

The Promise of the Temple

By Ellen Rowe Sigety

I was born and raised in the Church but chose inactivity in my 20s. I married a good man who was not active in his own faith either. As John and I began our family, which would eventually include five children, my heart began to yearn for the teachings of my youth. I did not pressure John, but he agreed to

worship with me and our two sons, John Rowe and Joseph. We began attending our ward every Sunday. The missionaries taught John, who embraced the gospel and was baptized three months later.

We became active members of our ward, fulfilling callings in different auxiliaries. Three

more children—Hayley, Tessa, and Jenna—came to our family, and all five thrived in Primary, Activity Days, and Scouting. Over the next decade, John and I took the temple-preparation classes three different times, but they never resulted in our going to the temple. We wanted our family to be sealed, but we didn't feel ready to live *all* of the commandments. We were attending church regularly and obeying *most* of the commandments—that was good enough, wasn't it? Besides, our children didn't really know the difference.

We soon realized that wasn't actually the case. As we tucked him into bed each night, our oldest son began asking when our family was going to the temple. That tugged at our heartstrings.

About this time our bishop invited my husband and me to his office. He wanted to know why we had not committed to making temple blessings a reality for our family. We explained that we weren't ready to live all of the commandments required for receiving a temple recommend and that we felt we were already doing our best.

As bishops had done before, Bishop Riding counseled us about the importance of these ordinances and the eternal blessings available to our family.



The Sigety family in 2006. Front row, from left: Joseph, Tessa, John Rowe, and Jenna. Back row, from left: Hayley, John, and Ellen.

But then something happened that I will never forget. Bishop Riding sat quietly for several seconds before saying softly, “I feel impressed to tell you that the time for you to go to the temple is now. The window of opportunity is closing for your family.”

We didn’t know all of the implications of the bishop’s comment, but we instantly felt the Spirit confirm its truth. We realized not only that the temple would bless us eternally but that our sealing could also help our children as they grew older and started making important decisions for their lives.

John and I left the bishop’s office that evening with a new sense of urgency. We set specific goals and a target date for our temple endowment and sealing. From then on we wholeheartedly tried to live all of the commandments—not just the ones we were comfortable with. In addition, we devoted consistent effort to prayer and scripture study and served with more fervor in our callings. As we made these sacrifices, we saw many blessings come into our lives.

When we did struggle, we encouraged each other. I remember one particular night when my husband sensed I was feeling a little bit apprehensive. He read a passage from President Boyd K. Packer’s *The Holy Temple*,¹ which we had been studying together. The words he shared broadened my vision and calmed my fears.



BLESSINGS OF THE TEMPLE

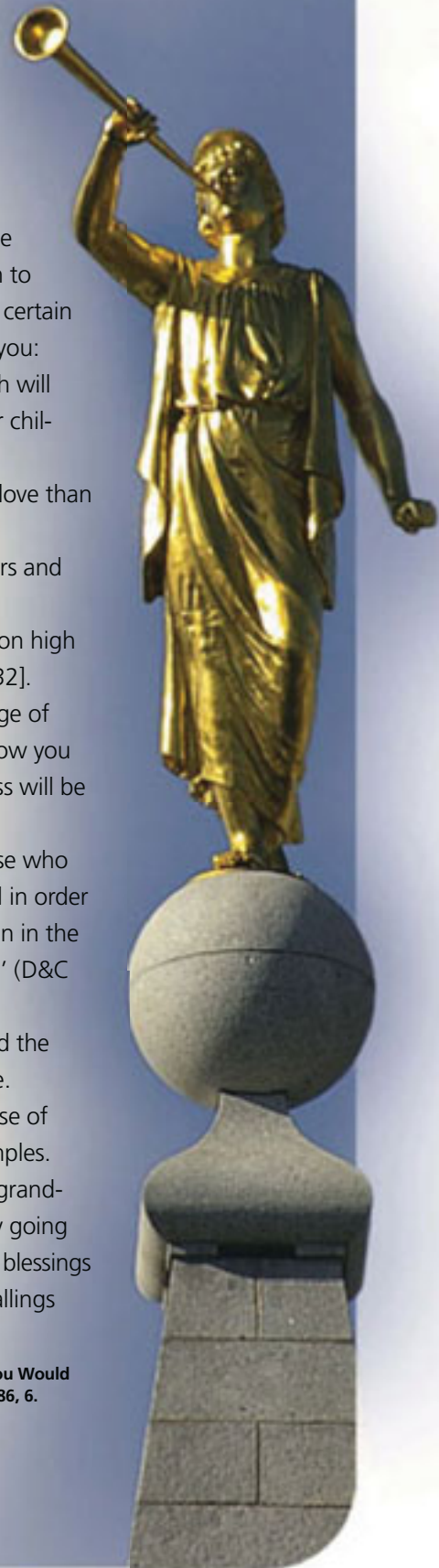
“When you attend the temple and perform the ordinances that pertain to the House of the Lord, certain blessings will come to you:

- 1 You will receive the spirit of Elijah, which will turn your hearts to your spouse, to your children, and to your forebears.
- 2 You will love your family with a deeper love than you have loved before.
- 3 Your hearts will be turned to your fathers and theirs to you.
- 4 You will be endowed with power from on high as the Lord has promised [see D&C 38:32].
- 5 You will receive the key of the knowledge of God. (See D&C 84:19.) You will learn how you can be like Him. Even the power of godliness will be manifest to you. (See D&C 84:20.)
- 6 You will be doing a great service to those who have passed to the other side of the veil in order that they might be ‘judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit.’ (D&C 138:34.)

“Such are the blessings of the temple and the blessings of frequently attending the temple.

“So I say: God bless Israel! God bless those of our forebears who constructed the holy temples. God bless us to teach our children and our grandchildren what great blessings await them by going to the temple. God bless us to receive all the blessings revealed by Elijah the prophet so that our callings and election will be made sure.”

President Ezra Taft Benson (1899–1994), “What I Hope You Would Teach Your Children about the Temple,” *Tambuli*, Apr. 1986, 6.



Bishop Riding continued to encourage us, as did ward members. A friend gave us a copy of the *Temples* booklet, which we pored over. The teachers of our temple-preparation class answered our questions and reached out in kindness and fellowship, and many ward members provided good examples of temple worthiness.

Each night as we tucked our children into bed, we confidently told them yes, our family *was* going to go to the temple. As the time drew closer, we were able to give them a specific date.

On April 17, 1998, about six months after that life-changing day in our bishop's office, John and I knelt at the altar of the Dallas Texas Temple with our five children. Many friends from our ward attended, and through their support I realized how eager they were for us to enjoy the blessings they knew in their own families. Without question, our sealing has been the single most important event in our life.

To my husband and me, the effects of our sealing seemed very tangible. For instance, we noticed a change in the atmosphere in our home, particularly in our children. They seemed more obedient, and while they weren't perfect, they did consistently strive to make good choices and follow the commandments. We experienced an increase in family unity too.

As rich as those blessings were, the reality of temple blessings became especially poignant in 2007. The

morning of October 21, our twins, then 17, were in a car accident. Tessa sustained minor injuries, but Jenna's condition was serious. She was taken to an area hospital, where she lay in a coma. When we learned she might not live, our three oldest children returned from college. As we spent

at the temple, which reminds us of our experience and the promises we know can be ours.

We are grateful for faithful priesthood leaders who counseled with us, particularly for a good bishop who followed a prompting that led to eternal blessings for our family.



We display in our home a picture of our family at the temple to remind us of our experience and of promised blessings.

the next days together in Jenna's hospital room, our family took great comfort in the ordinances that will allow us to be together after death. We spent time talking about the eternal nature of families—of *our* family. A week after the accident, Jenna passed away.

Our temple covenants have become even more important to us since her death. We miss Jenna terribly and long for the day when we can be together again, but our faith in the plan of salvation and our testimony of eternal families sustain us. We display in our home a picture of our family

We are grateful for friends and ward members who encouraged us along the way and who provided good examples for us to follow. Most of all, we are grateful to a loving Heavenly Father, who has made it possible for “family relationships to be perpetuated beyond the grave” through the gift of His Son and through temple ordinances.² ■

NOTES

1. The booklet *Preparing to Enter the Holy Temple* is based on the book by President Boyd K. Packer. The booklet is available from Distribution Services in many languages (item no. 36793).
2. “The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” *Liahona*, Oct. 2004, 49; *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 102.