the Holy Order, and was washed and inointed by Emma. This has been a great privilege to myshelf and wife for which we feel grateful to our heavenly Father.

Emma is identified as the one who washed and anointed women received into the Holy Order.

WHO IS ADMINISTERING THE ORDINANCE?
You decide.

Heber C. Kimball Journal, 1 November 1843
Church History Library, MS 1838

The September 28, 1843 journal records that "Baurak Ale," Joseph Smith's substitute name, was anointed and ordained to the "highest and holiest order of the priesthood," followed by the phrase "Companion ditto," meaning that his companion received the same ordinance. The Joseph Smith Papers identifies that companion as Emma and identifies the ordinance as what later participants called the second anointing. This surviving entry does not explicitly say that Emma personally performed the ordinance for Joseph, but every later Nauvoo record shows that the concluding portion of this ordinance was completed only when the wife washed and anointed her husband, marking women as the officiators in the ritual received by the men. Heber C. Kimball's account of the November 1 meeting then records that Vilate Kimball and other women were "received into the Holy Order" and "washed and anointed by Emma." Together, these sources show Emma first receiving the higher ordinance with Joseph and then administering washings and anointings to other women as they entered the developing temple council similar to the men in the Holy Order.

Required readings

- [Joseph Smith journal, 28 September 1843](#) — Read the exact manuscript wording: "Baurak Ale" and "Companion ditto."
- [Heber C. Kimball journal account of 1 November 1843](#) — Emma washes and anoints women received into the Holy Order.
- [Joseph Smith Papers, Documents volume 13 introduction](#) — Use the editorial introduction to place women's admission in the larger endowed council.

Vilate Kimball and the Concluding Ordinance

Washing, anointing, burial, Mary, and resurrection

READING THE EVOLUTION
OF WOMEN'S RITUAL AUTHORITY
THROUGH THE DOCUMENTS

How the language changes between
Joseph Smith and Nauvoo's later leadership

SECTION TWO

VILATE KIMBALL
COMPLETES THE ORDINANCE

- + I WASHED...
- + I ANOINTED...
- + THE MORNING OF THE FIRST RESURRECTION...

WHO IS ACTING?
WHO IS RECEIVING?
WHO PRONOUNCES THE BLESSING?

April the first day 1844
I Heber C Kimball received
the washing of my feet, and
was anointed by my wife
Vilate fore my burial, that
is my feet head Stomach.
Even as Mary did Jesus,
that She mite have a claim
on Him in the Resurrection.

I Vilate Kimball do hereby
certify that on the first day
of April 1844 I attended to
washing and anointing the
head, stomach and feet of my
dear companion Heber C. Kimball,
that I may have claim upon
him in the morning of the
first resurrection.

Heber C. Kimball's
journal entry,
April 1, 1844.

Certification
written in the
hand of
Vilate Kimball.

KEY PHRASES

- "I washed..."
- "I anointed..."
- "the morning of the first resurrection..."

Heber C. Kimball Papers, Journal, April 1, 1844
Church History Library, Salt Lake City

On April 1, 1844, Heber C. Kimball recorded that Vilate washed his feet and anointed his head, stomach, and feet in preparation for burial, comparing her action to Mary anointing Jesus. Vilate then certified in her own hand that she performed the washing and anointing so that she might have a claim upon Heber in the morning of the first resurrection. On May 4, 1844, Wilford Woodruff similarly recorded that Phebe washed his feet so that he might be "clean every whit." Together, these sources show women directly administering these sacred motions in ritual actions to the men before Joseph Smith's death and connect this sacred motion and administration with a burial ritual, complete cleansing, covenant partnership, and resurrection. This later is then incorporated into the Temple system.

Required readings

- [Prince Research Excerpts: Temples, 1844](#) — Use Command/Control + F for "I Vilate Kimball" and read the surrounding entries.
- [Wilford Woodruff and Phebe Woodruff, May 1844](#) — Phebe washes Wilford's feet so that he might be clean every whit.

Clean Every Whit

Trace the phrase, distinguish ritual cleansing from responsibility for a generation

CLEAN EVERY WHIT?

THE DIFFERENT BLESSINGS IN THE INITIATORY ORDINANCE

IMPORTANT DISTINCTION: This wording is from the MODERN TEMPLE ORDINANCE, not from Joseph Smith's surviving Nauvoo manuscripts.

MODERN TEMPLE INITIATORY WORDING (IN USE TODAY)

FOR WOMEN



"...your sins are forgiven, and you are **clean every whit**..."

