

# The Plan of Mercy

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*Of the Seventy*

## Ti Plano ti Asi

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*Ti Pitupulo*

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*The Lord is merciful and our Heavenly Father's plan of salvation is truly a plan of mercy.*

*Manangngaasi ti Apo ken ti plano ti Nailangitan nga Amatayo iti pannakaisalakan ket pudno a plano ti asi.*

### A Prophet's Invitation

Last April, soon after the joyful news that the Church had acquired the Kirtland Temple, President Russell M. Nelson invited us to study the dedicatory prayer of the Kirtland Temple, recorded in section 109 of the Doctrine and Covenants. The dedicatory prayer, said President Nelson, “is a tutorial about how the temple spiritually empowers you and me to meet the challenges of life in these last days.”

I am sure your study of section 109 yielded insights that blessed you. This evening, I share a couple of things I learned as I followed our prophet's invitation. The peace-giving path down which my study led reminded me that the Lord is merciful and that our Heavenly Father's plan of salvation is truly a plan of mercy.

### Newly Called Missionaries Serving in the Temple

As you may be aware, “newly called missionaries are encouraged to receive the temple endowment as soon as possible and to attend the temple as often as circumstances allow.” Once endowed, they also “may serve as temple ... workers before they begin missionary service.”

Time in the temple before entering the mis-

### Ti Awis ti Maysa a Propeta

Idi napalabas nga Abril, nabiit kalpasan ti naragsak a damag a nagun-od ti Simbaan ti Kirtland Temple, inawisnakami ni Presidente Russell M. Nelson nga adalen ti pangidaton a kararag ti Kirtland Temple, a nairekord itiben neg 109 ti Doktrina ken Katulagan. Ti pangidaton a kararag, kinuna ti Presidente Nelson, “ket maysa a pagsursuruan maipapan no kasano a naespirituan a mangpabileg ti templo kadayo tapno mangsango kadagiti karit ti biag kadagitoy maudi nga aldaw.”

Siguradoak a ti panagadalyo iti ben neg 109 ket nangted kadagiti insights a nangbendision kadakayo. Ita a sardam, ibinglayko ti dua a banag a nasursurok idi sinurotko iti awis ti propeta-tayo. Ti nangted-talna a dana a nagtutrong ti panagadalko ti nangipalagip kaniak a naasi ti Apo ken ti plano ti Nailangitan nga Amatayo iti pannakaisalakan ket pudno a plano ti asi.

### Dagiti Kaaw-awag a Misionario nga Agserserbi iti Templo

Kas mabalin nga ammoyo, “maparegta dagiti kaaw-awag a misionario nga umawat iti endowment iti templo iti kabiitan a panawen ken dumar-ay iti templo a masansan no ipalubos ti kasasaad.” Apaman a na-endow, mabalinda pay ti “agserserbi a kas templo ... worker sakbay a man-grugida iti serbisio kas misionario.”

Ti panawen iti templo sakbay a sumrek iti

sionary training center (MTC) can be a wonderful blessing for new missionaries as they learn more about temple covenants before sharing the blessings of those covenants with the world.

But in studying section 109, I learned that in the temple, God empowers new missionaries—indeed, all of us—in an additional, sacred way. In the dedicatory prayer, given by revelation, the Prophet Joseph Smith prayed that “when thy servants shall go out from thy house ... to bear testimony of thy name,” the “hearts” of “all people” would “be softened”—both the “great ones of the earth” and “all the poor, the needy, and [the] afflicted.” He prayed that “their prejudices may give way before the truth, and thy people may obtain favor in the sight of all; that all the ends of the earth may know that we, thy servants, have heard thy voice, and that thou hast sent us.”

This is a beautiful promise for a newly called missionary—to have prejudices “give way before the truth,” to “obtain favor in the sight of all,” and to have the world know they are sent by the Lord. Each of us surely needs these same blessings. What a blessing it would be to have hearts softened as we interact with neighbors and co-workers. The dedicatory prayer does not explain exactly how our time in the temple will soften others’ hearts, but I am convinced it is bound up with how time in the house of the Lord softens our own hearts by centering us on Jesus Christ and His mercy.

