

TEMPLES

OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

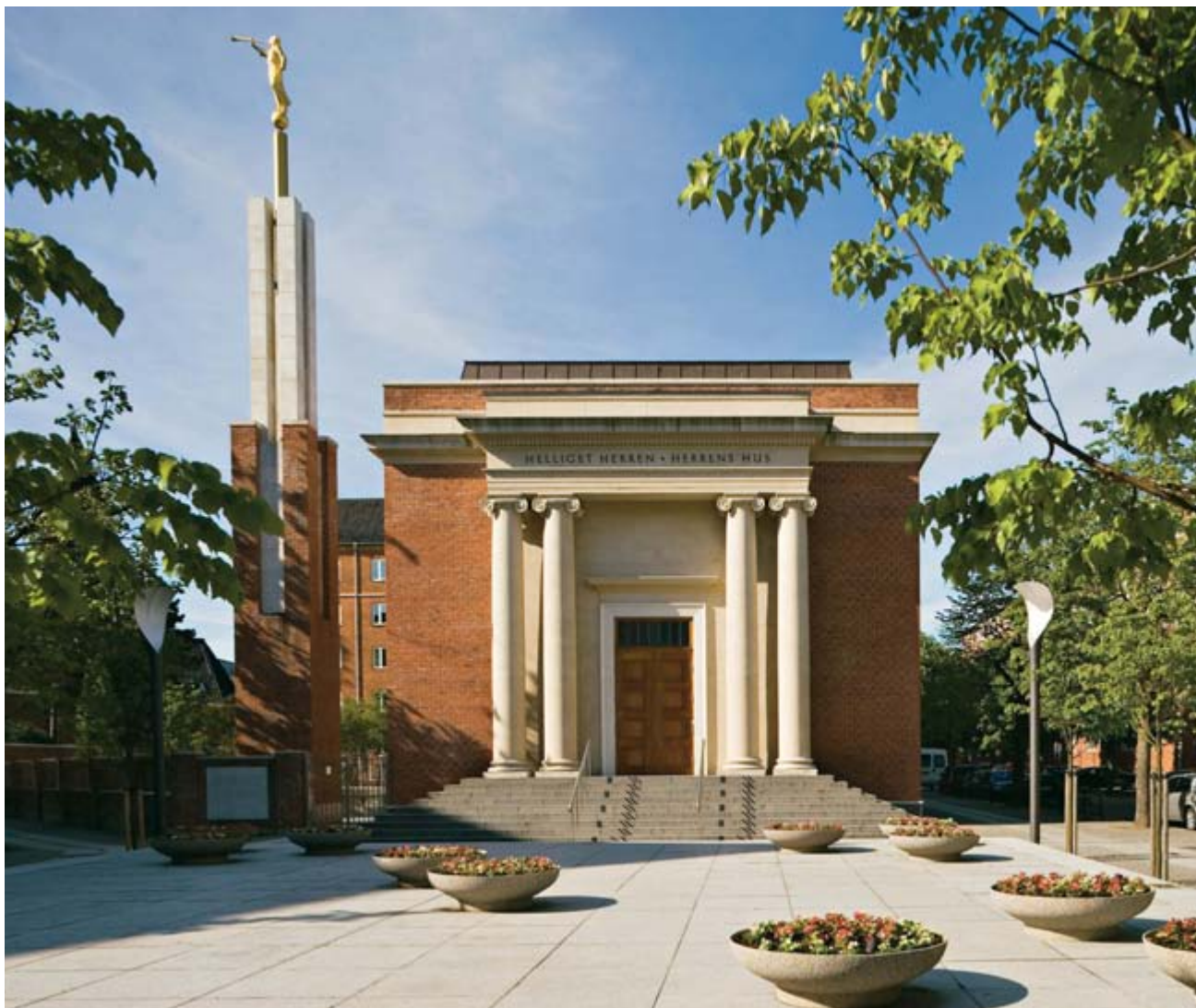


Jesus Christ said,
"I am the light of the world:
he that followeth me
shall not walk in darkness,
but shall have the light of life."

John 8:12

In the house of the Lord,
we feel the influence of the
Holy Ghost and draw nearer to
God, our Eternal Father, and to
His Beloved Son, Jesus Christ.





No temple photos, including exterior and interior images, may be duplicated or copied.

Published by
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
Salt Lake City, Utah

© 2010 by Intellectual Reserve, Inc.
All rights reserved
Printed in the United States of America
English approval: 8/09. 09339

Photos and Illustrations:

Unless otherwise noted here, photos and illustration are owned by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints or are used by permission of the artist or photographer.

Pages 4–5: © Robert A. Baird

Page 5: © Altus Photo Design

Page 6: © Val Brinkerhoff

Page 7: © Scott Cannon

Pages 8–9: © Fredy Apaza Ramirez

Page 10: © Val Brinkerhoff

Page 27: © 2000 John Telford

Page 48: © Pacific Press Publishing Association, Inc.
(Seventh-Day Adventist Church)

Page 54: *Moses Calls Aaron to the Ministry*,
by Harry Anderson, © IRI.

Page 55: *Solomon Prays at the Temple Dedication*,
© Robert T. Barrett; do not copy

Inside back cover: © Martin Van Hemert

Back cover: © Robert A. Baird

Contents

Members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints regard the temple as the house of the Lord—the most sacred place on earth. In this booklet you will find helpful information about the purpose and importance of temples and the eternal significance of the ordinances performed there.

This booklet can be found online at temples.lds.org.

4 Houses of the Lord

Photo Essay

12 Blessings of the Temple

President Thomas S. Monson

20 Why These Temples?

President Gordon B. Hinckley

28 The Holy Temple

President Boyd K. Packer

36 A Temple-Motivated People

President Howard W. Hunter

40 Prepare for the Blessings of the Temple

Elder Russell M. Nelson

52 A History of Temples

Elder James E. Talmage

60 Things Pertaining to This House

Photo Essay

68 Temple Service, Temple Blessings

Our Temple Marriage Was Worth Any Price

Geovanny Medina

How the Temple Helps

Frances W. Hodgson

72 For Children: Your Path to the Temple

76 For Youth: Making the Temple a Part of Your Life

79 Commonly Asked Questions



◀ Copenhagen Denmark Temple.
Dedicated May 23, 2004.

▲ Adelaide Australia Temple.
Dedicated June 15, 2000.

Front cover: Salt Lake Temple.
Dedicated Apr. 6, 1893.

Back cover: Portland Oregon Temple.
Dedicated Aug. 19, 1989.

Houses of the Lord

The temple is literally the house of the Lord. It is a place where God instructs His children and prepares them to return to His presence. It is a place where we are united as families and taught the ways of the Lord.





The temple was a place of learning for the Savior when He was on the earth; it was very much a part of His life. Temple blessings are available once again in our day” (James E. Faust, “The Restoration of All Things,” Liahona and Ensign, May 2006, 67).

◀ Washington D.C. Temple.
Dedicated Nov. 19, 1974.

▲ Fountain, Nashville Tennessee Temple.





"By identifying our ancestors and performing for them the saving ordinances they could not themselves perform, we are testifying of the infinite reach of the Atonement of Jesus Christ"
(D. Todd Christofferson, "The Redemption of the Dead and the Testimony of Jesus," Liahona, Jan. 2001, 11; Ensign, Nov. 2000, 10).

◀ Stained glass, Palmyra New York Temple (far left).

◀ Hong Kong China Temple. Dedicated May 26, 1996.

▲ Arches, Bountiful Utah Temple.





"The process of taking upon ourselves the name of Jesus Christ that is commenced in the waters of baptism is continued and enlarged in the house of the Lord. . . . In the ordinances of the holy temple we more completely and fully take upon us the name of Jesus Christ" (David A. Bednar, "Honorably Hold a Name and Standing," Liahona and Ensign, May 2009, 98).

◀ Cochabamba Bolivia Temple.
Dedicated Apr. 30, 2000.

▲ Masonry detail,
Cardston Alberta Temple.



"In its gleaming glory, the temple seems to beckon to each who views its splendor, 'Come! Come to the house of the Lord. Here is found rest for the weary and peace for the soul.' . . . The [temple] prepares all who enter to return homeward—homeward to heaven, homeward to family, homeward to God"
 (Thomas S. Monson, "Days Never to Be Forgotten," Ensign, Nov. 1990, 67, 70).

- ▲ Fencing,
Sacramento California Temple.
- Accra Ghana Temple.
Dedicated Jan. 11, 2004.







Blessings of the Temple

By President Thomas S. Monson

Sixteenth President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

In the temple we can feel close to the Lord

I think there is no place in the world where I feel closer to the Lord than in one of His holy temples. To paraphrase a poem:

How far is heaven?
It's not very far.
In temples of God,
It's right where we are.

The Lord said:

“Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal:

“But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:

“For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”¹

To members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the temple is the most sacred place on earth. It is the house of the Lord, and just as the inscription on the exterior of the temple states, the temple is “holiness to the Lord.”

The temple lifts and exalts us

In the temple, the precious plan of God is taught. It is in the temple that eternal covenants are made. The temple lifts us, exalts us, stands as a beacon for all to see, and points us toward celestial glory. It is the house of God. All that occurs within the walls of the temple is uplifting and ennobling.

*The temple
provides purpose
for our lives. It brings
peace to our souls—
not the peace provided
by men but the peace
promised by the Son of
God when He said,
“Peace I leave with
you, my peace I give
unto you.”*

◀ Lima Peru Temple.
Dedicated Jan. 10, 1986.



As we touch the temple and love the temple, our lives will reflect our faith. 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.

The temple is for families, one of the greatest treasures we have in mortality. The Lord has been very explicit in talking to us fathers, indicating that we have a responsibility to love our wives with all of our hearts and to provide for them and for our children. He has indicated that the greatest work we parents can do is performed in our homes, and our homes can be heaven, particularly when our marriages are sealed in the house of God.

The late Elder Matthew Cowley, who was a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, once recounted the Saturday afternoon experience of a grandfather as hand in hand he took his small granddaughter on a birthday visit—not to the zoo or to the movies but to the temple grounds. With permission of the groundskeeper, the two walked to the large doors of the temple. He suggested that she place her hand on the sturdy wall and then on the massive door. Tenderly he then said to her, “Remember that this day you touched the temple. One day you will go inside.” His gift to the little one was not candy or ice cream but an experience far more significant and everlasting—an appreciation of the

house of the Lord. She had touched the temple, and the temple had touched her.

The temple brings peace to our souls

As we touch the temple and love the temple, our lives will reflect our faith. 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.

The temple provides purpose for our lives. It brings peace to our souls—not the peace provided by men but the peace promised by the Son of God when He said, “Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.”²

There is great faith among the Latter-day Saints. The Lord gives us opportunities to see if we will follow His commandments, if we will follow the pathway that Jesus of Nazareth followed, if we will love the Lord with all our heart, might, mind, and strength, and love our neighbors as ourselves.³



The Lord has indicated that the greatest work we parents can do is performed in our homes, and our homes can be heaven, particularly when our marriages are sealed in the house of God.

◀ St. George Utah Temple.
Dedicated Apr. 6, 1877.
Rededicated Nov. 11, 1975.



Worthy young men and young women as young as 12 years of age can be proxy for those who have died without the blessings of baptism.

I believe in the proverb “Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.”⁴

So it has always been; so it shall always be. If we do our duty and trust fully in the Lord, we will fill His temples, not only doing our own ordinance work, but also having the privilege of doing work for others. We will kneel at sacred altars to be proxies in sealings that unite husbands and wives and children for all eternity. Worthy young men and young women as young as 12 years of age can be

proxy for those who have died without the blessings of baptism. This would be our Heavenly Father’s desire for you and for me.

A miracle occurred

Many years ago, a humble and faithful patriarch, Brother Percy K. Fetzer, was called to give patriarchal blessings to Church members living behind the Iron Curtain.

Brother Fetzer went into the land of Poland in those dark days. The borders were sealed, and no citizens were permitted to leave. Brother Fetzer

▲ Manila Philippines Temple.
Dedicated Sept. 25, 1984.

► Bountiful Utah Temple.
Dedicated Jan. 8, 1995.

met with German Saints who had been trapped there when the borders were redefined following World War II and the land where they were living became part of Poland.

Our leader among all of those German Saints was Brother Eric P. Konietz, who lived there with his wife and children. Brother Fetzer gave Brother and Sister Konietz and the older children patriarchal blessings.

