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THE Temple Gives US *Higher Vision*

Some of our most vivid and significant memories of living in the midwestern United States as young parents are of yearly visits to the temple in Washington, D.C. At the time, it was the only temple in operation east of the Mississippi River. Knowing that temple ordinances are essential for all of Heavenly Father’s children gave a sense of urgency to our efforts.

Like many of you, we arranged for friends to care for our small children, traveled through the night with a busload of fellow members, spent a couple of precious days doing as much temple work as we could, and then rode the bus home through the night so we could attend our Church meetings on Sunday. Those trips did not seem to be sacrifices; they were cherished because of the spiritual uplift that fed our souls for months afterward.

A few years later, we were thrilled to welcome the Chicago Illinois Temple, the first temple built in the North America Central Area since the Cardston Alberta Temple 62 years earlier. With a temple only 45 minutes from our home, it was a joy for us to attend more often than once a year and to receive that spiritual food on a regular basis.

Yet today, though some of us live within closer reach of a temple, we may still find it difficult to attend frequently. It may be that the easier availability of a temple lulls us into thinking, “I’ll go tomorrow, when I have more time.” It is easy to become distracted by immediate pressures and let more important opportunities slide away. Elder Richard G. Scott (1928–2015) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said, “I encourage you to establish your own goal of how frequently you will avail yourself of the ordinances offered in our operating temples.”¹

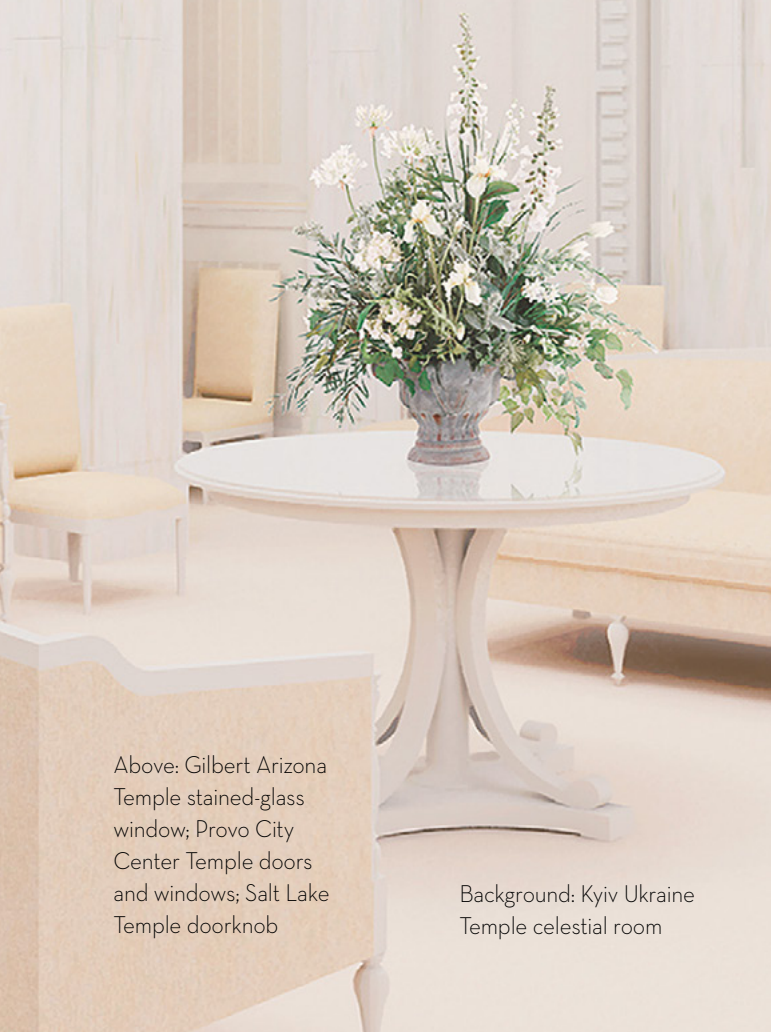
Left: Hartford Connecticut Temple celestial room

At 288 feet (88 m), the Washington D.C. Temple is the tallest temple.





Like a telescope focused on the stars beyond our sight, the temple opens our minds to a higher and broader vision.