## The Lord Answers Joseph Smith’s Plea for Mercy

As I studied the Kirtland dedicatory prayer, I was also struck that Joseph again and again pleaded for mercy—for the members of the Church, for the enemies of the Church, for the leaders of the country, for the nations of the earth. And, very personally, he pleaded with the Lord to remember him and to have mercy upon his beloved Emma and their children.

How must Joseph have felt when, one week later, on Easter Day, April 3, 1836, in the Kirtland Temple, the Savior appeared to him and Oliver Cowdery and, as recorded in section 110 of the

missionary training ket mabalin a nangayed a bendision kadagiti baro a misionario no agsuroda iti ad-adu pay maipapan kadagiti katulagan iti templo sakbay nga ibinglayda dagiti bendision dagita a katulagan iti lubong.

Ngem iti panagadal iti benneg 109, nasursurok, nga iti templo, pabilgen ti Dios dagiti baro a misionario—pudno, amintayo—iti nayon, sagrado a wagas. Iti pangidaton a kararag, a naited babaen ti paltiing, inkararag ni Propeta Joseph Smith a “no rummuar dagiti katulongam iti balaymo ... nga agpaneknek iti naganmo,” ti “puspuso” ti “amin a tao” ket “mapalukneng”—agpada “dagiti naindaklan iti daga” ken “ti amin a nakurapay, agkasapulan, ken [dagiti] agsag-sagaba.” Inkararagna nga “agparbeng ti dakes a panangipapanda iti kinapudno, ket magun-od dagiti taom ti pannakaawat iti imatang ti amin; tapno maammuan ti amin iti intero a daga a dakami a katulongam, nangngegmi ti timekmo ken imbaonnakami.”

Napintas daytoy a kari para iti kaaw-awag a misionario— “agparbeng ti dakes a panangipapanda iti kinapudno,” tapno “magun-od ti pannakaawat iti imatang ti amin,” ken tapno maammuan ti lubong nga imbaon ida ti Apo. Awan duadua a kasapulantayo met dagitoy a bendision. Anian a bendision no mapalukneng dagiti puso no makilangentayo kadagiti kaarruba ken katrabahuantayo. Di eksakto nga ilawlawag ti pangidaton a kararag no kasano a ti orastayo iti templo ket mapaluknengna ti puspuso ti dadduma, ngem patiek a maibegkes no kasano a ti oras iti balay ti Apo ket mapaluknengna ti bukodtayo a puspuso babaen ti panangisentrone kadatayo ken Jesucristo ken ti asina.

## Sungbatan ti Apo ti Araraw ni Joseph Smith para iti Asi

Idi adalek ti pangidaton a kararag iti Kirtland, nasdaawak pay a maulit-ulit nga immararaw ni Joseph iti asi—para kadagiti miembro ti Simbaan, para kadagiti kabusor ti Simbaan, para kadagiti dadaulo iti pagilian, para kadagiti nasion ditoy daga. Ket, personal unay, nagpakaasi iti Apo a manglaglagip kenkuanaken tapno kaasianna ti ay-ayatenna nga Emma ken dagiti annakda.

Kasano la ketdi ti narikna ni Joseph idi, maysa a lawas kalpasanna, iti agsapa ti Paskua ti Panagungar, Abril 3, 1836, iti Templo ti Kirtland, nagparang ti Mangisalakken kenkuana ken ni

Doctrine and Covenants, said, “I have accepted this house, and my name shall be here; and I will manifest myself to my people in mercy in this house.” This promise of mercy must have had special meaning to Joseph. And as President Nelson taught last April, this promise also “applies to every dedicated temple today.”

## Finding Mercy in the House of the Lord

There are so many ways in which we each can find mercy in the house of the Lord. This has been true since the Lord first commanded Israel to build a tabernacle and to place at its center the “mercy seat.” In the temple, we find mercy in the covenants we make. Those covenants, in addition to the baptismal covenant, bind us to the Father and the Son and give us increased access to what President Nelson has taught is “a special kind of love and mercy ... called *hesed*” in Hebrew.

We find mercy in the opportunity to be sealed to our families for eternity. In the temple, we also come to understand with greater clarity that the Creation, the Fall, the Savior’s atoning sacrifice, and our ability to enter again into our Heavenly Father’s presence—indeed, every part of the plan of salvation—are manifestations of mercy. It might be said that the plan of salvation is a plan of happiness precisely because it is a “plan of mercy.”

