

Chapter 9

“AND THE LIGHT WILL NOT GO OUT”: DEDICATING A HOUSE OF THE LORD

The dedication of the Nauvoo Temple in the spring of 1846 was one of the uncommon events in the history of the restored church. These services which occurred during a period of persecution and expulsion were another remarkable demonstration of the faith, the sacrifice, and the commitment of early Latter-day Saints. These meetings were also precursors to a period of disaster, decline and destruction.

Joseph Smith had predicted that peace would not follow his martyrdom. In his 18 June 1844 address to the Nauvoo Legion he said,

It is thought by some that our enemies would be satisfied with my destruction; but I tell you that as soon as they have shed my blood they will thirst for the blood of every man in whose heart dwells a single spark of the spirit of the fullness of the Gospel. The opposition of these men is moved by the spirit of the adversary of all righteousness. It is not only to destroy me, but every man and woman who dares believe the doctrines that God hath inspired me to teach to this generation.¹

Although there was temporary peace in Nauvoo following the death of Joseph and Hyrum, it did not continue. When some recognized that there was no interruption in the growth of the restored church, hostilities resumed. Anti-