When Brother Fetzer returned to the United States, he called and asked if he could come visit with me. As he sat in my office, he began to weep. He said, "Brother Monson, as I laid my hands upon the heads of the members of the Konietz family, I made promises which cannot be fulfilled. I promised Brother and Sister Konietz that they would be able to return to their native Germany, that they would not be held captive by the arbitrary decisions of conquering countries and that they would be sealed together as a family in the house of the Lord. I promised their son that he would fill a mission, and I promised their daughter that she would be married in the holy temple of God. You and I know that because of the closed borders, they will not be able to receive the fulfillment of those blessings. What have I done?"

I said, "Brother Fetzer, I know you well enough to know that you have done just what our Heavenly Father

wanted you to do." The two of us knelt down beside my desk and poured out our hearts to our Heavenly Father, indicating that promises had been given to a devoted family pertaining to the temple of God and other blessings now denied to them. Only He could bring forth the miracle we needed.

The miracle occurred. A pact was signed between the leaders of the Polish government and the leaders of the Federal Republic of Germany, permitting German nationals who had been trapped in that area to move to West Germany. Brother and Sister Konietz and their children moved to West Germany, and Brother Konietz became the bishop of the ward in which they resided.

The entire Konietz family went to the holy temple in Switzerland. And who was the temple president who greeted them in a white suit with open arms? None other than Percy Fetzer—the patriarch who gave them the promise. Now, in his capacity as president of the Bern Switzerland Temple, he welcomed them to the house of the Lord, to the fulfillment of that promise, and sealed the husband and wife together and the children to their parents.

The young daughter eventually married in the house of the Lord. The young son received his call and fulfilled a full-time mission.



If we do our duty and trust fully in the Lord, we will fill His temples, not only doing our own ordinance work, but also having the privilege of doing work for others.



In the temple, the precious plan of God is taught. It is in the temple that eternal covenants are made. All that occurs within the walls of the temple is uplifting and ennobling.

“We’ll see you in the temple!”

For some of us, our journey to the temple is but a few blocks. For others, there are oceans to cross and miles to go before they enter the holy temple of God.

Some few years ago, before the completion of a temple in South Africa, while attending a district conference in what was then Salisbury, Rhodesia, I met the district president, Reginald J. Nield. He and his wife and lovely daughters met me as I entered the chapel. They explained to me that they had been saving their means and had been preparing for the day when they could journey to the temple of the Lord. But, oh, the temple was so far away.

At the conclusion of the meeting, the four lovely daughters asked me questions about the temple: “What is the temple like? All we have seen is a picture.” “How will we feel when we enter the temple?” “What will we remember most?” For about an hour I had the opportunity to talk to four girls about the house of the Lord. As I departed for the airport, they waved to me, and the youngest girl said, “We’ll see you in the temple!”

One year later I had the opportunity to greet the Nield family in the Salt Lake Temple. In a peaceful sealing room I had the privilege to unite for eternity, as well as for time, Brother and Sister Nield. The doors were then opened, and those beautiful daughters, each of them dressed in spotless white, entered the room. They embraced mother, then father. Tears were in their eyes, and gratitude was in their hearts. We were next to heaven. Well could each one say, “Now we are a family for eternity.”

This is the marvelous blessing that awaits those who come to the temple. May each of us live worthy lives, with clean hands and pure hearts, so that the temple may touch our lives and our families.

How far is heaven? I testify that in the holy temples it is not far at all—for it is in these sacred places that heaven and earth meet and our Heavenly Father gives His children His greatest blessings.

Notes

1. Matthew 6:19–21.
2. John 14:27.
3. See Matthew 22:37–39.
4. Proverbs 3:5–6.



In a peaceful sealing room I had the privilege to unite for eternity, as well as for time, Brother and Sister Nield and their daughters. Tears were in their eyes, and gratitude was in their hearts. We were next to heaven.

◀ Bern Switzerland Temple.
Dedicated Sept. 11, 1955.
Rededicated Oct. 23, 1992.

▲ Sealing room, Salt Lake Temple.



Why These Temples?

By President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008)

Fifteenth President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

Temples are places where our questions about life receive the answers of eternity

Was there ever a man or woman who, in a time of quiet introspection, has not pondered the solemn mysteries of life?

Has he or she not asked, “Where did I come from? Why am I here? Where am I going? What is my relationship to my Maker? Will death rob me of the treasured associations of life? What of my family? Will there be another existence after this, and, if so, will we know one another there?”

The answers to these questions are not found in the wisdom of the world. They are found only in the revealed word of God. Temples of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are sacred structures in which these and

other eternal questions are answered. Each is dedicated as a house of the Lord, a place of holiness and peace set apart from the world. There truths are taught and ordinances are performed that bring knowledge of things eternal and motivate the participants to live with an understanding of our divine inheritance as children of God and an awareness of our potential as eternal beings.

Temples are unique in purpose and function from all other religious edifices

These buildings, different from the thousands of regular Church houses of worship scattered over the earth, are unique in purpose and function from all other religious edifices. It is not the

*Temples of
The Church of
Jesus Christ of Latter-
day Saints are sacred
structures in which
eternal questions are
answered.*



*The teachings set forth
in modern temples give
powerful emphasis to our
duty to our Maker and to
our neighbors.*

size of these buildings or their architectural beauty that makes them so. It is the work that goes on within their walls.

The designation of certain buildings for special ordinances, as distinguished from regular places of worship, is not new. This was the practice in ancient Israel, where the people worshipped regularly in the synagogues. Their more sacred place was, first, the tabernacle in the wilderness with its Holy of Holies, and then a succession of

temples, where special ordinances were performed and where only those who met the required qualifications could participate in these ordinances.

So it is today. Prior to the dedication of a temple, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints invites the public to go through the building and inspect its various facilities. But when it is dedicated it becomes the house of the Lord, vested with a character so sacred that only members of the Church in good standing are permitted to enter. It is not a matter of secrecy. It is a matter of sanctity.

Temple work is concerned with each of us as members of God's eternal family

The work that goes on in these buildings sets forth God's eternal purposes with reference to man, who is God's child and creation. For the most part, temple work is concerned with the family, with each of us as members of God's eternal family and with each of us as members of earthly families. It is concerned with the sanctity and eternal nature of the marriage covenant and family relationships.

It affirms that each man and woman born into the world is a child of God, endowed with something of His divine nature. The repetition of these basic and fundamental teachings has a salutary effect upon those who receive them, for as the doctrine is enunciated in language both beautiful and impressive, the participant comes to realize that since every man and woman is a child of Heavenly Father, then each is a member of a divine family; hence, every person is his brother or sister.

When asked by the scribe, "Which is the first commandment of all?" the Savior replied, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment.

"And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Mark 12:28, 30-31).

The teachings set forth in modern temples give powerful emphasis to this most fundamental concept of our duty to our Maker and to our neighbors. Sacred ordinances amplify this ennobling philosophy of the family of God. They teach that the spirit within each of us is eternal, in contrast with the body, which is mortal. They not only give understanding of these great truths but also motivate the participant to a love of God and encourage him to demonstrate a greater neighborliness toward others of our Father's children.

Accepting the premise that each person is a child of God helps us see that there is divine purpose in mortal life. Here again, revealed truth is taught in the house of the Lord. Earth life is part of an eternal journey. We lived as spirit children before we came here. The scriptures bear testimony of this. Witness the word of the Lord to Jeremiah: "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations" (Jeremiah 1:5).

The treasured relationships of family life may continue in the world to come

We come into this life as children of mortal parents and as members of families. Parents are partners with God in



In language both beautiful and impressive, the participant comes to realize that since every man and woman is a child of Heavenly Father, then each is a member of a divine family.

Reason demands that the family relationship shall continue after death. The human heart longs for it, and the God of heaven has revealed a way whereby it may be secured. The sacred ordinances of the house of the Lord provide for it.

bringing to pass His eternal purposes with reference to His children. The family, therefore, is a divine institution, the most important both in mortality and in eternity.

Much of the work that goes on within temples is concerned with the family. Basic to an understanding of its meaning is recognition of the fact that even as we existed as children of God before we were born into this world, so also shall we continue to live after death, and the treasured and satisfying relationships of mortality, the most beautiful and meaningful of which are found in the family, may continue in the world to come.

When a man and a woman are married in house of the Lord, they are joined not only for the period of their

mortal lives but for all eternity. They are bound together under authority not only of the law of the land that joins them until death but also through the eternal priesthood of God, which binds in heaven that which is bound on earth. The couple so married has the assurance of divine revelation that their relationship and that of their children will not end with death but will continue in eternity, provided they live worthy of that blessing.

Was there ever a man who truly loved a woman, or a woman who truly loved a man, who did not pray that their relationship might continue beyond the grave? Has a child ever been buried by parents who did not long for the assurance that their loved one would again be theirs in a world to come? Can anyone believing in eternal life doubt that the God of heaven would grant His sons and daughters that most precious attribute of life, the love that finds its most meaningful expression in family relationships? No, reason demands that the family relationship shall continue after death. The human heart longs for it, and the God of heaven has revealed a way whereby it may be secured. The sacred ordinances of the house of the Lord provide for it.



Can anyone believing in eternal life doubt that the God of heaven would grant His sons and daughters that most precious attribute of life, the love that finds its most meaningful expression in family relationships?

The blessings of the temple are available to all

But all of this would appear to be unfair indeed if the blessings of these ordinances were available only to those who are now members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The fact is that the opportunity to come into the temple and partake of its blessings is open to all who will accept the gospel and be baptized into the Church. For this reason, the Church carries forward an extensive missionary program in much of the world and will continue to expand this program as widely as possible, for it has the responsibility, under divine revelation, to teach the gospel to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people.

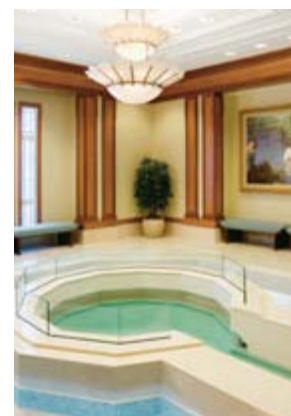
But there are uncounted millions who have walked the earth and who have never had the opportunity to hear the gospel. Shall they be denied such blessings as are offered in the temples of the Lord?

Through living proxies who stand in behalf of the dead, the same ordinances are available to those who have passed

from mortality. In the spirit world these same individuals are then free to accept or reject those earthly ordinances performed for them, including baptism, marriage, and the sealing of family relationships. There's no compulsion in the work of the Lord, but there must be opportunity.

Work in the temple is a labor of love on the part of the living in behalf of the dead

This vicarious work constitutes an unprecedented labor of love on the part of the living in behalf of the dead. It makes necessary a vast undertaking of family history research to find and identify those who have gone before. To assist in this research, the Church coordinates a family history program and maintains research facilities unmatched in all the world. Its archives are open to the public and have been used by many who are not members of the Church in tracing their forebears. This program has been praised by genealogists throughout the world and has been utilized by various nations as a safeguard of their own records.



Through living proxies who stand in behalf of the dead, the ordinances of the gospel are available to those who have passed from mortality.

▲ Baptismal font, Papeete Tahiti Temple.



Surely these temples are unique among all buildings. They are houses of instruction. They are places of covenants and promises. At their altars we kneel before God our Creator and are given promise of His everlasting blessings.

But its primary purpose is to afford members of the Church the resources needed to identify their ancestors that they might extend to them the blessings that they themselves enjoy. They in effect say to themselves, “If I love my wife and children so dearly that I want them for all eternity, then should not my deceased grandfather and great-grandfather and other forebears have opportunity to receive the same eternal blessings?”

Temples offer the opportunity to learn of the truly meaningful things of life

And so these sacred buildings are scenes of tremendous activity, quietly and reverently carried forward. They call to mind a part of the vision of John the Revelator wherein are recorded this question and this answer: “What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? . . .

“These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

“Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple” (Revelation 7:13–15).

Those who come to these holy houses are arrayed in white as they participate therein. They come only on recommendation of their local ecclesiastical authorities, having been

certified as to their worthiness. They are expected to come clean in thought, clean in body, and clean in dress to enter the temple of God. As they enter they are expected to leave the world behind them and concentrate on things divine.

This very exercise, if such it may be called, carries with it a reward of its own, for who in these times of stress would not welcome an opportunity to shut out the world and enter into the Lord’s house, there to ponder quietly the eternal things of God? These sacred precincts offer the opportunity, available nowhere else, to learn of and reflect on the truly meaningful things of life—our relationship to Deity and our eternal journey from a premortal state into this life and on to a future estate where we shall know and associate one with another, including our own loved ones and our forebears who have preceded us and from whom has come our inheritance of things of the body, mind, and spirit.

