



The LONG WAIT

BY ALEXA JUSTESEN

I was impatient after waiting in the temple for a few hours. How would it feel to wait hundreds of years?

My ward had been planning a temple day for a long time. So, early on a Saturday morning, my sister and I woke up, groggily drove to the church, met the youth of our ward, and then drove to the temple. When we arrived, we noticed a large group ahead of us that was also waiting to perform baptisms for the dead. Our leaders had made the appointment for us to be at the temple that morning, and they had been told that at 8:00 we would be able to go and perform baptisms.

Well, 8:00 came and went, and the group ahead of us was still there. Soon it was 9:00, and no one in our group had been baptized yet. A few people started to grow impatient. I'll admit, I did, too.

I looked around. The leaders' faces were showing a bit of concern. Some teens had to be home by 10:00. The temple workers let them go ahead of everyone else and be baptized. Since I didn't have to be home by a certain time, I waited.

Around 10:15, the temple workers let me and the rest of the girls in my ward go to the font. But we still had to wait, because they were letting others come in before us to be baptized. I grew a little bit impatient. We were so close to being baptized, but we still had to wait. I watched the minutes creep by slowly on the clock. When would it be my turn?

I watched a deacon walk down the steps into the font. It must have been his first time, because he climbed down

the steps very slowly and looked rather nervous. That was when it hit me. I had been waiting for two and a half hours, but the people we were being baptized for had been waiting for much longer than that, some for hundreds of years! Who was I to grow impatient because I was giving up a Saturday, while many people who had passed on were waiting for someone to find their names and submit them to the temple? I said a silent prayer to Heavenly Father asking for forgiveness.

Soon it was my turn to enter the font. As I walked down the steps, I thought of the people who had been waiting for this day. How did they feel knowing that finally they had the opportunity to accept the gospel of Jesus Christ? How would I feel if I were one of them? I read the name on the screen of the first woman I was being baptized for. She had died in 1752. She had been waiting for more than 250 years! My mind couldn't even start to comprehend that.

After I was baptized, I stepped out of the font, feeling gratitude toward my Heavenly Father for letting me be born into a family that had the gospel so that I didn't have to wait my turn after I passed on. I was so grateful that I had made good choices and was able to come to the temple. In the dressing room, I distinctly heard a voice whisper, "Thank you." Tears filled my eyes as I toweled off my wet hair.

After we left the temple, one of my Young Women leaders remarked, "You girls have been here for a long time, but what better place to spend a few hours than in the temple?" For the feeling I had right then, I would gladly give up Saturday morning just to come to the temple. **NE**