## Seeking Forgiveness Opens the Door to the Holy Ghost

I am grateful for the beautiful promise in section 110 that the Lord will manifest Himself in mercy in His temples. I am also grateful for what it reveals about how the Lord will manifest Himself in mercy whenever we, like Joseph, plead for mercy.

Joseph Smith’s plea for mercy in section 109 was not the first time his pleas for mercy prompted revelation. In the Sacred Grove, young Joseph prayed not just to know which Church was true, but he also said that he “cried unto the Lord for mercy, for there was none else to whom I could go [to] obtain mercy.” Somehow his recognition that he needed mercy that only the Lord could

Oliver Cowdery ket, kas nairekord itiben neg 110 ti Doktrina ken Katulagan, kinunana, “Inawato daytoy a balay, ket addanto ditoy ti naganko; agpakitaakto kadagiti taok a siaasi iti daytoy a balay.” Nalabit a naisangsangayan ti kaipapanan daytoy a kari ti asi ken Joseph. Ken kas iti insuro ni Presidente Nelson idi napalabas nga Abril, “maaramat pay ititunggal na idatton a templo ita.”

## Panangsarak iti Asi iti Balay ti Apo

Nakaad-adu dagiti wagas a pakasarakan ti tunggal maysa kadaytoy iti asi iti balay ti Apo. Pudno daytoy manipud idi damo nga imbilin ti Apo iti Israel a mangbangan iti maysa a tabernakulo ken mangikabil iti tengngana ti “tugaw ti asi.” Iti templo, masarakantayo ti asi kadagiti katulagan nga aramidentayo. Dagita a katulagan, kas nayon iti katulagan iti panagbuniag, ibegkesnatayo iti Ama ken iti Anak ken maikkannatayo iti ad-adu a pannakagun-od iti insuro ni Presidente Nelson a “naisangsangayan a kita ti ayat ken asi ... a maawagan itihesed” iti Hebreo.

Makitatayo ti asi iti gundaway a mailantip kadagiti pamilyatayo iti agnanayon. Iti templo, maawatantayo pay a nalawlawag a ti Panagpar-sua, ti Pannakatnag, ti pangsubbot a sakripisio ti Mangisalakan, ken ti kabaelantayo a sumrek manen iti imatang ti Nailangitan nga Amatayo—pudno, tunggal paset ti plano ti pannakaisalakan—ket dagiti pannakaiparangarang ti asi. Mabalin a makuna a ti plano ti pannakaisalakan ket plano ti ragsak gapu ta maysa daytoy a “plano ti asi.”

## Ti Panagdawat iti Pammakawan ti Manglukat iti Ruangan nga agturong iti Espiritu Santo

Agyamanak iti napintas a kari itiben neg 110 nga iparangarang ti Apo ti Bagina iti asi kadagiti templona. Agyamanak pay iti ipalgakna no kasano nga iparangarang ti Apo ti bagina iti asi no, kas ken Joseph, agpakaasitayo.

Ti pakaasi ni Joseph Smith iti asi iti ben neg 109 ket saan nga umuna a gundaway a dagiti pakaasina iti asi ti nangtignay iti paltiing. Iti Sagrado a Kakaywan, nagkararag ni ubing a Joseph saan laeng a tapno maammuanna no ania a simbaan ti pudno, ngem kinunana pay nga isu “nagpakaasi iti Apo, ta awanen ti sabali a mabalinko a papanan tapno makagun-odak iti asi.” No

provide helped open the windows of heaven. Three years later the angel Moroni appeared, following what Joseph said was his “prayer and supplication to Almighty God for forgiveness of all my sins and follies.”

This pattern of revelation following a plea for mercy is a familiar one in the scriptures. Enos heard the voice of the Lord only after praying for forgiveness. King Lamoni’s father’s conversion begins with his prayer, “I will give away all my sins to know thee.” We may not be blessed with these same dramatic experiences, but for those who sometimes struggle to feel answers to prayer, seeking the Lord’s mercy is one of the most powerful ways to feel the witness of the Holy Ghost.

## Pondering God’s Mercy Opens the Door to a Testimony of the Book of Mormon

A similar principle is beautifully taught in Moroni 10:3–5. We often shorthand these verses to teach that through sincere prayer, we can learn whether the Book of Mormon is true. But this shorthand can neglect the important role of mercy. Listen to how Moroni begins his exhortation: “I would exhort you that when ye shall read these things, ... that ye would remember how merciful the Lord hath been unto the children of men, from the creation of Adam even down until the time that ye shall receive these things, and ponder it in your hearts.”