In the temples we are given promise of God’s everlasting blessings

Surely these temples are unique among all buildings. They are houses of instruction. They are places of covenants and promises. At their altars we kneel before God, our Creator, and are given promise of His everlasting blessings.

▲ Stockholm Sweden Temple.
Dedicated July 2, 1985.

► Manti Utah Temple.
Dedicated May 21, 1888.
Rededicated June 14, 1985.



In the sanctity of their appointments we commune with Him and reflect on His Son, our Savior and Redeemer, the Lord Jesus Christ, who served as proxy for each of us in a vicarious sacrifice in our behalf. Here we set aside our own selfishness and serve for those who cannot serve themselves. Here, under the true priesthood power of God, we are bound together in the most sacred of all human relationships—as husbands and wives, as children and parents, as families under a sealing that time cannot destroy and death cannot disrupt.

These sacred buildings were constructed even during those dark years when the Latter-day Saints were relentlessly driven and persecuted. They have been built and maintained in times of poverty and prosperity. They come from the vital faith of an ever-growing number who bear witness of a living God, of the resurrected Lord, of prophets and divine revelation, and of the peace and assurance of eternal blessings to be found only in the house of the Lord.

Adapted from *Ensign*, Aug. 1974, 37–41

These sacred buildings, built and maintained in times of poverty and prosperity, come from the vital faith of an ever-growing number who bear witness of a living God and of the resurrected Lord.



The Holy Temple

By President Boyd K. Packer
President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

In temples we can participate in the most exalted of the redeeming ordinances

There are many reasons one should want to come to the temple. Even its external appearance seems to hint of its deeply spiritual purposes. This is much more evident within its walls. Over the door to the temple appears the tribute “Holiness to the Lord.” When you enter any dedicated temple, you are in the house of the Lord.

In the temples, members of the Church who make themselves eligible can participate in the most exalted of the redeeming ordinances that have been revealed to mankind. There, in a sacred ceremony, an individual may be washed and anointed and instructed and endowed and sealed. And when we have received these blessings for

ourselves, we may officiate for those who have died without having had the same opportunity. In the temples sacred ordinances are performed for the living and for the dead alike.

The ordinances and ceremonies of the temple are simple, beautiful, and sacred

A careful reading of the scriptures reveals that the Lord did not tell all things to all people. There were some qualifications set that were prerequisite to receiving sacred information. Temple ceremonies fall within this category.

We do not discuss the temple ordinances outside the temples. It was never intended that knowledge of these temple ceremonies would be limited

*In the temples,
members of
the Church who make
themselves eligible can
participate in the most
exalted of the redeem-
ing ordinances that
have been revealed to
mankind.*

◀ Panama City Panama Temple.
Dedicated Aug. 10, 2008.

to a select few who would be obliged to ensure that others never learn of them. It is quite the opposite, in fact. With great effort we urge every soul to qualify and prepare for the temple experience. Those who have been to the temple have been taught an ideal: Someday every living soul and every soul who has ever lived shall have the opportunity to hear the gospel and to accept or reject what the temple offers. If this opportunity is rejected, the rejection must be on the part of the individual.

The ordinances and ceremonies of the temple are simple. They are beautiful. They are sacred. They are kept confidential lest they be given to those who are unprepared. Curiosity is not a preparation. Deep interest itself is not a preparation. Preparation for the ordinances includes preliminary steps: faith, repentance, baptism, confirmation, worthiness, a maturity and dignity worthy of one who comes invited as a guest into the house of the Lord.

Only those who are worthy should go to the temple. Your local bishop or branch president has the responsibility of making inquiries into your personal worthiness before you receive your temple ordinances.

Those who are worthy may enter the temple

All who are worthy and qualify in every way may enter the temple, there to be introduced to the sacred rites and ordinances.

Once you have some feeling for the value of temple blessings and for the sacredness of the ordinances performed in the temple, you would be hesitant to question the high standards set by the Lord for entrance into the holy temple.

You must possess a current recommend to be admitted to the temple. This recommend must be signed by the proper officers of the Church. Only those who are worthy should go to the temple. Your local bishop or branch president has the responsibility of making inquiries into your personal worthiness before you receive your temple ordinances. This interview is of great importance, for it is an occasion to explore with an ordained servant of the Lord the pattern of your life. If anything is amiss in your life, the bishop will be able to help you resolve it. Through this procedure, you can declare or can be helped to establish your worthiness to enter the temple with the Lord's approval.

The interview for a temple recommend is conducted privately between the bishop and the Church member concerned. Here the member is asked searching questions about his or her personal conduct, worthiness, and loyalty to the Church and its officers. The person must certify that he or she



Preparation for the ordinances of the temple includes preliminary steps: faith, repentance, baptism, confirmation, worthiness, a maturity and dignity worthy of one who comes invited as a guest into the house of the Lord.

is morally clean and is keeping the Word of Wisdom, paying a full tithing, living in harmony with the teachings of the Church, and not maintaining any affiliation or sympathy with apostate groups. The bishop is instructed that confidentiality in handling these matters with each interviewee is of the utmost importance.

Acceptable answers to the bishop's questions will ordinarily establish the worthiness of an individual to receive a temple recommend. If an applicant is not keeping the commandments or there is something unsettled about his or her life that needs putting in order, it will be necessary to demonstrate true repentance before a temple recommend is issued.

After the bishop has conducted such an interview, the stake president likewise interviews you before you can receive your temple ordinances.

Teaching in the temple is symbolic

Before going to the temple for the first time, or even after many times, it may help you to realize that the teaching in the temples is done in symbolic fashion.

The Lord, the Master Teacher, gave much of His instruction in this way.

The temple is a great school. It is a house of learning. In the temples the atmosphere is maintained so that it is ideal for instruction on matters that are deeply spiritual. The late Elder John A. Widtsoe of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles was a distinguished university president and a world-renowned scholar. He had great reverence for temple work and said on one occasion:

"The temple ordinances encompass the whole plan of salvation, as taught from time to time by the leaders of the Church, and elucidate matters difficult of understanding. There is no warping or twisting in fitting the temple teachings into the great scheme of salvation. The philosophical completeness of the endowment is one of the great arguments for the veracity of the temple ordinances. Moreover, this completeness of survey and expounding of the Gospel plan, makes temple worship one of the most effective methods of refreshing the memory concerning the whole structure of the Gospel" ("Temple Worship," *Utah Genealogical and Historical Magazine*, Apr. 1921, 58).



Before going to the temple for the first time, or even after many times, it may help you to realize that the teaching in the temples is done in symbolic fashion. The Lord, the Master Teacher, gave much of His instruction in this way.



The house of the Lord, bathed in light, standing out in the darkness, becomes symbolic of the power and the inspiration of the gospel of Jesus Christ standing as a beacon in a world that sinks ever further into spiritual darkness.

If you will go to the temple and remember that the teaching is symbolic, you will never go in the proper spirit without coming away with your vision extended, feeling a little more exalted, with your knowledge increased as to things that are spiritual. The teaching plan is superb. It is inspired. The Lord Himself, the Master Teacher, taught His disciples constantly in parables—a verbal way to represent symbolically things that might otherwise be difficult to understand.

The temple itself becomes a symbol. If you have seen one of the temples at night, fully lighted, you know what an impressive sight that can be. The house of the Lord, bathed in light, standing out in the darkness, becomes symbolic of the power and the inspiration of the gospel of Jesus Christ standing as a beacon in a world that sinks ever further into spiritual darkness.

Upon entering the temple, you exchange your street clothing for the white clothing of the temple. This change of clothing takes place in the dressing room, where each individual is provided with a locker and a dressing space that is completely private. In the temple the ideal of modesty is carefully maintained. As you put your clothing in the locker, you leave your cares and concerns and distractions there with them. You step out of this private little dressing area dressed in white, and you feel a oneness and a sense of equality, for all around you are similarly dressed.

Temple marriage is the ultimate ordinance of the temple

Those of you who look forward to a temple marriage may want to know what will occur. We do not quote the words of the sealing (marriage) ordinance outside of the temple, but we may describe the sealing room as being beautiful in its appointment, quiet and serene in spirit, and hallowed by the sacred work that is performed there.

Before the couple comes to the altar for the sealing ordinance, it is the privilege of the officiator to extend, and of the young couple to receive, some counsel. These are among the thoughts that a young couple might hear on this occasion.

“Today is your wedding day. You are caught up in the emotion of your marriage. Temples were built as a sanctuary for such ordinances as this. We are not in the world. The things of the world do not apply here and should have no influence upon what we do here. We have come out of the world into the temple of the Lord. This becomes the most important day of your lives.

“You were born, invited to earth, by parents who prepared a mortal tabernacle for your spirit to inhabit. Each of you has been baptized. Baptism, a sacred ordinance, is symbolic of a cleansing, symbolic of death and resurrection, symbolic of coming forward in a newness of life. It contemplates

▲ Tokyo Japan Temple.
Dedicated Oct. 27, 1980.

If you will go to the temple and remember that the teaching is symbolic, you will never go in the proper spirit without coming away with your vision extended, feeling a little more exalted, with your knowledge increased as to things that are spiritual.

repentance and a remission of sins.

The sacrament of the Lord's Supper is a renewal of the covenant of baptism, and we can, if we live for it, retain a remission of our sins.

"You, the groom, were ordained to the priesthood. You had first conferred upon you the Aaronic Priesthood and probably have progressed through all the offices thereof—deacon, teacher, and priest. Then the day came when you were found worthy to receive the Melchizedek Priesthood. That priesthood, the higher priesthood, is defined as the priesthood after the holiest order of God, or the Holy Priesthood after the Order of the Son of God (see Alma 13:18; Helaman 8:18; Doctrine and Covenants 107:2–4). You were given an office in the priesthood. You are now an elder.

"Each of you has received your endowment. In that endowment you received an investment of eternal potential. But all of these things, in one sense, were preliminary and preparatory to your coming to the altar to be sealed as husband and wife for time and for all eternity. You now become a family, free to act in the creation of life, to have the opportunity through devotion and sacrifice to bring children into the world and to raise them and

foster them safely through their mortal existence; to see them come one day, as you have come, to participate in these sacred temple ordinances.

"You come willingly and have been judged to be worthy. To accept one another in the marriage covenant is a great responsibility, one that carries with it blessings without measure."

The sealing power binds on earth and in heaven

If we would understand both the history and the doctrine of temple work, we must understand what the sealing power is. We must envision, at least to a degree, why the keys of authority to employ the sealing power are crucial.

"When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? . . .

"And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.

"And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.



All of the ordinances of the gospel, in one sense, are preliminary to coming to the temple to be sealed as husband and wife for time and for all eternity.

No work is more of a protection to this Church than temple work and the family history research that supports it. No work is more spiritually refining. No work we do gives us more power. No work requires a higher standard of righteousness.

“And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

“And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven” (Matthew 16:13, 16–19).

Peter was to hold the keys. Peter was to hold the sealing power, that authority which carries the power to bind or seal on earth or to loose on earth and it would be so in the heavens. Those keys belong to the President of the Church—to the prophet, seer, and revelator. That sacred sealing power is with the Church now. Nothing is regarded with more sacred contemplation by those who know the significance of this

authority. Nothing is more closely held. There are relatively few men who have been delegated this sealing power upon the earth at any given time—in each temple are brethren who have been given the sealing power. No one can get it except from the prophet, seer, and revelator and President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

The Prophet Joseph Smith said he was frequently asked the question “‘Can we not be saved without going through with all those ordinances, etc.?’ I would answer, No, not the fullness of salvation. Jesus said, ‘There are many mansions in my Father’s house, and I will go and prepare a place for you.’ [See John 14:2.] *House* here named should have been translated kingdom; and any person who is exalted to the highest mansion has to abide a celestial



law, and the whole law too" (in *History of the Church*, 6:184).

Temple work is a source of spiritual power

Temples are the very center of the spiritual strength of the Church. We should expect that the adversary will try to interfere with us as a Church and with us individually as we seek to participate in this sacred and inspired work. Temple work brings so much resistance because it is the source of so much spiritual power to the Latter-day Saints and to the entire Church.

At the Logan Utah Temple cornerstone dedication, President George Q. Cannon, then of the First Presidency, made this statement:

"Every foundation stone that is laid for a Temple, and every Temple completed according to the order the Lord has revealed for his holy Priesthood, lessens the power of Satan on the earth, and increases the power of God and Godliness, moves the heavens in mighty power in our behalf, invokes and calls down upon us the blessings of the Eternal Gods, and those who reside in their presence" (in "The Logan Temple," *Millennial Star*, Nov. 12, 1877, 743).

