

# Capturing a Vision IN THE TEMPLE

By Heather J. Johnson

Whenever I schedule a time to attend the temple, I always look forward to going. But one week I had an unusual, overwhelming sense of anticipation for the evening I was planning on spending in the temple.

When the evening arrived, I was still puzzled by why I was so eager to go. As I walked to the dressing room, I stopped to put a friend's name on the temple prayer roll. Then it clicked.

The reason I was so happy to be in the temple that day was that I had a specific purpose in mind. I'd been looking forward all week to putting Brad's name (name has been changed) on the temple prayer roll. I was there because I wanted to help my friend.

The Sunday before, I'd been talking on the phone with Brad, a man I had taught on my mission. He had been baptized, but he admitted to me that

now he wasn't attending church or reading the scriptures and praying like he knew he should.

We didn't have long to talk, and after our conversation I wondered what I could do to help him. I felt a little helpless—we live on opposite sides of the country, and our communication with each other is fairly sporadic. I decided that when I went to the temple that week, I would go with this question in mind: "What can I do to help Brad get back to church?"

In the temple, I started to imagine what it would be like to see Brad receive his own endowment. I realized that I needed to broaden my vision. I didn't simply want to get Brad back to church. I wanted to know what I could do to help Brad prepare to attend the temple and enjoy all of the blessings available there.

As I sat in the celestial room, praying that I would know how to help

**I went to the temple wanting to know how to help my friend, but what I learned gave me a broader perspective.**

Brad, I opened the Book of Mormon to where I had left off the night before. I read the chapter heading of 3 Nephi 6. I doubted that this chapter about the pride cycle could help me with this issue, but I began to read.

In verse 7, Mormon talks about the Nephites building and repairing cities. I began to see how it applied to Brad. There were many "cities" or patterns

PHOTOGRAPH OF TWIN FALLS IDAHO TEMPLE BY AARON BARKER

in his life that he needed to rebuild. He needed to begin to attend church again. He needed to start praying and reading the scriptures again. He needed to live the commandments.

But not all was lost for the Nephites. There were the cities in this verse that only needed to be repaired. I was reminded of all the progress Brad had made. He is generous. He loves people. He makes people feel welcome. He loves to be involved. All of these

qualities are like the old cities that were repaired—these qualities will be magnified and made even better as Brad returns to Christ. I was amazed and grateful that a seemingly random chapter in the Book of Mormon could help me understand more about my friend.

As I left the temple that day, I had an expanded vision of what was possible. I had just wanted Brad to go back to church. I found out that God

wants Brad in the temple receiving saving ordinances and making sacred covenants. I wanted him to get back to living the gospel so he would have a happy life. Turns out that God wants that and more for Brad—God wants a happy and fulfilling life for Brad now and eternal life for him later on.

I also realized I needed to lift my own vision of what my temple experience could be. Going regularly is important, but going with a purpose or a question can make our temple experience more meaningful. I'm grateful for the temple and the clear vision we are given there of who we are and what we have the potential to become. ■

*The author lives in Idaho, USA.*



### **ELEVATING OUR VISION**

"A principal purpose of the temple is to elevate our vision from the things of the world to the blessings of eternity. Removed for a short time from the worldly settings with which we are familiar, we can 'look to God and live' [Alma 37:47] by receiving and remembering the great and precious promises whereby we become partakers of the divine nature."

**Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "Exceeding Great and Precious Promises," *Ensign*, Nov. 2017, 92.**