The language of full cleansing and forgiveness, echoing the scriptural phrase "clean every whit." (D&C 88:68; John 13:10)

FOR MEN



"...through your faithfulness, you may become clean from the blood and sins of this generation..."

The language is conditional and prospective, tied to faithfulness and future cleansing.

NOT FOUND IN JOSEPH SMITH'S NAUVOO MANUSCRIPTS



The exact phrases "clean every whit" and "may become clean" one day" are not found in any surviving 1842–1844 Joseph Smith manuscripts or journals that describe the initiatory ordinance.



EARLY JOSEPH SMITH-ERA SOURCES (1842–1844)

The earliest accounts confirm that washings and anointings occurred, but they do not preserve the full spoken wording of the blessings.

- Joseph Smith – Journal, May 4, 1842: washings, anointings, endowments, and the communication of keys.
- Heber C. Kimball – Journal, May–June 1842: participants were washed, anointed, and received the ordinances.
- Wilford Woodruff – Journal, May 1842: participants "received their endowments."
- William Clayton – Journal, May 5, 1842: refers to anointings and endowments.
- These sources describe the process, but not the complete initiatory wording.

BIBLICAL PARALLEL

The phrase "clean every whit" is found in scripture:

"He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit."
— John 13:10



KEY TAKEAWAY

Modern initiatory wording distinguishes between women and men. Joseph Smith's surviving Nauvoo sources confirm the ordinances took place, but they do not record the exact words of the blessings.

WHY IT MATTERS

Understanding the difference between what is documented and what is developed helps us honor the historical record.



WOMEN COMPLETE THE RITUAL CLEANSING

FROM "CLEAN EVERY WHIT" TO RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE BLOOD OF THE GENERATION

How the language of cleanness evolves with the entrance of women into the Holy Order

1 BEFORE WOMEN IN THE HOLY ORDER JANUARY 1833

Male priesthood practice already used the language "clean every whit."



"This morning Brother John Cook and myself washed each other's feet agreeable to the directions in the 13th of John, and he said unto me **I am clean every whit**."
— Joseph Smith Journal, January 27, 1833

- Joseph connected the washing of feet with John 13 and becoming clean from the blood of that generation.
- The language of complete cleansing existed before women entered the Holy Order.

2 WOMEN ENTER THE HOLY ORDER MAY 5, 1844

After women entered the Holy Order, they administered ordinances that made men "clean every whit."



"Phebe washed my feet that I might be **clean every whit**."
— Wilford Woodruff Journal, May 5, 1844

- Phebe Woodruff had been received into the temple order.
- Her washing completed Wilford's cleansing: "clean every whit."

3 DISTINCTION IN LANGUAGE DEVELOPING DECEMBER 10, 1845

Temple council language in December 1845 shows a developing distinction.

HEBER C. KIMBALL TAUGHT:
"You have been pronounced clean but some of you have been pronounced clean from the blood of the generation."

*"If we have made you **clean every whit**, go now to work and make others clean."*
— Journal of Discourses, Vol. 2, p. 663, December 10, 1845

- Two related but distinct kinds of cleansing:
 - Pronounced clean
 - Pronounced clean from the blood of the generation
- The command to "make others clean" reflects an ongoing responsibility.

4 GENDERED THEOLOGY OF CLEANNES LATER NAUVOO TEMPLE LANGUAGE

Later temple language develops a clear gendered distinction in cleanness.

WOMEN



"You are clean before God, and your sins are forgiven you."
— Temple Initiatory Language

Women are declared clean and forgiven.

MEN



"You have covenanted to obey and keep the law of the Lord, and to be **clean from the sins of this generation in which you live**."
— Temple Initiatory Language

Men are charged to become clean from the sins of the generation through faithfulness.

THE EVOLUTION IN SUMMARY

- The phrase "clean every whit" existed before women entered the Holy Order.
- Once women were admitted, they administered the washing that completed men's cleansing.
- Temple leaders taught a distinction between being clean and being clean from the blood of the generation.
- Later initiatory language developed a gendered theology of cleanness: Women are declared clean; men are charged to become clean.