When members of the Church are troubled or when crucial decisions weigh heavily upon their minds, it is a common thing for them to go to the temple. It is a good place to take our cares. In the temple we can receive

spiritual perspective. There, during the time of the temple service, we are "out of the world."

Sometimes our minds are so beset with problems and there are so many things clamoring for attention at once that we just cannot think clearly and see clearly. At the temple the dust of distraction seems to settle out, the fog and the haze seem to lift, and we can "see" things that we were not able to see before and find a way through our troubles that we had not previously known.

The Lord will bless us as we attend to the sacred ordinance work of the temples. Blessings there will not be limited to our temple service. We will be blessed in all of our affairs.

Our labors in the temple cover us with a shield and a protection

No work is more of a protection to this Church than temple work and the family history research that supports it. No work is more spiritually refining. No work we do gives us more power. No work requires a higher standard of righteousness.

Our labors in the temple cover us with a shield and a protection, both individually and as a people.

So come to the temple—come and claim your blessings. It is a sacred work.

Adapted from *Preparing to Enter the Holy Temple* (booklet, 2002)



"Every foundation stone that is laid for a Temple, and every Temple completed according to the order the Lord has revealed for his holy Priesthood, lessens the power of Satan on the earth, and increases the power of God and Godliness."
—President George Q. Cannon

▲ Curitiba Brazil Temple.
Dedicated June 1, 2008.



A Temple-Motivated People

By President Howard W. Hunter (1907–95)

Fourteenth President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

The temple is the great symbol of our membership

What a glorious thing it is for us to have the privilege of going to the temple for our own blessings. Then after going to the temple for our own blessings, what a glorious privilege to do the work for those who have gone on before us. This aspect of temple work is an unselfish work. Yet whenever we do temple work for other people, there is a blessing that comes back to us. Thus it should be no surprise to us that the Lord does desire that His people be a temple-motivated people.

It is the Lord Himself who, in His revelations to us, has made the temple the great symbol for members of the Church. Think of the attitudes and righteous behaviors that the Lord

pointed us toward in the counsel He gave to the Kirtland Saints through the Prophet Joseph Smith as they were preparing to build a temple. This counsel is still applicable:

“Organize yourselves; prepare every needful thing; and establish a house, even a house of prayer, a house of fasting, a house of faith, a house of learning, a house of glory, a house of order, a house of God” (Doctrine and Covenants 88:119). Are these attitudes and behaviors indeed reflective of what each of us desires and seeks to be?

All of our efforts in the Church lead to the holy temple

All of our efforts in proclaiming the gospel, perfecting the Saints, and

*Keep a picture
of a temple in
your home that your
children may see it.
Teach them about the
purposes of the house
of the Lord.*

◀ Freiberg Germany Temple.
Dedicated June 29, 1985.
Rededicated Sept. 7, 2002.



The Lord told the Kirtland Saints as they were preparing to build a temple, “Establish a house, even a house of prayer, a house of fasting, a house of faith, a house of learning, a house of glory, a house of order, a house of God.”

redeeming the dead lead to the holy temple. This is because the temple ordinances are absolutely crucial; we cannot return to God’s presence without them.

Truly, the Lord desires that His people be a temple-motivated people. It would be the deepest desire of my heart to have every member of the Church be temple worthy. I would hope that every adult member would be worthy of—and carry—a current temple recommend, even if proximity to a temple does not allow immediate or frequent use of it.

The temple is holy unto the Lord; it should be holy unto us

Let us be a temple-attending and a temple-loving people. Let us hasten to the temple as frequently as time and means and personal circumstances allow. Let us go not only for our kindred dead, but let us also go for the personal blessing of temple worship, for the sanctity and safety which is provided within those hallowed and consecrated walls. The temple is a place of beauty, it is a place of revelation, it is a place of peace. It is the house of the Lord. It is

▲ Kirtland Temple.
Dedicated Mar. 27, 1836.

► Logan Utah Temple.
Dedicated May 17, 1884.
Rededicated Mar. 13, 1979.

holy unto the Lord. It should be holy unto us.

Let us share with our children the spiritual feelings we have in the temple. And let us teach them more earnestly and more comfortably the things we can appropriately say about the purposes of the house of the Lord. Keep a picture of a temple in your home that your children may see it. Teach them about the purposes of the house of the Lord. Have them plan from their earliest years to go there and to remain worthy of that blessing.

It is pleasing to the Lord when we go worthily to the temple

It is pleasing to the Lord for our youth to worthily go to the temple and perform vicarious baptisms for those who did not have the opportunity to be baptized in life. It is pleasing to the Lord when we worthily go to the temple to personally make our own covenants with Him and to be sealed as couples and as families. And it is pleasing to the Lord when we worthily go to the temple to perform these same saving ordinances for those who have died, many of whom eagerly await the completion of these ordinances in their behalf.

To have the temple indeed be a symbol unto us, we must desire it to be so. We must live worthy to enter the temple. We must keep the

commandments of our Lord. If we can pattern our life after the Master, and take His teaching and example as the supreme pattern for our own, we will not find it difficult to be temple worthy, to be consistent and loyal in every walk of life, for we will be committed to a single, sacred standard of conduct and belief. Whether at home or in the marketplace, whether at school or long after school is behind us, whether we are acting totally alone or in concert with a host of other people, our course will be clear and our standards will be obvious.

The ability to stand by one's principles, to live with integrity and faith according to one's belief—that is what matters. That devotion to true principle—in our individual lives, in our homes and families, and in all places that we meet and influence other people—that devotion is what God is ultimately requesting of us. It requires commitment—whole-souled, deeply held, eternally cherished commitment to the principles we know to be true in the commandments God has given. If we will be true and faithful to the Lord's principles, then we will always be temple worthy, and the Lord and His holy temples will be the great symbols of our discipleship with Him.

Adapted from *Ensign*, Oct. 1994, 2–5; Feb. 1995, 2–5



Let us be a temple-attending and a temple-loving people. Let us hasten to the temple as frequently as time and means and personal circumstances allow.



Prepare for the Blessings of the Temple

By Elder Russell M. Nelson
Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

As temples are prepared for the people, the people need to prepare themselves for the temple

Inscribed on each temple are the words “holiness to the Lord.”¹ That statement designates both the temple and its purposes as holy. Those who enter the temple are also to bear the attribute of holiness.² As temples are prepared for the people, the people need to prepare themselves for the temple.

A temple differs from other houses of worship. Unlike chapels, the temple is closed on the Sabbath so that people can attend church and be with their families on that hallowed day. Temples are open for sacred work on other days of the week. A temple is literally the house of the Lord, reserved for ordinances of eternal significance. Those

ordinances include baptisms, marriages, endowments, and sealings.

Each temple is symbolic of our faith in God and an evidence of our faith in life after death. The temple is the object of every activity, every lesson, every progressive step in the Church. All of our efforts in proclaiming the gospel, perfecting the Saints, and redeeming the dead lead to the holy temple. Ordinances of the temple are absolutely crucial. We cannot return to God’s glory without them.

Each temple ordinance is an act of solemn promising

In the temple we receive an endowment, which is, literally speaking, a gift. We need to understand the

Each temple is symbolic of our faith in God and an evidence of our faith in life after death. The temple is the object of every activity, every lesson, every progressive step in the Church.

◀ Houston Texas Temple.
Dedicated Aug. 26, 2000.



President Brigham Young explained that “your endowment is, to receive all those ordinances in the house of the Lord, which are necessary for you, after you have departed this life, to enable you to walk back to the presence of the Father.”

spiritual significance of it and the importance of keeping the sacred covenants and obligations we make in receiving this gift. Each “temple ordinance is not just a ritual to go through, it is an act of solemn promising.”³

The temple endowment was given by revelation. Thus, it is best understood by revelation, vigorously sought with a pure heart. President Brigham Young explained that “your endowment is, to receive all those ordinances in the house of the Lord, which are necessary for you, after you have departed this life, to enable you to walk back to the presence of the Father, passing the angels who stand as sentinels, . . . and gain your eternal exaltation.”⁴

Obedience to the sacred covenants made in temples qualifies us for eternal life

In each temple the sealing authority of the priesthood is exercised. President Gordon B. Hinckley explained that “no king, no president of a nation, no official of any entity in the world of which we are a part has any authority over matters beyond the grave. Everyone is helpless before the reach of death, but the humblest, good, righteous high priest who has received the sealing authority may bind in the heavens that which is bound on the earth.”⁵

Just as priesthood is eternal—without beginning or end—so is the authority of that priesthood.⁶ Consequently, the ordinances and covenants

of the priesthood also transcend time. The first revelation given by the angel Moroni to the Prophet Joseph Smith referred to this priesthood authority.⁷ In later instructions to the Prophet regarding the temple, the Lord said:

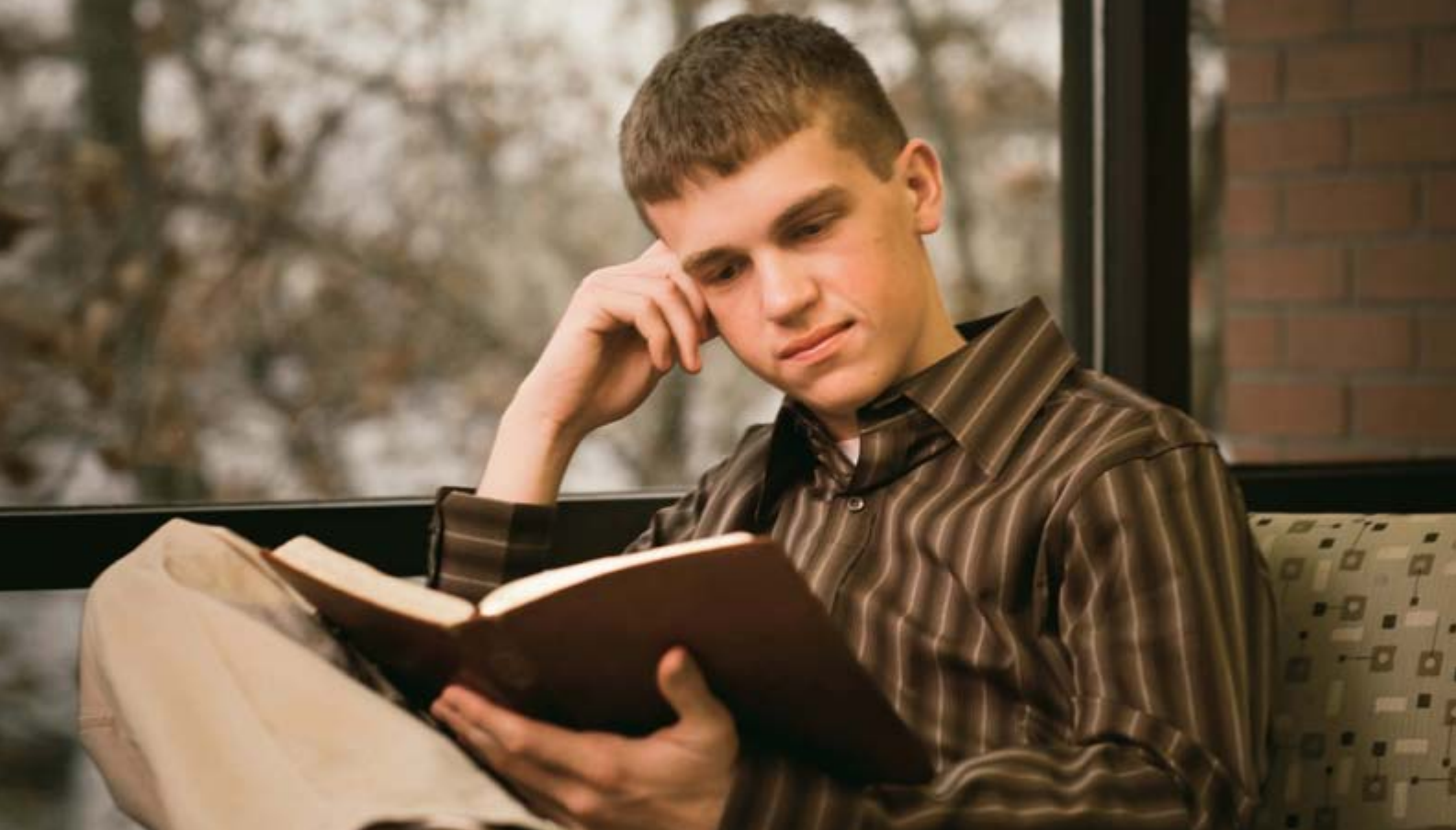
“Let this house be built unto my name, that I may reveal mine ordinances therein unto my people;

“For I deign to reveal unto my church things which have been kept hid from before the foundation of the world, things that pertain to the dispensation of the fulness of times.”⁸

We are living in that dispensation. Temples, ordinances, covenants, endowments, and sealings have been restored, precisely as prophesied. Ordinances of the temple provide for reconciliation with the Lord and seal families together forever. Obedience to the sacred covenants made in temples qualifies us for eternal life—the greatest gift of God to man.⁹

Anyone who is willing to prepare well may enter the temple

Because a temple is sacred, the Lord asks that it be protected from desecration. Anyone may enter who is willing to prepare well for that privilege. The concept of preparation prevails in other fields of endeavor. I remember when I was but a young boy, I told my parents I wanted to attend the university. They said I could, but only if I worked hard in preliminary schooling and met all



the requirements for admission to the university. Similarly, we must qualify for admission to the temple. We prepare physically, intellectually, and spiritually. Eligibility is determined individually for each person applying for a recommend.