Moroni urges us not only to read these things—the records he was about to seal up—but also to ponder in our hearts what the Book of Mormon reveals about “how merciful the Lord hath been unto the children of men.” It is pondering upon the Lord’s mercy that prepares us to “ask God, the Eternal Father, in the name of Christ, if these things are not true.”

As we ponder on the Book of Mormon, we might ask: Is it really true, as Alma taught, that God’s plan of mercy assures that every person who ever lived on this earth will be resurrected and that they will “be restored to their ... perfect frame”? Is Amulek right—can the Savior’s

kaskasano ti panangbigbigna a kasapulanna ti asi a ti laeng Apo ti makaipaay ket nakatulung a nanglukat iti tawtawa ti langit. Tallo a tawen kalpasanna, nagparang ni anghel Moroni kalpasan ti kinuna ni Joseph a “kararag ken ararawna iti Mannakabalin a Dios maipaay iti pannakapakanawan ti amin a basolko ken kinarasik.”

Daytoy a pagtuladan ti paltiing kalpasan iti araraw iti asi ket pamilyar iti maysa iti scriptures. Nangngeg laeng ni Enos ti timek ti Apo kalpasan ti panagkararagna para iti pammakawan. Mangrugi ti kumbersion ti ama ni Ari Lamoni iti kararagna: “Iwaksikto amin a basolko tapno maammuanka.” Mabalin a ditayo maparaburan kadagitoy met laeng a padas, ngem para kadagiti agkarkarigatan a mangrikna iti sungbat iti kararag, nga agkalkalikagum iti asi ti Apo ket maysa kadagiti kabilgan a wagas a mangrikna iti saksi ti Espiritu Santo.

## Ti Panangutob iti Asi ti Dios ti Manglukat iti Ruangan iti Pammaneknek iti Libro ni Mormom

Napintas a naisuro ti isu met la a prinsipio iti Moroni 10:3–5. Masansan a gupgopentayo dagitoy a bersikulo tapno maisuro a, babaen ti napasnek a kararag, masursurotayo no pudno ti Libro ni Mormom. Ngem daytoy a pananggupgop ti mangbaybay-a iti napateg nga akem ti asi. Denggen no kasano ti panangirugi ni Moroni iti balakadna: “Igunamgunamko nga inton basaenyo dagitoy a banag, ... tapno malagipyo no kasano ti kinamanangngaasi ti Apo kadagiti annak ti tao, manipud iti pannakaparsua ni Adan agingga iti kanito nga awatenyonto dagitoy a banag, ket usigenyo iti puspusoyo.”

Guyugoyennatayo ni Moroni a saan laeng a basaentayo dagitoy a banag—dagiti kasuratan a dandanin rikpanna—ngemutobenpay iti puspusotayo no ania ti ipalgak ti Libro ni Mormom maipapan iti “no kasano ti kinamanangngaasi ti Apo kadagiti annak ti tao.” Daytoy ti panangutob iti asi ti Apo a mangisagana kadatayo a dawatenyo iti Dios, ti Agnanayon nga Ama, iti nagan ni Cristo, no saan a pudno dagitoy a banag.”

Bayat ti panangutob tayo ti Libro ni Mormom, mabalintayo a saludsoden: Talaga kadi a pudno, kas insuro ni Alma, a ti plano ti Dios ti asi ket mangipanamna a mapagungarto ti tunggal tao a nagbiag ditoy dagaken maisublida iti naan-anay a bagida?” Husto kadi ni Amulek—

mercy satisfy all the bitterly real demands of justice that we would otherwise be obligated to pay and instead “[encircle us] in the arms of safety”?

Is it true, as Alma testified, that Christ suffered not only for our sins but for our “pains and afflictions” so that He could “know ... how to succor his people according to their infirmities”? Is the Lord really so merciful, as King Benjamin taught, that as a free gift, He atoned “for the sins of those ... who have died not knowing the will of God concerning them, or who have ignorantly sinned”?