Above: Gilbert Arizona Temple stained-glass window; Provo City Center Temple doors and windows; Salt Lake Temple doorknob

Background: Kyiv Ukraine Temple celestial room



Freiberg Germany Temple stained-glass windows



Kansas City
Missouri Temple



If we neglect the opportunity to attend as often as our circumstances allow, if we take lightly the opportunity to go to the temple when it is right in our backyard, so to speak, we may forfeit future blessings and opportunities our Father and His Son have in store for us. “I, the Lord,” He said, “am bound when ye do what I say; but when ye do not what I say, ye have no promise” (D&C 82:10).

When it seems that events conspire to prevent us from going to the temple, we can remember Jesus Christ’s assurance: “In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world” (John 16:33). As we persevere and attend the temple despite stumbling blocks, we’ll have the Savior’s help to overcome the world in which *we* live. One time as my husband and I were preparing to leave for the temple, one problem after another cropped up. Finally, as we were nearly out the door, we had a strained “marital moment.” As the two of us walked silently to the car, we could hear our oldest daughter reassure her sister, “Don’t worry; they always come home happy from the temple.” And she was right!

Temples Remind Us of the Span of Eternity

Whether we come to the temple with hearts full of joy or heavy with sorrow, the temple is the place for *every* worthy member with an open heart to be lifted and strengthened.

I have come to the temple almost floating in deep gratitude for a blessing granted to a struggling loved one; I have also shed quiet tears of great sorrow for my own failures. I have received promptings and instruction

From left: staircase in the Nauvoo Illinois Temple, which was dedicated on the 158th anniversary of the martyrdom of Joseph and Hyrum Smith; Idaho Falls Idaho Temple garden room; Calgary Alberta Temple door handle; Hartford Connecticut Temple interior (background)



Left: President David O. McKay, Sister Emma McKay, and other Church leaders attended the 1955 dedication of the Bern Switzerland Temple, the first temple constructed in Europe.



Below: Star Valley Wyoming Temple stained-glass window

and even rebukes from the Spirit while serving as proxy for someone receiving the ordinances that will allow her to progress through eternity. All of those experiences have lifted and strengthened me. And yes, I've sat through many an hour in the temple as a "duty," simply fulfilling my obligation, and I even found myself dozing off during temple sessions in my years as an early-morning seminary teacher! But every single time I've gone to the temple, I have been blessed. Whether we are granted an immediate blessing or our efforts accrue toward later blessings, every bit of time we spend in the temple results in some personal increase.

Being in the temple reminds us of the span of eternity, both looking back at our ancestors and forward to our children. Our children are also strengthened in their eternal perspective when they focus on the temple. How can we best prepare them for the temple—a vital step in their eternal progression? President Russell M. Nelson, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, counseled, "Parents should teach the importance of the temple from a child's earliest days."² President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985) advised parents to put a picture of the temple in their children's bedroom so they can look at that sacred reminder every day until it becomes part of them.³ You can also share with your children the blessings you receive from attending the temple as well as your testimony of the joy you anticipate in eternal

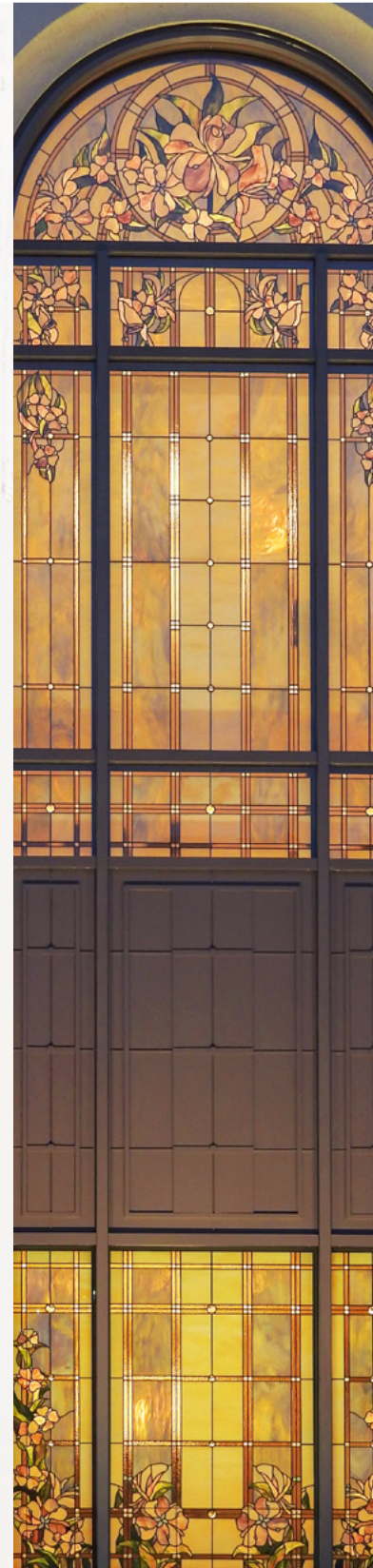
relationships with them. And you can support your teenagers in their desire to perform baptisms for the dead.