SOURCES

- Joseph Smith Journal, January 27, 1833 (washing of feet; John 13; "I am clean every whit.")
- Wilford Woodruff Journal, May 5, 1844 (Phebe washed my feet that I might be clean every whit)
- Journal of Discourses, Vol. 2, p. 663, December 10, 1845 (Heber C. Kimball)
- Temple Initiatory Language (Nauvoo)
- D&C 25:7; D&C 84:33–39 (cleansing from the blood of the generation)
- History of the Church, 4:518–519
- Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith (2007), 253–255

"If we have made you clean every whit, go now to work and make others clean." — Heber C. Kimball

"Phebe washed my feet that I might be clean every whit." — Wilford Woodruff

Joseph's 1833 School of the Prophets instructions connected the washing of feet with becoming "clean from the blood of this generation," and in 1835 he tied the phrase "clean every whit" directly to preparation for the endowment (Doctrine and Covenants 88:74–75, 138–141; John 13:10). The precise place of that cleansing within the higher Nauvoo ordinances becomes clearer only after women enter the Holy Order: Vilate Kimball washed and anointed Heber in April 1844, and Phebe Woodruff washed Wilford's feet in May 1844 "that I might be clean every whit." The documents show women's sacred administration becoming the concluding action through which men received complete ritual cleansing. By December 1845, temple leaders distinguished between being "pronounced clean" and being clean from the blood of the generation, while the later initiatory wording displayed here bifurcates that theology by declaring women clean and charging men to become clean through faithfulness. Joseph also taught that the fulness of God came through receiving all the ordinances of the house of the Lord, so the surviving pattern places the wife's concluding washing within the culminating ordinance later called the second anointing, even though the Joseph era records preserve no universal formula in which every wife explicitly pronounces her husband "clean every whit" the ritual is accounted in the Holy Order as such.

Required readings

- [Joseph Smith Papers search tips](#) — Use the method in the research lab to trace exact phrases and variants.
- [Doctrine and Covenants 88:74–75, 138–141](#) — Read the washing of feet and cleansing language in its scriptural setting.
- [John 13:1–17](#) — Read the scriptural source for "clean every whit."
- [Prince Research Excerpts: Temples, 1845](#) — Search for "clean every whit," "blood of the generation," and "women wait upon women."

The Fulness of the Holy Priesthood

Explicit teaching, direct journal evidence, and strong historical inference

THE FULNESS OF THE HOLY PRIESTHOOD Revealed Through Higher Ordinances Completed by Husband and Wife  The fulness of the priesthood is obtained by keeping all the ordinances of the House of the Lord—culminating in the higher ordinances received by husband and wife together. WHAT DO THESE SOURCES TEACH? - How is the fulness of God obtained? - Who receives the highest and holiest order? - How does the ordinance work in practice? - Why are husband and wife together essential?	1. JOSEPH SMITH'S TEACHING ABOUT THE FULNESS (Strongest) <i>Sunday June 11th 1843.</i> <i>I attended meeting this morning & preached to the congregation. Elders went out in different directions. In the afternoon I preached again to a large congregation in the bower.</i> <i>If a man gets the fulness of God he has to get in the same way that Jesus Christ obtained it & that was by keeping all the ordinances of the house of the Lord. Evening preached again.</i> ✦ JOSEPH SMITH DISCOURSE 11 JUNE 1843 <i>As reported by Wilford Woodruff (JS Journal, 11 June 1843; JSP, D12)</i> <i>Joseph connects the fulness of God with keeping all the ordinances of the House of the Lord.</i>	2. JOSEPH AND EMMA RECEIVE THE HIGHEST ORDER TOGETHER (Very Strong) <i>September 28. 1843.</i> <i>This morning I went to the Temple with Hyrum and Ariel K. Whitney.</i> <i>Joseph and Emma were anointed and ordained to the highest and holiest order of the priesthood. A number of others received the same ordinance.</i> <i>Evening, I preached in the bower. The power of God was with us.</i> ✦ JOSEPH SMITH JOURNAL 28 SEPTEMBER 1843 <i>(JS Journal, Sept. 28, 1843; JSP, J3)</i> <i>Joseph and Emma receive this ordinance together as husband and wife, not individually—the highest order of the priesthood.</i>	3. THE ORDINANCE IN PRACTICE THROUGH HUSBAND AND WIFE (Strong Historical Inference) ✦ A. EMMA ORDAINING FOR WOMEN (Nov. 1, 1843) <i>My wife Vilate and many females was received in to the Holy Order, and was washed and anointed by Emma.</i> <i>Heber C. Kimball Journal, 1 November 1843 (JSP, J1, p. summary online)</i> ✦ B. VILATE KIMBALL ORDAINATES HEBER (Nov. 1, 1843) <i>She washed my feet and anointed my head and I anointed her.</i> <i>Heber C. Kimball Journal, 1 November 1843 (JSP, J1, p. summary online)</i> ✦ C. HUSBAND AND WIFE TOGETHER IN THE HIGHER ORDINANCE (1843) <i>Husband and wife received together, that he might have a claim upon her, and she upon him, through the resurrection.</i> <i>Joseph Smith Journal, 28 Sept. 1843 (JSP, J3)</i> ✦ D. RESURRECTION LANGUAGE TIED TO WIFE'S CLAIM (1843) <i>He that receiveth this ordinance before God and these witnesses from his wife, cannot be saved without her.</i> <i>Joseph Smith Journal, 28 Sept. 1843 (JSP, J3)</i>
THE FULNESS IS RECEIVED BY KEEPING ALL THE ORDINANCES—CULMINATING IN THE HIGHER ORDINANCES PERFORMED BY HUSBAND AND WIFE TOGETHER.			