Is it true, as Lehi said, that “Adam fell that men might be; and men are, that they might have joy”? And is it really true, as Abinadi testified, quoting Isaiah, that Jesus Christ was “wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed”?

In sum, is the Father’s plan as taught in the Book of Mormon really this merciful? I testify that it is and that the peace-giving and hopeful teachings of mercy in the Book of Mormon are true.

Still, I imagine that some may be struggling, despite your faithful reading and prayers, to realize Moroni’s promise that Heavenly Father “will manifest the truth of it unto you, by the power of the Holy Ghost.” I know this struggle because I felt it, many years ago, when my own first couple of reads of the Book of Mormon did not yield an immediate and clear answer to my prayers.

If you are struggling, may I invite you to follow Moroni’s counsel to ponder on the many ways the Book of Mormon teaches “how merciful the Lord hath been [to] the children of men”? Based on my experience, I hope that when you do, the peace of the Holy Ghost can enter your heart and you can know, believe, and feel that the Book of Mormon and the plan of mercy it teaches are true.

I express my gratitude for the Father’s great plan of mercy and for the Savior’s willingness to carry it out. I know that He will manifest Himself in mercy in His holy temple and in every part of our life if we will seek Him. In the name of Jesus

mapennek kadi ti asi ti Mangisalakana tiamina napait a pudno a dawdawaten ti hustisia a no saan ket obligadotayo a bayadan ket imbes ketdi a “[likmutennatayo] kadagiti takiag ti kinatalged”?

Pudno kadi, kas pinaneknekan ni Alma, a nagsagaba ni Cristo saan laeng a gapu kadagiti basoltayo no di ket gapu kadagiti “ut-ot ken rigattayo” tapno “maammuanna ... no kasa-no a tulongan dagiti taona maibatay kadagiti kinakapuyda”? Talaga kadi a naasi unay ti Apo, kas insuro ni Ari Benjamin, a kas libre a sagut, sinubbotna “dagiti basol dagidiay ... natay a dida ammo ti pagayatan ti Dios maipanggep kadakuada, wenno dida ammo a nagbasolda”?

Pudno kadi, kas kinuna ni Lehi, a “Natnag ni Adan tapno mabalin dagiti tao; ket adda dagiti tao, tapno maaddaanda iti rag-o”? Ket talaga kadi a pudno, kas pinaneknekan ni Abinadi, nga inadawna ni Isaia, a ni Jesucristo ket “nasugatan gapu kadagiti salungasingtayo, nasugatan gapu kadagiti kinadakestayo, ti pannakadusa ti talnatayo adda kenkuana; ket babaen kadagiti saplitna maagasantayo”?

Iti pakagupgopan, talaga kadi a kastoy ti asi ti plano ti Ama kas naisuro iti Libro ni Mormon? Paneknekak a kastoy ken pudno dagiti pannursuro a mangted-talna ken namnama ti asi iti Libro ni Mormon.

Kaskasdi, panunotek a mabalin a marigatan ti dadduma, iti laksid ti napudno a panagbasa ken kararagyo, a mangbigbig iti kari ni Moroni a ti Nailangitan nga Ama “iparangarangganto kadakayo ti kinapudno daytoy, babaen ti bileg ti Espiritu Santo.” Ammok daytoy a panagkarigatan gapu ta nariknak, adu a tawenen ti napalabas, idi ti dua nga umuna a panagbasak iti Libro ni Mormon ket di nangted a dagus iti nalawag a sungbat kadagiti kararagko.

No agkarkarigatankayo, awisenkayo man mangsurot iti balakad ni Moroni a mangutob iti adu a wagas nga isuro ti Libro ni Mormon “no kasano ti kinamanangngaasi ti Apo [kadagiti] annak ti tao”? Maibatay iti padasko, sapay ta, no aramidem, makastrek iti pusom ti talna ti Espiritu Santo ket mabalinmo nga ammuken, patien, ken riknaena pudno ti Libro ni Mormon ken ti plano ti asi nga isurona.

Ipeksak ti panagyamanko iti naindaklan a plano ti Ama ti asi ken iti kinatulok ti Mangisalakana a mangipatungpal iti daytoy. Ammok nga iparangaranggan ti bagina iti asi iti nasantuan a templona ken iti tunggal paset ti biagtayo no

Christ, amen.

sapulentayo. Iti nagan ni Jesucristo, amen.