Remember in your family home evening lessons and teaching moments that "the temple is the object of every activity, every lesson, every progressive step in the Church."⁴

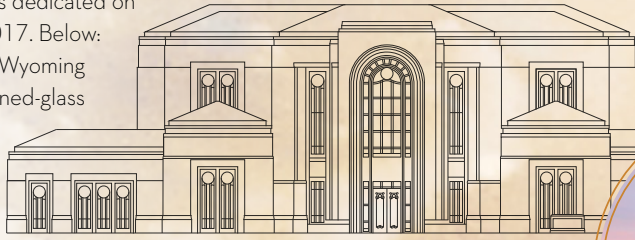
As you sing with your children, "I love to see the temple. I'll go inside someday. I'll cov'nant with my Father; I'll promise to obey,"⁵ you will help them feel a desire to enter the Lord's holy house. And your own heart will swell with gratitude for Heavenly Father, for His plan of salvation, for the Savior and His Atonement, which have made it possible for you to be with your loved ones forever. The Savior's "way is the path that leads to happiness in this life and eternal life in the world to come."⁶ That path leads to and through the temple!

Temples Are a Refuge from the World

Worldly influences can pull us away from the temple. A dear young friend has been troubled by opinions and speculations about the Church that he read on the internet. He decided to forgo attending the temple until his questions are resolved. With all my heart, I plead with you who may have questions that affect your testimony to continue participating in personal prayer and scripture study and to continue attending the temple while you work to find the answers that will bring you peace. Stay focused on the gospel to avoid being



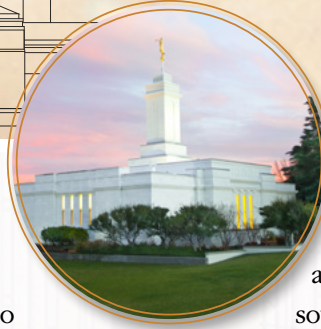
The 156th operating temple, the Paris France Temple, was dedicated on May 21, 2017. Below: Star Valley Wyoming Temple stained-glass window



Right: carving in the Papeete Tahiti Temple; Fort Lauderdale Florida Temple; Hartford Connecticut Temple interior



Below, left: The smallest temple is the Colonia Juárez Chihuahua Mexico Temple.



distracted by clever but false ideologies. One wouldn't seek to heal a physical ailment by asking a star football player for medical advice any more than significant spiritual questions can be correctly resolved by someone who has a limited understanding of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ. The Holy Ghost, who bears witness of "the truth of all things" (Moroni 10:5), "will tell you in your mind and in your heart" (D&C 8:2) what is eternal truth.

One of the places to access that Spirit most abundantly is in the temple. If you are worthy to enter the house of the Lord (as determined by you and your bishop), please come to the temple with your questions and receive the assurance that even if you do not understand all things now, the Lord does. Remember all that you *do* know and understand. The things you *do* know and have received a spiritual witness of will lead you to "the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, [and will] keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:7). I testify that the understanding and peace you seek will come as you continue to have faith that your Father in Heaven will lead and guide you to the truth.