Those who hold keys of priesthood authority and responsibility help us prepare by conducting temple recommend interviews. These leaders care for us and help us determine if we are ready to attend the temple. They also love the Lord and ensure “that no unclean thing shall be permitted to come into [His] house.”¹⁰ Thus, these

interviews are conducted in a spirit of accountability.

How do you prepare for a temple recommend? You may consult with your bishopric, as well as your parents, family, stake presidency, teacher, or quorum adviser. The requirements are simple. Succinctly stated, an individual is required to keep the commandments of Him whose house it is. He has set the standards. We enter the temple as His guests.

The Lord would be pleased if every adult member would be worthy of—and carry—a current temple recommend. “Interviews . . . for temple recommends, with

*We must qualify for
admission to the temple.
We prepare physically,
intellectually, and
spiritually.*



You prepare physically by dressing properly to go to the temple. It is not a place for casual attire. Respect for our physical bodies should be observed especially by those who enter a holy temple.

[members of your bishopric and members of your stake presidency are precious experiences. And, in a way, they could be considered meaningful ‘dress rehearsals’ for that grand colloquy when you will stand before the Great Judge.”¹¹

Prepare physically to go to the temple

Now, with a temple recommend in hand, you are ready for additional preparation. You prepare physically by dressing properly to go to the temple. It is not a place for casual attire. Latter-day prophets have emphasized self-respect for our physical bodies. That respect should be observed especially by those who would enter a holy temple.¹²

In the temple, all are dressed in spotless white. “The symbolic purity of white likewise reminds us that God is to have a pure people.”¹³ Age, nationality, language—even position in the Church—are of secondary significance. I have attended many endowment sessions when the President of the Church participated. Every man in the room was accorded the same high regard that was extended to the President.

All sit side by side and are considered equal in the eyes of the Lord. Through a democracy of dress, temple attendance reminds us that “God is no respecter of persons.”¹⁴

Brides and grooms enter the temple to be married for time and all eternity. In the temple, brides wear dresses that are white, long sleeved, modest in design and fabric, and free of elaborate ornamentation. Men do not wear tuxedos or formal wear. President Boyd K. Packer, now President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, wrote: “It is pleasing to the Lord when we bathe our bodies and put on clean clothing, however inexpensive the clothing may be. We should dress in such a way that we might comfortably attend a sacrament meeting or a gathering that is proper and dignified.”¹⁵

Speaking of temple attire, mothers and grandmothers can exert a great influence for good among their children and grandchildren. As their skill and circumstances permit, they can provide tangible motivation for their family. A mother’s gift of a hand-embroidered handkerchief or other article of temple



In the temple, all are dressed in spotless white. Through a democracy of dress, temple attendance reminds us that “God is no respecter of persons.”

▲ Johannesburg South Africa Temple.
Dedicated Aug. 24, 1985.



Mothers and grandmothers can exert a great influence for good among their children and grandchildren regarding proper temple attire.

clothing can be a powerful incentive for a loving child or grandchild to cherish.

The temple garment symbolizes continuing commitment

The wearing of the temple garment bears great symbolic significance and represents a continuing commitment. Just as the Savior gave us an example of His ability to endure to the end, wearing the garment is one way we demonstrate enduring faith in Him and in His eternal covenants with us.

The First Presidency prepared a letter to the Church on this subject. They wrote:

“Practices frequently observed among the members of the Church suggest that some members do not fully understand the covenant they make in the temple to wear the garment in accordance with the spirit of the holy endowment.

“Church members who have been clothed with the garment in the temple have made a covenant to wear it throughout their lives. This has been interpreted to mean that it is worn as underclothing both day and night. . . . The promise of protection and blessings is conditioned upon worthiness and faithfulness in keeping the covenant.

“The fundamental principle ought to be to wear the garment and not to find occasions to remove it. Thus, members should not remove either all or part of the garment to work in the yard or to lounge around the home in swimwear or immodest clothing. Nor should they remove it to participate in recreational activities that can reasonably be done with the garment worn properly beneath regular clothing. When the garment must be removed, such as for swimming, it should be restored as soon as possible.

“The principles of modesty and keeping the body appropriately covered are implicit in the covenant and should govern the nature of all clothing worn. Endowed members of the Church wear the garment as a reminder of the sacred covenants they have made with the Lord and also as a protection against temptation and evil. How it is worn is an outward expression of an inward commitment to follow the Savior.”¹⁶

Prepare mentally and spiritually to go to the temple

In addition to physical preparation, we need to be prepared mentally and spiritually. Because the ordinances and covenants of the temple are sacred, we are under absolute obligation not to discuss outside the temple that which occurs in the temple. Sacred matters deserve sacred consideration.

In this house of learning, we are taught in the Lord’s way. His ways are not our ways.¹⁷ We should not be surprised if teaching techniques differ from those employed in educational pursuits more familiar to us. Temple ordinances and covenants have been an integral part of the gospel since the days of Adam and Eve. Anciently, symbols were used to teach profound truths, and this method of instruction is used in the temple today.

It is necessary, therefore, that we ponder the symbols presented in the temple and see the mighty realities for which each symbol stands.¹⁸ “The temple ordinances are so imbued with symbolic meaning as to provide a lifetime of productive contemplation and learning.”¹⁹ The teachings of the temple are beautifully simple and simply beautiful. They are understood by those who have had little opportunity for education, yet they can excite the intellect of the highly educated.

I recommend that members going to the temple for the first time read entries in the Bible Dictionary that are related to the temple, such as “Anoint,” “Covenant,” “Sacrifices,” and “Temple.” One may also wish to read Exodus, chapters 26–29, and Leviticus, chapter 8. The Old Testament, as well as the books of Moses and Abraham in the Pearl of Great Price, underscores the antiquity of temple work and the enduring nature of its ordinances.



In this house of learning, we are taught in the Lord’s ways. His ways are not our ways. The teachings of the temple are beautifully simple and simply beautiful.

▲ Helsinki Finland Temple.
Dedicated Oct. 22, 2006.



Without the infinite Atonement, all mankind would be irretrievably lost. Temple ordinances and covenants teach of the redeeming power of the Atonement.

Keeping a covenant with God is both protective and enabling

There are two concepts we especially need to keep in mind as we prepare for the temple. The first is *covenant*. We need to remember that a covenant is a promise. A covenant made with God should be regarded not as restrictive but as protective. Covenants with Him protect us from danger.

This concept is not new. If our water supply is of questionable quality, for example, we filter the water. Similarly, divine covenants shield us from harm. When we choose to deny ourselves of all ungodliness,²⁰ we lose nothing of value and gain glory known only to those who obtain eternal life. Keeping a temple covenant is not constraining but enabling. It elevates us beyond limits of our own perspective and power. It is like the difference between plodding through a muddy field and soaring through the skies in a supersonic jet. Keeping a covenant with God is both protective and enabling.

The second concept to stress in our mental preparation is *Atonement*. The

Atonement of Jesus Christ is the central act of all human history. It is the core of the plan of salvation. Without the infinite Atonement, all mankind would be irretrievably lost. Temple ordinances and covenants teach of the redeeming power of the Atonement.

Eternal life is available to us through our obedience to covenants made in the temple

Service in the temple brings blessings to us in this life as well as in eternity. Elder Neal A. Maxwell of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said that “temple work is not an escape from the world but a reinforcing of our need to better the world while preparing ourselves for another and far better world. Thus, being in the Lord’s house can help us to be different from the world in order to make more difference in the world.”²¹

If we are true and faithful in this life, we may obtain eternal life. Immortality is to live forever. Eternal life means more than simply being immortal. Eternal life is to gain exaltation in the highest heaven and live in the family unit. God declared that His grand



Blessed with eternal sealings, we can face death as a necessary component of God’s great plan of happiness.

"Through the power of [the] priesthood . . . , husband and wife may be sealed, or married for eternity; children may be sealed to their parents for eternity; thus the family is made eternal."
—President Joseph Fielding Smith

mission statement—"my work and my glory"—is "to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man."²² His gift of immortality is unconditional—a free gift of salvation to all humankind. The possibility of eternal life—even exaltation—is available to us through our obedience to covenants made and ordinances received in holy temples of God.

The blessings of the temple become most meaningful when our loved ones are taken in death from our family circles. To know that our period of

separation is but temporary provides peace that passes ordinary understanding.²³ President Joseph Fielding Smith wrote, "Through the power of this priesthood which Elijah bestowed, husband and wife may be sealed, or married for eternity; children may be sealed to their parents for eternity; thus the family is made eternal, and death does not separate the members."²⁴ Blessed with eternal sealings, we can face death as a necessary component of God's great plan of happiness.²⁵

The eternal perspective we receive in the temple gives us strength to endure the trials of life

An eternal perspective helps us maintain complete fidelity to the covenants we make. President Packer emphasized that "ordinances and covenants become our credentials for admission into [God's] presence. To worthily receive them is the quest of a lifetime; to keep them thereafter is the challenge of mortality."²⁶

Ordinances of the temple relate not only to our eternal glory but also to that of our departed ancestors. "For their salvation is necessary and essential to our salvation, . . . they without us cannot be made perfect—neither can we without our dead be made perfect."²⁷ Service in their behalf provides an opportunity for our continuing temple worship, selflessly rendered as



a vicarious work patterned after that of the Lord as He wrought the Atonement to bless all who would ever live.

One day we will surely meet our Maker and stand before Him at the bar of judgment. Scripture teaches us that “the keeper of the gate is the Holy One of Israel; and he employeth no servant there; and there is none other way save it be by the gate; for he cannot be deceived, for the Lord God is his name.”²⁸ The Lord Himself will determine whether we have been true to the covenants we made with Him in the temple and thus merit the glorious blessings He has promised those who keep their covenants.

This perspective gives us strength to endure the trials of life. President Packer stated, “The ultimate purpose of all we teach is to unite parents and children in faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, that they are happy at home, sealed in an eternal marriage, linked to their generations, and assured of exaltation in the presence of our Heavenly Father.”²⁹

Each temple stands as a symbol of our membership in the Church, as a sign of our faith in life after death, and as a stepping-stone to eternal glory for us and our family. I pray that each member of the Church will prepare for the marvelous blessings of the temple.

