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TEMPLE BLESSINGS

The temple's saving ordinances are essential to—and even the central focus of—the eternal plan of happiness.

The temple endowment blessings are as essential for each of us as was our baptism. For this reason we are to prepare ourselves that we may be clean to enter into the temple of God. Temple work is an opportunity to perform our personal endowments and covenants for the living and also perform these same ordinances for the redemption of the dead. It is for this reason we are instructed in the scriptures to build temples and prepare our lives to be worthy to partake of the sacred temple ordinances and covenants.

We have been taught in the scriptures that the personal worthiness required of us by the Lord to enter the temple and to take upon us the sacred covenants therein is one of the greatest blessings available to us in mortality. Then, after taking upon us the covenants in the temple, our obedience in living the covenants daily



is a demonstration of our faith, love, devotion, and spiritual commitment to honor our Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, and prepares us to live with Them in the eternities. The temple’s saving ordinances are essential to—and even the central focus of—the eternal plan of happiness.

The Holy Temple

We need to acquire a testimony of and a reverent feeling for the temple being the house of the Lord. The temple is truly a place where you are “in the world and not of the world.” When you are troubled and when you have crucial decisions that weigh heavily on your mind and soul, you can take your cares to the temple and receive spiritual guidance.

To preserve the sanctity of the temple so that the temple may be kept pure and to invite the Spirit to bless those who enter the holy temple

for their ordinances and covenants, we are taught that no unclean thing should enter the temple. Reverence in the temple is a vital element in inviting the Spirit to reside within it every hour of every day.

When I was a boy, my father brought me from Long Island, New York, USA, to walk on the Salt Lake Temple grounds in Salt Lake City, to touch the temple, and to discuss the importance of the temple in my life. It was on that occasion that I made up my mind that someday I would return to enter the temple and receive the ordinances.

The temple is a sacred edifice, a holy place where essential saving ceremonies and ordinances are performed to prepare us for exaltation. It is important that we gain a sure knowledge that our preparation to enter the holy house and our participation in these ceremonies and covenants are some of the most significant events we will experience in our mortal lives.

appeared in glory and accepted the Kirtland Temple as His house. On that occasion Moses, Elias, and Elijah each appeared to commit to Joseph Smith the keys held from their dispensations. Elijah restored the keys of his dispensation as promised by Malachi so that we could enjoy the blessings of the temple in our lives. (See D&C 110.)

The Nauvoo Temple was the first latter-day temple in which endowments and sealings were performed, which proved a great strength to the pioneers as they endured the hardships crossing the plains to Zion in the Salt Lake Valley.

When Joseph Smith was taken to Carthage, it was clear why the

LEFT: PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY CRAIG DIMOND, RIGHT: THE LORD APPEARS IN THE KIRTLAND TEMPLE, BY DEL PARSON

Our preparation to enter the holy house and our participation in these ceremonies and covenants are some of the most significant events we will experience in our mortal lives.

Temple Blessings throughout History

Throughout history, in every dispensation of time, the Lord has commanded prophets that temples should be built so that His people could receive temple ordinances.

The Kirtland Temple was the first temple in these latter days, and it played an important role in the restoration of priesthood keys. The Savior



completion of the temple had meant so much to him. He knew what was going to be required of the Saints and that to have the strength to endure what was ahead of them they had to be endowed with power—the power of the priesthood.

Our pioneer ancestors were sealed together as families in Nauvoo. Their covenants with the Lord in the Nauvoo Temple were a protection for them during their journey westward, as it is for each of us today and throughout our lives. The ordinances and covenants of the temple are the protection for us in our trials and tribulations in our day and for what we will face in the future. It is our heritage. It is who we are.

For these early Saints, their participation in the ordinances of the temple was essential to their testimonies as

they faced the hardships, the angry mobs, being driven from comfortable homes in Nauvoo, and the long and difficult journey ahead. They had been endowed with power in the holy temple. Husband and wife were sealed to each other. Children were sealed to their parents. Many lost

family members to death along the way, but they knew that wasn't the end for them. They had been sealed in the temple for all eternity.

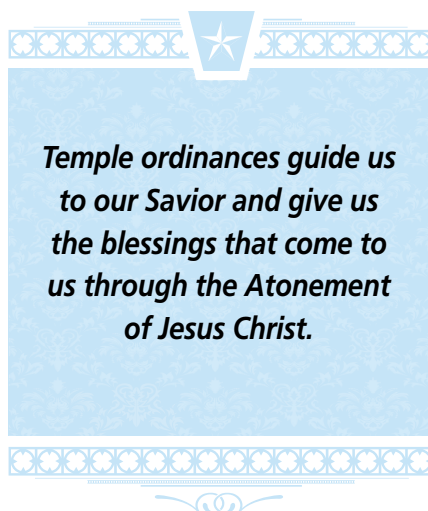
The Temple Ordinances— Endowments and Sealings

Temples are the greatest university of learning known to man, giving us knowledge and wisdom about the Creation of the world. Washings and anointings tell us who we are. Endowment instructions give guidance as to how we should conduct our lives here in mortality (see D&C 97:13–14).

The primary purpose of the temple is to provide the ordinances necessary for our exaltation in the celestial kingdom. Temple ordinances guide us to our Savior and give us the blessings that come to us through the Atonement of Jesus Christ. The meaning of the word *endowment* is “gift.” The ordinance consists of a series of instructions on how we should live and covenants we make to live righteously by following our Savior.

Another important ordinance is being sealed for eternity in celestial marriage. This covenant allows children to be sealed to their parents and children born in the covenant to become part of an eternal family.

The Doctrine and Covenants teaches us: “Whatsoever you seal on earth shall be sealed in heaven; and whatsoever you bind on earth, in my name and by my word, saith the Lord,



it shall be eternally bound in the heavens; and whosoever sins you remit on earth shall be remitted eternally in the heavens; and whosoever sins you retain on earth shall be retained in heaven” (D&C 132:46).

When a couple is kneeling at the altar, as a sealer I am aware of my role as a representative of the Lord. I know that what is sealed on earth is literally sealed in heaven—never to be broken if those being sealed remain faithful and endure to the end.

The mirrors on opposite walls in the temple sealing room are angled to create the visual impression of endless images. Looking into these mirrors on one side of the room represents the eternities of time that we have traveled to come to earth. As we turn to the opposite side of the room, we look into the seemingly endless images symbolizing the eternities after we leave this frail existence on earth. The sealing room itself represents our mortal probation here on earth. The lesson to be learned from this temple experience is that we have made the right choices to come to earth and experience mortality and that how we live our life in this brief period will determine how we will live in all the eternities to come.

You are preparing to meet the tests of mortal life. We voluntarily came from the presence of God the Father to this mortal probation with agency, knowing we would have “opposition



in all things” (2 Nephi 2:11). Our objective (see 1 Nephi 15:14) is to take upon us the whole armor of God and withstand “the fiery darts of the adversary” (D&C 3:8) with our sword of the Spirit and shield of faith (see D&C 27:15–18), to endure to the end, and to be worthy to stand and live in the presence of God the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, for all eternity—to achieve what is called eternal life.

I give you my testimony that God lives; that Jesus is the Christ; and that Joseph Smith, the Prophet of our dispensation, restored the priesthood blessings that allow us to partake of the temple blessings. ■

The ordinances and covenants of the temple are the protection for us in our trials and tribulations in our day and for what we will face in the future.

From a devotional address, “Temple Blessings,” delivered at Brigham Young University on November 15, 2005. For the full text in English, go to speeches.byu.edu.