Isaiah reminds us that the temple is "a place of refuge . . . from [the] storm" (Isaiah 4:6). President Thomas S. Monson's words are equally reassuring: "As we enter through the doors of the temple, we leave behind us the distractions and confusion of the world. Inside this sacred sanctuary, we find beauty

and order. There is rest for our souls and a respite from the cares of our lives."⁷

As troubles in the world increase and the pressures of daily life build up, we must keep our focus on the things that really matter. It is easy to focus on the negative and on worldly woes, as if we were looking at our failures and problems through a microscope. Being in the temple reminds us to keep an eternal perspective. Like a massive telescope focused on stars beyond our immediate sight, the temple opens our minds to a higher and broader vision. It allows us to see, hope for, and work toward becoming all that Heavenly Father has designed us to be. It helps us focus on eternal truths—on Heavenly Parents who love us and desire to help us, on our true worth as Their children, and on what we are capable of becoming as "heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ" (Romans 8:17). In the temple, the plan of God is taught and eternal covenants are made. In the temple, we are given the tools to become our highest and best eternal selves.

"As we attend the temple," counseled President Monson, "there can come to us a dimension of spirituality and a feeling of peace which will transcend any other feeling which could come into the human heart. We will grasp the true meaning of the words of the Savior when He said: 'Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you. . . . Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid' [John 14:27]."⁸





Your Temple Service Will Touch Others

The spirit you bring from your service in the temple will touch many within your circles of influence—some you may not have even considered. At the conclusion of one of our visits to the temple in Washington, D.C., the group of members shared testimonies as the bus rolled across the miles toward home. One after another, participants shared their joy and gratitude for the immediate and eternal blessings of the temple. Our nonmember bus driver finally couldn't stand it any longer. He grabbed the microphone and expressed appreciation for being with us. He then said, "I don't know what you people have, but I feel something different here." Of course, a ward mission leader on the bus got his contact information and later gave it to the missionaries.

May I invite you to take advantage of the gift of the temple near you as often as your circumstances allow. You will be strengthened and find peace in the house of the Lord Jesus Christ, for He is the light and the life and the hope of the world. As these latter days progress toward His promised return, may you receive His light and feel the hope that is offered in His holy temples. ■

NOTES

1. Richard G. Scott, "Temple Worship: The Source of Strength and Power in Times of Need," *Ensign*, May 2009, 43–45.
2. Russell M. Nelson, "Prepare for Blessings of the Temple," *Ensign*, Mar. 2002, 17.
3. See *The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, ed. Edward L. Kimball (1982), 301.
4. Russell M. Nelson, "Prepare for Blessings of the Temple," 17.
5. "I Love to See the Temple," *Children's Songbook*, 95.
6. "The Living Christ: The Testimony of the Apostles," *Ensign*, Apr. 2000, 2.
7. Thomas S. Monson, "Blessings of the Temple," *Ensign*, May 2015, 91.
8. Thomas S. Monson, "Blessings of the Temple," 91–92.
9. Thomas S. Monson, "Blessings of the Temple," 15; emphasis added.
10. "Excerpts from Recent Addresses of President Gordon B. Hinckley," *Ensign*, July 1997, 73; emphasis added.
11. Richard G. Scott, "Receive the Temple Blessings," *Ensign*, May 1999, 26; emphasis added.

SPECIFIC PROMISES

Prophets and apostles have given specific promises to those who attend the temple. Remember that God is bound when we do what He says, but when we do not do what He says, we have no promise (see D&C 82:10).

- President Thomas S. Monson has promised: "As we go to the holy house, as we remember the covenants we make therein, we will be able to *bear every trial and overcome each temptation.*"⁹
- President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008) promised: "If you will go to the house of the Lord, you will be blessed, *life will be better for you.* . . . Avail yourselves of the great opportunity to go to the Lord's house and thereby partake of all the marvelous blessings that are yours to be received there."¹⁰
- Elder Richard G. Scott promised: "Regular [temple] attendance will enrich your life with *greater purpose.*"¹¹



Read how one couple's efforts to attend the temple blessed their family (page 42 of this issue).

Five temples feature an angel Moroni statue holding the golden plates: the Los Angeles California Temple (left), the Washington D.C. Temple, the Seattle Washington Temple, the Jordan River Utah Temple, and the Mexico City Mexico Temple. For more information, visit temples.lds.org.