Adapted from *Ensign*, Mar. 2002, 17–23

Notes

1. See Exodus 28:36; 39:30; Psalm 93:5.
2. See Exodus 19:5–6; Leviticus 19:1–2; Psalm 24:3–5; 1 Thessalonians 4:7; Moroni 10:32–33; Doctrine and Covenants 20:69; 110:6–9; see also Bible Dictionary, “Holiness.”
3. *Teachings of Gordon B. Hinckley* (1997), 638.
4. *Discourses of Brigham Young*, sel. John A. Widtsoe (1954), 416.
5. *Teachings of Gordon B. Hinckley*, 639.
6. See Joseph Smith Translation, Hebrews 7:3, in Bible appendix; Alma 13:8.
7. See Doctrine and Covenants 2:1 (dated Sept. 21, 1823); see also 138:47–48.
8. Doctrine and Covenants 124:40–41.
9. See Doctrine and Covenants 14:7.
10. Doctrine and Covenants 109:20.
11. Russell M. Nelson, in Conference Report, Oct. 1990, 96; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1990, 75.
12. See Gordon B. Hinckley, in Conference Report, Oct. 2000, 70–71; or *Ensign*, Nov. 2000, 52; “Your Greatest Challenge, Mother,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2000, 99. In these addresses, President Hinckley read the statement of the First Presidency and the Twelve that “the Church discourages tattoos. It also discourages the piercing of the body for other than medicinal purposes, although it takes no position on the minimal piercing of the ears by women for one pair of earrings.” See also “A Prophet’s Counsel and Prayer for Youth,” *New Era*, Jan. 2001, 11; *Ensign*, Jan. 2001, 7–8.
13. Neal A. Maxwell, *Not My Will, But Thine* (1988), 135; see also Doctrine and Covenants 100:16.
14. Acts 10:34; see also Moroni 8:12.
15. Boyd K. Packer, *The Holy Temple* (1980), 73.
16. First Presidency letter, Oct. 10, 1988.
17. See Isaiah 55:8–9.
18. See John A. Widtsoe, “Temple Worship,” *Utah Genealogical and Historical Magazine*, Apr. 1921, 62.
19. Richard G. Scott, in Conference Report, Apr. 1999, 33; or *Ensign*, May 1999, 27.
20. See Moroni 10:32; Joseph Smith Translation, Matthew 16:26, in Matthew 16:24, footnote d.
21. Neal A. Maxwell, *Not My Will, But Thine*, 135.
22. Moses 1:39.
23. See Philippians 4:7.
24. Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, comp. Bruce R. McConkie, 3 vols. (1954–56), 2:118.
25. See Alma 42:8.
26. Boyd K. Packer, in Conference Report, Apr. 1987, 27; or *Ensign*, May 1987, 24.
27. Doctrine and Covenants 128:15.
28. 2 Nephi 9:41.
29. Boyd K. Packer, in Conference Report, Apr. 1995, 8; or *Ensign*, May 1995, 8.



Each temple stands as a symbol of our membership in the Church, as a sign of our faith in life after death, and as a stepping-stone to eternal glory for us and our family.

▲ Recife Brazil Temple.
Dedicated Dec. 15, 2000.



A History of Temples

By Elder James E. Talmage (1862–1933)
Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

A Place Set Apart

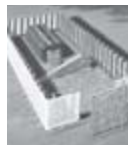
The essential idea of a temple is and ever has been that of a *place* specially set apart for service regarded as sacred; in a more restricted sense, a temple is a *building* constructed for and exclusively devoted to sacred rites and ceremonies.

The Latin *templum* was the equivalent of the Hebrew *beth Elohim* and signified the abode of Deity; hence it meant literally the house of the Lord.

Such structures have been raised in many different ages, both by worshippers of idols and by the followers of the true and living God. While the outer courts of such temples were used as places of general assembly and public ceremony, there were always inner precincts into which only the

consecrated priests might enter and wherein, it was claimed, the presence of the deity was manifest. Temples have never been regarded as places of ordinary public assembly but as sacred enclosures consecrated to the most solemn ceremonials of that particular system of worship.

The Tabernacle of Ancient Israel



In olden times, the people of Israel were distinguished among nations as the builders of sanctuaries to the name of the living God. This service was specifically required of them by Jehovah, whom they professed to serve. The history of Israel as a nation dates from the Exodus. No sooner had

*In both ancient
and modern
times the covenant
people of the Lord have
regarded the building
of temples as a labor
specifically required at
their hands.*

◀ The interior of the Kirtland Temple as photographed in the early 20th century.



▲ Moses anointed Aaron to serve as a priest in the tabernacle.



▲ The tabernacle served as a portable temple during Israel's wanderings in the wilderness.

they escaped from the environment of Egyptian idolatry than they were required to prepare a sanctuary, wherein Jehovah would manifest His presence and make known His will as their accepted Lord and King.

The tabernacle was sacred to Israel as the sanctuary of Jehovah. It had been built according to revealed plan and specifications (see Exodus 26–27). It was a compact and portable structure, and, though but a tent, it was made of the best, the most prized, and the costliest materials the people possessed. This condition of excellence was a nation's offering unto the Lord. It was in every respect the best the people could give, and Jehovah sanctified the proffered gift by His divine acceptance.

After Israel had become established in the land of promise, when,

after four decades of wandering in the wilderness, the covenant people possessed at last a Canaan of their own, the tabernacle was given a resting place in Shiloh; and thither came the tribes to learn the will and word of God (see Joshua 18:1; 19:51; 21:2; Judges 18:31; 1 Samuel 1:3, 24; 4:3–4). Afterward it was removed to Gibeon (see 1 Chronicles 21:29; 2 Chronicles 1:3) and yet later to the City of David, or Zion (see 2 Samuel 6:12; 2 Chronicles 5:2).

Solomon's Temple



David, the second king of Israel, desired and planned to build a house unto the Lord, declaring that it was unfit that he, the king, should dwell in a palace of cedar, while the sanctuary of God was but a tent (see 2 Samuel 7:2).

But the Lord spake by the mouth of Nathan the prophet, declining the proposed offering, because David, king of Israel, though in many respects a man after God's own heart, had sinned; and his sin had not been forgiven (see 2 Samuel 7:1–13; 1 Chronicles 28:2–3). Nevertheless, David was permitted to gather material for the house of the Lord, which edifice not he but Solomon, his son, should build.

Soon after Solomon's accession to the throne he set about the labor. He laid the foundation in the fourth year of his reign, and the building was completed within seven years and a half. The erection of the Temple of Solomon was an epoch-making event, not alone in the history of Israel but in that of the world.



▲ Completed in 1005 B.C., Solomon's Temple is one of the most remarkable buildings in history.

▲ The dedicatory services of Solomon's Temple lasted seven days—a week of holy rejoicing in Israel.

According to commonly accepted chronology, the temple was finished about 1005 B.C. In architecture and construction, in design and costliness, it is known as one of the most remarkable buildings in history. The dedicatory services lasted seven days—a week of holy rejoicing in Israel. The Lord's gracious acceptance was manifest in the cloud that filled the sacred chambers as the priests withdrew, "for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of God" (2 Chronicles 5:14; see also Exodus 40:35; 2 Chronicles 7:1–2).

Desecration of Solomon's Temple

The glorious preeminence of this splendid structure was of brief duration. Thirty-four years after its dedication, and but five years subsequent to the death of Solomon, its decline began; and this decline was soon to

develop into general spoliation and finally to become an actual desecration. Solomon had been led astray by the wiles of idolatrous women, and his wayward ways had fostered iniquity in Israel. The temple soon lost its sanctity, and Jehovah withdrew His protecting presence from the place no longer holy.

The Egyptians, from whose bondage the people had been delivered, were again permitted to oppress Israel. Shishak, king of Egypt, captured Jerusalem, "and he took away the treasures of the house of the Lord" (1 Kings 14:25–26). The work of desecration continued through centuries. Two hundred and sixteen years after the Egyptian spoliation, Ahaz, king of Judah, removed the altar

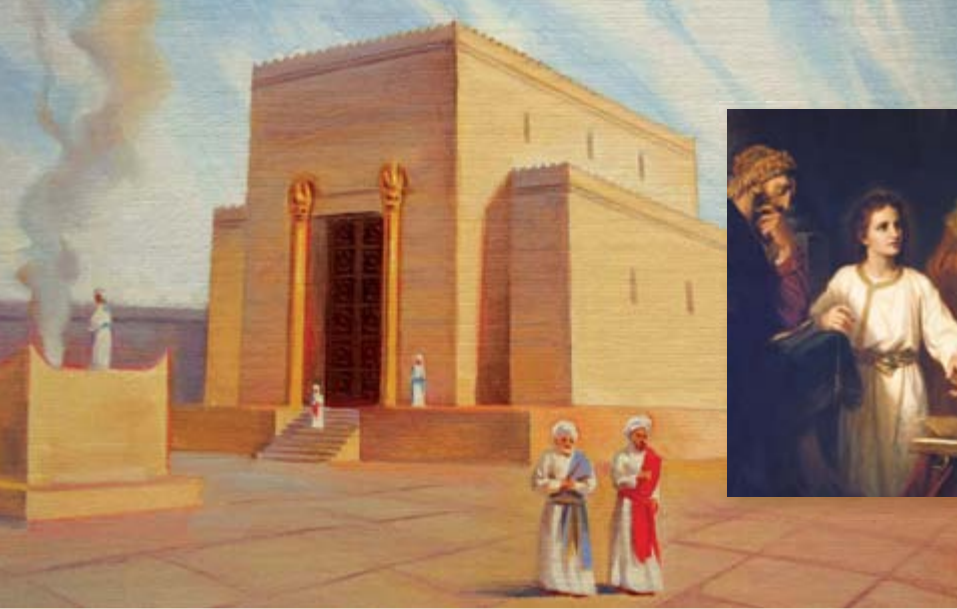
and the font and left but a house where once had stood a temple (see 2 Kings 16:7–9, 17–18; see also 2 Chronicles 28:24–25). Later, Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, completed the despoiling of the temple and destroyed the building by fire (see 2 Chronicles 36:18–19; see also 2 Kings 24:13; 25:9).

The Temple of Zerubbabel



Thus, about 600 years before the earthly advent of our Lord, Israel was left without

a temple. The people had become idolatrous and altogether wicked, and the Lord had rejected them and their sanctuary. The kingdom of Israel, comprising approximately 10 of the 12 tribes, had been made subject to Assyria about 721 B.C.,



▲ During their Babylonian captivity, the Jews were allowed to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the temple.

▲ Many incidents in the Savior's earthly life show that He recognized the sanctity of the temple.

and a century later the kingdom of Judah was subdued by the Babylonians. For 70 years the people of Judah—thereafter known as Jews—remained in captivity, even as had been predicted (see Jeremiah 25:11–12; 29:10).

Then, under the friendly rule of Cyrus (see Ezra 1, 2) and Darius (see Ezra 6), they were permitted to return to Jerusalem and once more to raise a temple in accordance with their faith. In remembrance of the director of the work, the restored temple is known in history as the Temple of Zerubbabel. While this temple was greatly inferior in richness of finish and furniture as compared with the splendid Temple of Solomon, it was nevertheless the best the people could build, and the Lord accepted it as an offering typifying the love and devotion of His covenant children.

The Temple of Herod



About 16 years before the birth of Christ, Herod I, king of Judea, commenced the

reconstruction of the then decayed and generally ruinous Temple of Zerubbabel. For five centuries that structure had stood, and doubtless it had become largely a wreck of time.

Many incidents in the earthly life of the Savior are associated with the Temple of Herod. It is evident from scripture that while opposed to the degraded and commercial uses to which the temple had been betrayed, Christ recognized and acknowledged the sanctity of the temple precincts. By whatsoever name it might have been known, it was to Him the house of the Lord.

The absolute destruction of the temple had been foretold by our Lord while He yet lived in the flesh (see Matthew 24:1–2; Mark 13:1–2; Luke 21:6). In the year A.D. 70 the temple was utterly destroyed by fire in connection with the capture of Jerusalem by the Romans under Titus.

Temples in Ancient America



The Temple of Herod was the last temple reared in the Eastern Hemisphere in ancient times. From the destruction of that great edifice onward to the time of the reestablishment of the Church of Jesus Christ in the 19th century, our only record of temple building is such mention as is found in the Book of Mormon, which affirms that temples were erected on what



▲ When the resurrected Savior appeared on the American continent, He came to the temple.

▲ After years of apostasy, the authority needed for temple worship was restored through Joseph Smith.

is now known as the American continent, but we have few details of construction and fewer facts as to administrative ordinances pertaining to these western temples. The people constructed a temple about 570 B.C., and this we learn was patterned after the Temple of Solomon, though it was greatly inferior to that gorgeous structure in grandeur and costliness (see 2 Nephi 5:16).

When the resurrected Lord manifested Himself to the Nephites on the western continent, He found them assembled about the temple (see 3 Nephi 11:1–10).

The Book of Mormon, however, makes no mention of temples even as late as the time of the destruction of the temple at Jerusalem; and, moreover, the Nephite nation

came to an end within about four centuries after Christ. It is evident, therefore, that on both hemispheres temples ceased to exist in the early period of the Apostasy and the very conception of a temple in the distinctive sense perished among mankind.

Apostasy and Restoration

For many centuries no offer of a sanctuary was made unto the Lord; indeed, it appears that no need of such was recognized. True, many edifices, most of them costly and grand, were erected. Of these some were dedicated to Peter and Paul, to James and John; others to the Magdalene and the Virgin; but not one was raised by authority and name to the honor of Jesus, the Christ. Among the multitude of chapels and shrines, of churches

and cathedrals, the Son of Man had not a place to call His own.