Joseph taught on June 11, 1843, that a person receives the fulness of God by keeping “all the ordinances of the house of the Lord,” establishing that the highest priesthood blessings come through completion of the entire temple sequence. The September 28 journal then records Joseph and his companion Emma receiving the “highest and holiest order of the priesthood,” while the participant accounts show how that higher ordinance functioned through husband and wife together. Vilate Kimball washed and anointed Heber in preparation for burial and resurrection, and Phebe Woodruff washed Wilford’s feet so that he might be “clean every whit.” The surviving sources therefore support the conclusion that the fulness was completed through a reciprocal ordinance in which the wife performed the indispensable concluding washing for her husband. The ritual pattern places the woman at the point where the man’s cleansing and highest priesthood ordinance were completed.

Required readings

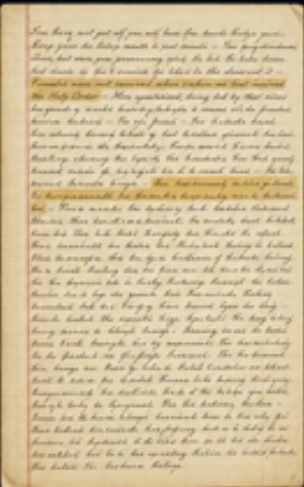
- [Joseph Smith discourse, 11 June 1843, reported by Wilford Woodruff](#) — The fulness of God comes through keeping all the ordinances of the house of the Lord.
- [Joseph Smith journal, 28 September 1843](#) — Joseph and his companion receive the highest and holiest order.
- [Instruction on Priesthood, circa 5 October 1840](#) — Read Joseph’s broader explanation of the highest and holiest priesthood.

After Joseph: Reconfiguration in 1845 and 1846

Gender boundaries, mass temple administration, movement west, and continued adaptation

DECEMBER 1845: HOLY ORDER MEETING MINUTES

ELDER HEBER C. KIMBALL'S INSTRUCTIONS ON PRIESTHOOD ORDER AND WOMEN'S ROLE



SOURCE: "Untitled Document [Holy Order Meeting Minutes]," ca. December 1845, Church History Library, Vault (Manuscript Collections)

SELECTIONS FROM THE HOLY ORDER MEETING MINUTES (DECEMBER 1845)

“You have not got all you will have if you are faithful and keep your tongue in your mouth — You are pronounced clean, but were you pronounced clean from the blood of this generation! NO! Not all of you. Only some few who have deserved it — Females were not received when we first received the Holy Order — Men apostatized, being led by their wives — if any such cases occur again no more women will be admitted — He spoke of the necessity of women being in subjection to their husbands — I am subject to my God, my wife is in subjection to me and will reverence me in my place and I will make her happy I do not want her to step forward and dictate to me any more than I dictate to Pres. Young — Let women wait upon women & let men wait upon men, then no jealousies will arise.

“Elder H. C. Kimball said, the ideas advanced by brother Lyman are good and true — We have been taken as it were from the earth, and have travelled until we have entered the Celestial Kingdom. ... Every man that ever came upon this earth, or any other earth will take the course we have taken — another thing, — it is to bring us to an organization — and just as quick as we can get into that order and government we have the Celestial Kingdom here — You have got to honor and reverence your brethren, for if you do not you never can honor God. The man was created, and God gave him dominion over the whole earth, but he saw that he never could multiply, and replenish the earth, without a woman. And he made one and gave her to him. He did not make the man for the woman, but the woman for the man, and it is just as unlawful for you to rise up and rebel against your husband, as it would be for man to rebel against God.

“When the man came to the veil, God gave the key word to the man, and the man gave it to the woman. But if a man don't use a woman well and take good care of her, God will take her away from him, and give her to another.