Not until the gospel was restored in the 19th century, with its ancient powers and privileges, was the holy priesthood manifest again among men. And be it remembered that the authority to speak and act in the name of God is essential to a temple, and a temple is void without the sacred authority of the holy priesthood. Through Joseph Smith, the gospel of old was restored to earth, and the ancient law was reestablished. In course of time, through the ministry of the Prophet, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was organized and established by manifestations of divine power.



▲ The first temple of the latter days was dedicated at Kirtland, Ohio, in March 1836.



▲ Soon after arriving in the Salt Lake Valley, Brigham Young proclaimed, "Here will be the temple."

Latter-day Temples



This Church began in the very early days of its history to provide for the erection of a temple (see Doctrine and Covenants 36:8; 42:36; 133:2). On the first day of June 1833, in a revelation to the Prophet Joseph Smith, the Lord directed the immediate building of a holy house in which He promised to endow His chosen servants with power and authority (see Doctrine and Covenants 95). The people responded to the call with willingness and devotion. In spite of dire poverty and in the face of unrelenting persecution, the work was carried to completion, and in March 1836 the first temple of modern

times was dedicated at Kirtland, Ohio (see Doctrine and Covenants 109). The dedicatory services were marked by divine manifestations comparable to those attending the offering of the first temple of olden times, and on later occasions heavenly beings appeared within the sacred precincts with revelations of the divine will to man. In that place the Lord Jesus was again seen and heard (see Doctrine and Covenants 110:1–10).

Within two years from the time of its dedication, the Kirtland Temple was abandoned by the people who built it; they were forced to flee because of persecution, and with their departure the sacred temple became an ordinary house.

The migration of the Latter-day Saints was first to Missouri and

later to Nauvoo, Illinois. Scarcely had they become settled in their new abode when the voice of revelation was heard calling upon the people to again build a house sacred to the name of God.

Though it was evident that the people would be forced to flee again, and though they knew that the temple would have to be abandoned soon after completion, they labored with might and diligence to finish and properly furnish the structure. It was dedicated April 30, 1846, but even before the completion of the building, the exodus of the people had begun.

The temple was abandoned by those who in poverty and by sacrifice had reared it. In November 1848 it became a prey to incendiary



▲ From 1893 to the present, more than 130 temples have been constructed and dedicated around the world.

flames, and in May 1850 a tornado demolished what remained of the blackened walls.

On July 24, 1847, the Mormon pioneers established a settlement where now stands Salt Lake City. A few days later, Brigham Young, prophet and leader, indicated a site in the sagebrush wastes and, striking the arid ground with his staff, proclaimed, “Here will be the temple of our God.” That site is now the beautiful temple block, around which the city has grown. The Salt Lake Temple was 40 years in building; the capstone was laid on April 6, 1892, and the completed temple was dedicated one year later.

A Divine Commission



In both ancient and modern times the covenant people have regarded the building of temples as a labor specifically required at their hands. It is plain that a temple is more than chapel or church, more than synagogue or cathedral; it is a structure erected as the house of the Lord, sacred to the closest communion between the Lord and the holy priesthood, and devoted to the highest and most sacred ordinances. Moreover, to be indeed a holy temple—accepted of God and by Him acknowledged as His house—the offering must have been called for, and both gift and giver must be worthy.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints proclaims that it is the possessor of the holy priesthood again restored to earth and that it is invested with divine commission to erect and maintain temples dedicated to the name and service of the true and living God, and to administer within those sacred structures the ordinances of the priesthood, the effect of which shall be binding both on earth and beyond the grave.

Adapted from *The House of the Lord: A Study of Holy Sanctuaries, Ancient and Modern* (1968)

For a list of latter-day temples, visit temples.lds.org

▲ Tampico Mexico Temple. Dedicated May 20, 2000.

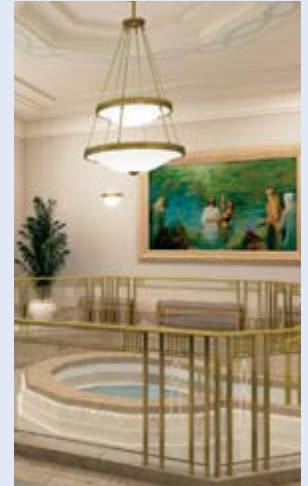
▲ Apia Samoa Temple. Dedicated Aug. 5, 1983. Rededicated Sept. 4, 2005.

▲ Madrid Spain Temple. Dedicated Mar. 19, 1999.



Things Pertaining to This House





The temple's baptismal font rests on the backs of twelve oxen (see 2 Chronicles 4:2–4), symbolically representing the twelve tribes of Israel. Following the Savior's example of selfless service, we can perform baptisms for our ancestors who died without receiving this ordinance.

- ◀ Stained glass, Nauvoo Illinois Temple (far left).
- ◀ Baptismal font, Draper Utah Temple.
- ▲ Baptismal font, The Gila Valley Arizona Temple.



In ordinance rooms an overview is given of God's plan for His children. Latter-day Saints learn of their premortal and mortal lives, the creation of the world and the Fall of man, the central role of Jesus Christ as the Redeemer of all God's children, and the blessings they can receive in the next life.

- ▲ Ordinance room,
Manhattan New York Temple.
- Ordinance room,
Newport Beach California Temple.









The celestial room symbolizes the exalted and peaceful state that all may achieve through living the gospel of Jesus Christ. This room represents the contentment, inner harmony, and peace available to eternal families in the presence of Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ.

◀ Celestial room,
San Antonio Texas Temple.

▲ Grand staircase,
Oquirrh Mountain Utah Temple.



In a sealing room, a bride and bridegroom are married not only for this life but also for eternity.



- ▲ Inlaid wood table,
Mexico City Mexico Temple.
- Sealing room,
Vancouver British Columbia Temple.





Temple Service, Temple Blessings

Our Temple Marriage Was Worth Any Price

By Geovanny Medina

It wasn't until after my first business venture broke down and my second one burned to the ground that I wondered if I would be able to take my fiancée, Beny, to the temple. We had heard that getting there would be a trial of faith, but when we made temple marriage our goal, we had no idea how thoroughly our faith would be tested.

Beny and I met in our native Panama after serving missions. Because of the laws in Panama, couples who wanted to start their married lives in the temple were married civilly just before traveling to the nearest temple, the Guatemala City Guatemala Temple. It would be an expensive and difficult trip, but being sealed was a blessing we did not want to live without.

The day after I proposed, I lost my job. Undaunted, I decided to earn money by giving bus tours. My bus broke down the first night. Concerned but determined, I next decided to sell T-shirts. The morning I went to pick up the shirts from the manufacturer, I found that the building had burned to the ground the night before. It seemed that my hopes had gone up in smoke too.

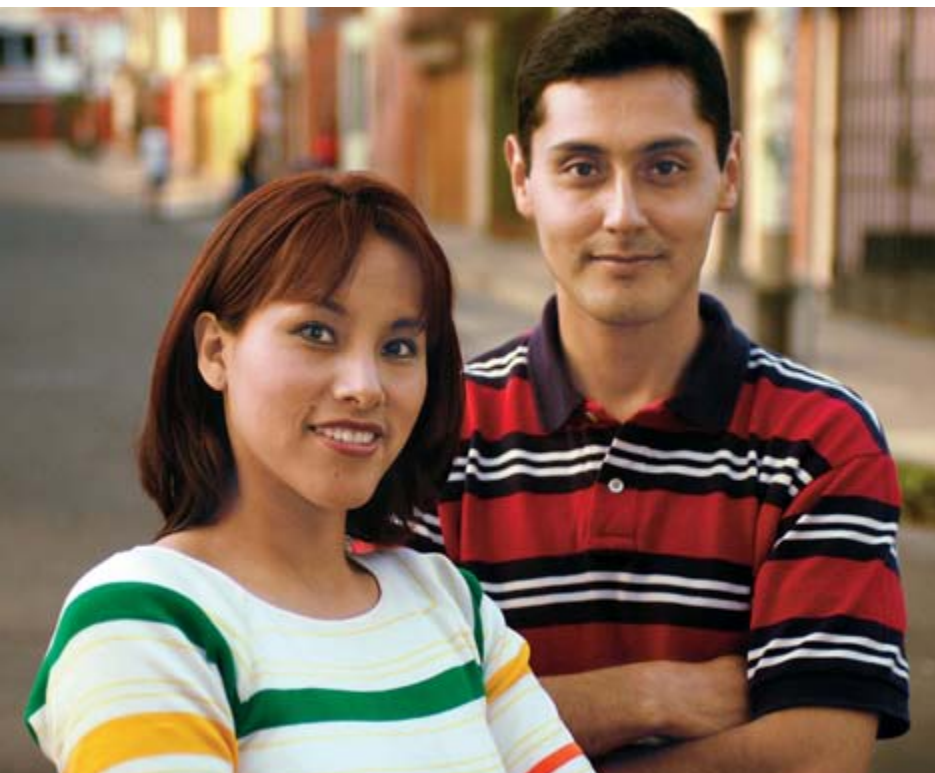
It was only a few months before the next scheduled temple trip, yet to this point, every effort I had made to raise money had ended in abrupt failure. I left the smoldering rubble and went to find Beny.

"I have nothing," I told her. "Maybe you shouldn't marry me."

"If I were marrying for money, I'd be married already," she said. "But I'm not marrying for money. I'm marrying you because I love you."

Because we believed in the sealing power of the priesthood restored in our day, we didn't give up, knowing that our temple marriage—for time and all eternity—was worth whatever sacrifice we had to make.

◀ Guatemala City Guatemala Temple.
Dedicated Dec. 14, 1984.



That was a turning point. We felt that we had passed an important test. As we pushed ahead with faith, doors began opening. I found work making furniture, though the pay wasn't enough to meet our needs. Then a kind bishop offered to help us with our bus fare. As exciting as his offer was, it didn't feel right. We were intent on being self-sufficient. But seeing that he truly desired to help, we asked him if he could give Beny a job instead. He did.

After earning enough money to travel to the temple, we married civilly and were at last on our way to Guatemala with 10 other Church members. But our test wasn't over yet.

Widespread transportation strikes stopped us at the border of Costa Rica. After waiting at the border for two days, our driver decided to turn back. But Beny and I, along with two brothers and one other couple, decided not to give up. After watching our bus turn

around and leave us, we walked into Costa Rica. We kept walking, sleeping in roadside shelters, until we reached the Nicaraguan border. From there we managed to take a taxi to the capital city, where we purchased a bus ticket to the Honduran border. Two days—and two more buses—later we finally arrived at the temple. We were dirty and tired, and we had spent far more than we had planned, but we were happy.

The next day, after all our trials and delays, we were finally sealed eternally as husband and wife. Our joy—worth the working, the waiting, and the worrying—was full!

Not everyone getting married in the temple will face such challenges, but for Beny and me (and the others who went to the temple with us), these experiences were a refining process. It was one of the greatest experiences of my life.

If our goal to marry in the temple had been only for worldly love, we wouldn't have made it. But because we believed in the sealing power of the priesthood restored in our day, we didn't give up, knowing that our temple marriage—for time and all eternity—was worth whatever sacrifice we had to make.

How the Temple Helps

By Frances W. Hodgson

Every parent knows that rearing children brings unexpected challenges and blessings. My husband and I have discovered that when we consider the eternal perspective of the role of parenting, we feel a great weight of responsibility along with great hope.

Of course, the Lord has given us spiritual rewards to ease our burdens. For our family, the greatest of those spiritual rewards has been going to the house of the Lord to receive His help as our children have grown and life has become more complicated. We have discovered that we can take very specific problems to the Lord in His temple.

As our children became teenagers we realized they had the potential to make serious mistakes. Probably the most frightening realization was that we had basically done all we knew how to do, yet danger signs loomed before us.

Then we discovered that temple worship could be an important element in our efforts to help our children choose the right. We have found great strength and blessing from attending the temple in the spirit of fasting and prayer for our children. We pray for a feeling of personal preparation, for the

appropriate thoughts and attitudes prior to entering the temple. When appropriate, our meditations while inside the temple are about our role as parents and about the needs of that particular child.

Sometimes answers have come rapidly and clearly. The first time it happened, we perhaps considered it a coincidence. But soon it was obvious that we indeed were engaging in a process that was bringing down the blessings of heaven.

Answers sometimes came in the form of people who influenced our children's lives, such as a loving bishop who helped our college-age daughter through a difficult crisis. Other children have been similarly blessed. Each has his or her agency, and they may choose not to respond the way we hope, but we feel that our service in the temple has brought heaven's help in our children's lives.