NAUVOO TEMPLE
Dedicated 1846

These minutes record a December 1845 Holy Order meeting in which Elder Heber C. Kimball taught principles regarding priesthood authority, marriage order, and the role of women in the temple.

The record reflects the theology and policy decisions that shaped the endowment and temple practice in Nauvoo.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Women were not originally admitted in the first receiving of the Holy Order.
- Men must honor and reverence their brethren.
- Women are to be in subjection to their husbands.
- Women should wait upon women; men upon men.
- A man who does not care for his wife may lose her to another.

SOURCE: "Untitled Document [Holy Order Meeting Minutes]," ca. December 1845, Church History Library, Vault.

Required readings

- [Prince Research Excerpts: Temples, 1845](#) — Search for “pull men through the veil,” “women wait upon women,” “subjection,” and “clean every whit.”
- [Prince Research Excerpts: Temples, 1846](#) — Search for “washing and anointing,” “dancing,” “temple garments,” “mountains,” and “endowments.”

Joseph Smith Papers

Research Lab: How to Find Better Sources

A repeatable Joseph Smith Papers workflow

Step	Action	What to do
1	Start broad	Open the Joseph Smith Papers search and enter one or more distinctive words. The search returns documents containing all searched words.
2	Use quotation marks	Search an exact phrase such as “highest and holiest order” or “fulness of God.”
3	Refine the results	Use Type, Date, Glossary, People, and Places. Choose “Search transcripts only” when you want the historical text rather than editorial discussion.
4	Sort chronologically	Chronological sorting helps you observe development and prevents a later source from being mistaken for an earlier one.
5	Open the source note first	Identify date, author or scribe, manuscript type, provenance, and whether the record is contemporary or retrospective.
6	Compare image and transcript	Look for editorial brackets, supplied words, canceled text, dittos, substitute names, and spelling variants.
7	Follow the footnotes	Editorial notes often lead to parallel accounts, later recollections, related ordinances, and additional versions.
8	Build a source chain	Record the claim, exact words, date, document, repository, link, and your confidence level.

Live example: “highest and holiest order”

1. Search the exact phrase in quotation marks.
2. Open the 28 September 1843 journal result.
3. Read the manuscript line containing “Baurak Ale” and “Companion ditto.”
4. Open the source note and the Documents volume 13 introduction.
5. Write two sentences: one quoting the manuscript exactly and one explaining the editorial identification of the companion.

Your independent search

Search phrase: _____

Document title: _____

Date: _____

Scribe or author: _____

Repository or edition: _____

Exact quotation: _____

Why it matters: _____

Confidence level and reason: _____

Bridge to the Next Class: Prophetesses Then and Now

Spiritual gifts, prophecy, women’s records, and evidence

Required readings

- [Relief Society minutes, 19 April 1842](#) — Read the gift of tongues, interpretation, promised prophecy, and Eliza R. Snow’s recorded blessing.
- [Joseph Smith discourse, 31 August 1842](#) — Observe Eliza R. Snow as the scribe preserving Joseph’s discourse.
- [Eliza R. Snow, “The Female Relief Society of Nauvoo,” 1 July 1842](#) — Read Snow’s own published interpretation of the new organization.

Chronology worksheet

Date	Documented development	What the evidence establishes
17 Mar. 1842	Relief Society organized; Emma elected to preside	
	Society to move according to the ancient priesthood	
31 Mar. 1842		
	Durfee healing testimony; women administer again	
19 Apr. 1842		
	Joseph teaches conferred authority and turns the key	
28 Apr. 1842		
	Temple keys, sacred space, and first Nauvoo endowment	
1 & 4 May 1842		
	Fulness of God through all ordinances of the house	
11 Jun. 1843		
	Highest and holiest order; companion receives the same	
28 Sep. 1843		
	Women received, washed, and anointed by Emma	
1 Nov. 1843		
	Vilate washes and anoints Heber	
1 Apr. 1844		
	Phebe washes Wilford's feet to be clean every whit	
May 1844		
	Gendered reorganization of temple administration	
Dec. 1845		
	Mass endowment, temple use, dancing, departure, and movement west	
1846		

Final synthesis

1. In one paragraph, explain how women moved from Relief Society administration into the Holy Order.

2. In one paragraph, explain what the sources establish about wives administering concluding ordinances to husbands.

3. Identify one claim from the slides that required correction or qualification after checking the primary source.

4. Explain how accommodation, council, repetition, and human reception help account for the development of temple practice.