Our benefits from worship in the temple have extended beyond

blessing our children. On one occasion, my husband faced a very perplexing employment problem that he decided to take to the temple. On that day, the Lord blessed him with the impression that a particular scripture was the answer to his question.

Upon arriving home, he anxiously opened the scriptures and, to his delight, found help for his problem. This experience opened up a whole new application of the scriptures. The Lord can speak to His children by reminding us of scriptures that contain answers to our challenges. We appreciate this principle we learned in the temple.

In a world where evil abounds and where Satan has unleashed his powers to destroy homes, it is comforting to know that we can go to the house of the Lord and seek guidance. Regardless of what challenges we face as we care for our families, we find joy when we seek the sanctuary and solace of the temple.





For Children

Your Path to the Temple

The temple is the house of the Lord.

It is a place where we learn about Heavenly Father, make covenants (or promises) with Him, and receive great blessings. In the temple, we do important work for ourselves and for family members who have died. The work that is done in the temple includes baptisms for the dead, endowments, and sealings. These are called temple ordinances.

What Happens inside the Temple

Baptisms for the Dead

When you are eight years old, you can be baptized and confirmed a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Many of your ancestors have died without being baptized and confirmed. Though their bodies are dead, their spirits are still alive in the spirit world, where they can be taught the gospel of Jesus Christ.

When you are 12 years old, you can go to the temple and help these people by being baptized and confirmed in their name. They can then choose whether or not they want to accept baptism and confirmation. You will wear all white when you are baptized for the dead, just as you do when you are baptized for yourself.

Ask your parents to help you make a list of family members who have died without being baptized in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Find out if anyone has been to the temple to be baptized for them.

The Endowment

One of the great blessings of the temple is the endowment. *Endowment* means “gift.” When you receive your endowment, you will learn more about the plan of salvation and make covenants. Covenants are promises



Do you know which temple is closest to you? Draw a picture of that temple, and hang it where you will see it every day.

▲ Boston Massachusetts Temple.
Dedicated Oct. 1, 2000.



Look at the mirror in this picture. Some sealing rooms have mirrors like this one. Because of sealings in the temple, our families, just like the reflection in this mirror, can continue forever.

▲ Sealing room, Aba Nigeria Temple.

we make with Heavenly Father. As you keep those covenants, you prepare to live with Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ someday.

Inside the temple is a beautiful, peaceful room called the celestial room. In the celestial room we feel close to Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ, and we feel a little of what it will be like to live with Them in the celestial kingdom.

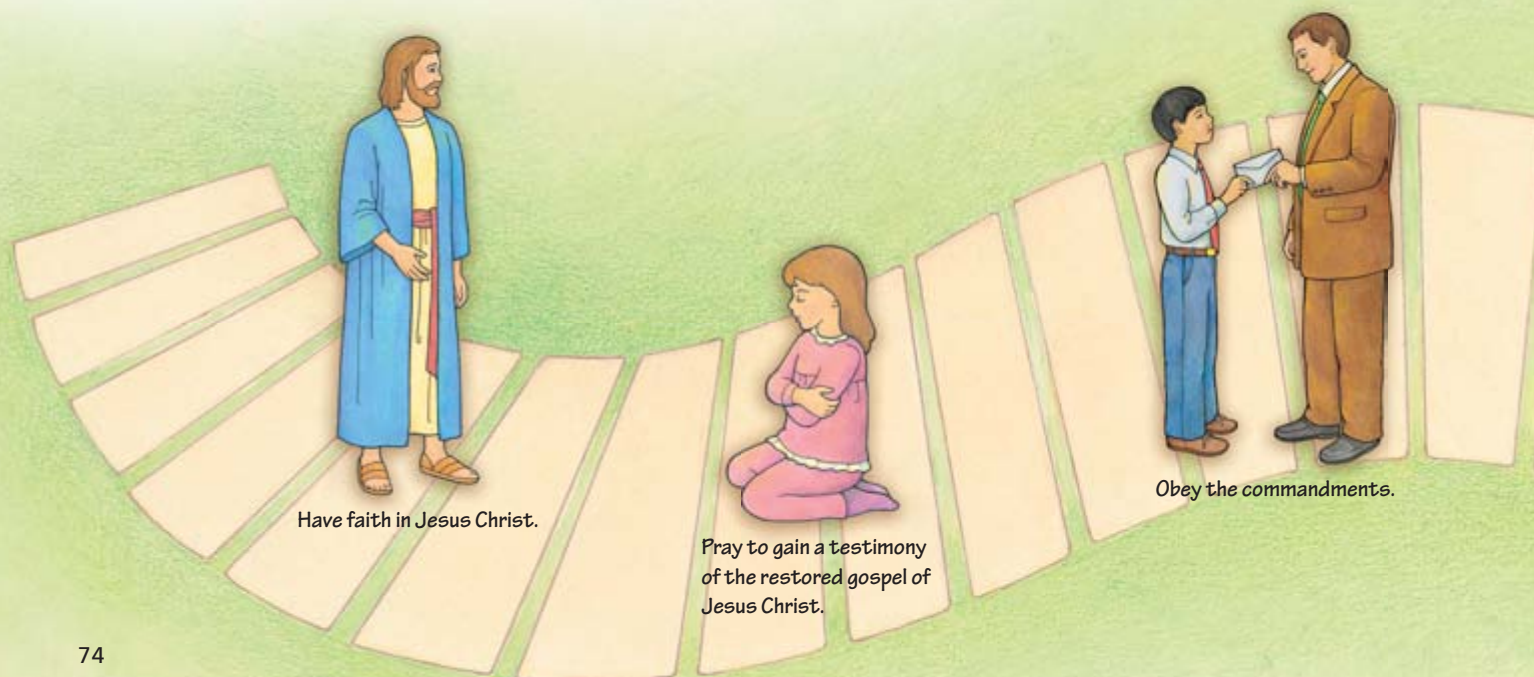
Sealings for Time and Eternity

When a man and a woman get married in the temple, they kneel at an altar and are sealed for time and all eternity. This means that they and their children can be united together as an eternal family. Plan to be married in the temple someday. This is the greatest blessing of the temple.

The Temple Recommend

The temple is a holy place. Bishops and branch presidents make sure that those who enter the temple are prepared and worthy. Before you go to the temple, you will have a special interview with your bishop or branch president. He will ask if you have a testimony of the Church, keep the commandments, support the Church leaders, obey the Word of Wisdom, pay tithing, and are honest in everything you do and say. He will help you know what to do to be worthy to enter the temple.

Follow the path below to learn how you can prepare to enter the temple.



Prepare Now to Enter the Temple

Heavenly Father gives many blessings to those who live righteously and attend the temple. It is important to prepare to enter the temple while you are young.

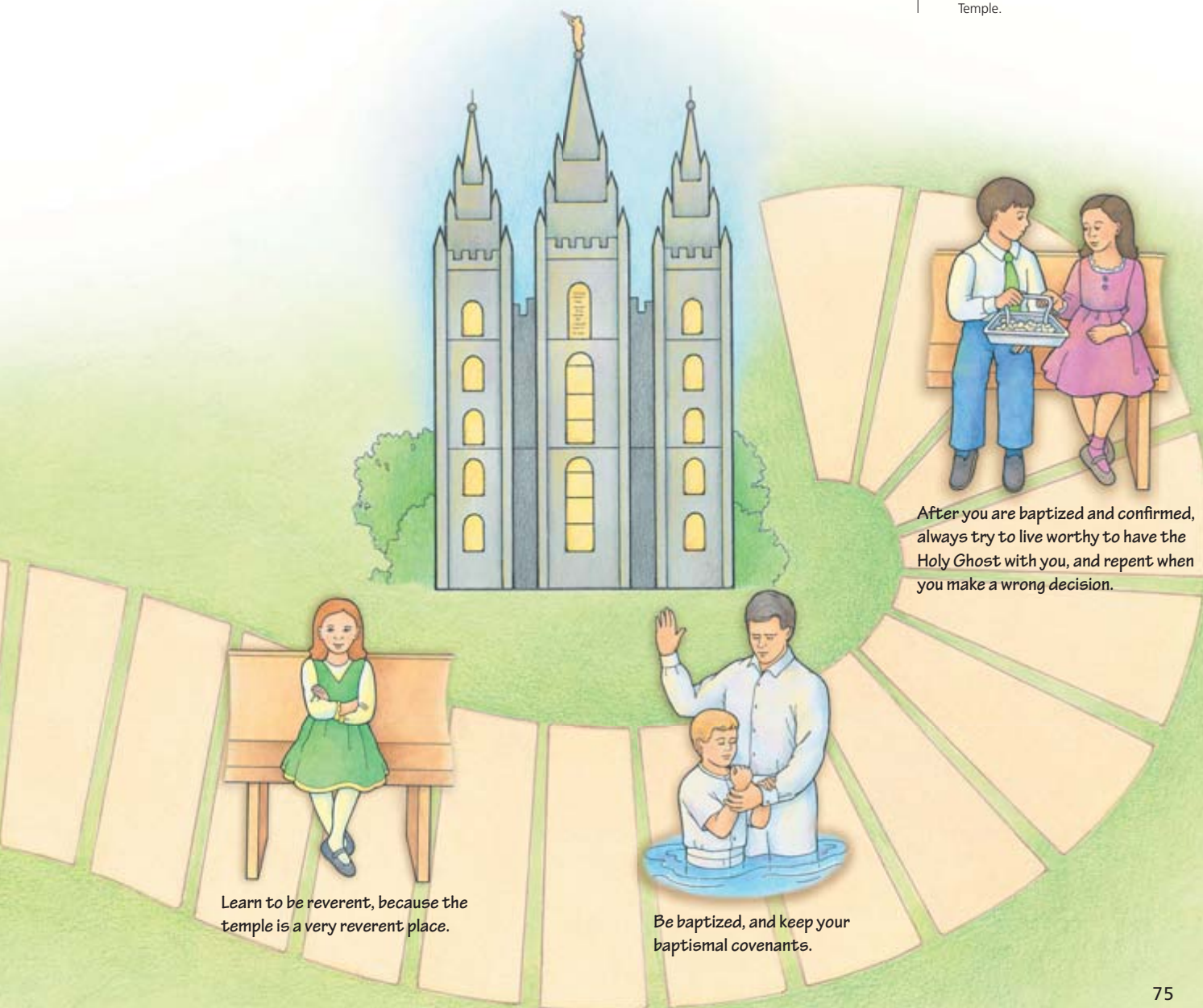
Heavenly Father loves you and wants you to receive the blessings of the temple. He will bless you for performing temple ordinances for

yourself and others. Although you may not be able to enter the temple now, if there is a temple nearby, you can visit the temple grounds and feel the spirit that is there. You can also keep a picture of the temple in your home to remind you of how important the temple is. Live righteously so that you will be worthy to enter the house of the Lord.



Look at the celestial room in this picture and in the picture on page 64. How do you feel when you see a celestial room?

▲ Celestial room, Nuku'alofa Tonga Temple.





For Youth

Making the Temple a Part of Your Life

The temple is the most sacred place on earth—a place where earth and heaven meet and where we feel close to our Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ. Although you are preparing to receive your temple ordinances in the future, the temple can have a profound influence on your life right now. Here are some things you can do to make the temple a part of your life while you are young.

Participate in Baptisms for the Dead

Worthy young men and young women ages 12 and older can visit the temple to be baptized for their ancestors who have died without being baptized.

President Thomas S. Monson spoke of the joy this service brings:

“One morning as I walked to the temple, I saw a group of young women who, early that morning, had

participated in baptisms for those who had passed beyond. Their hair was wet. Their smiles were radiant. Their hearts were filled with joy. One girl turned back to face the temple and expressed her feelings. ‘This has been the happiest day of my life,’ she said.”¹

Thirteen-year-old Jessica Hahn of Daphne, Alabama, was baptized for some of her ancestors in the Atlanta Georgia Temple. Though it took five hours to travel to the temple, she says the experience was wonderful. “Being able to put on pure white clothes and be baptized for my ancestors gave me a great feeling,” she said. “I feel like I know them now.”

Go to the temple as often as you can. There you can experience the joy of helping others receive the blessings of baptism.

*Although you
are preparing
to receive your temple
ordinances in the future,
the temple can have a
profound influence on
your life right now.*

◀ Seoul Korea Temple.
Dedicated Dec. 14, 1985.



President Dieter F. Uchtdorf explained that “the standards set by the Lord in the temple recommend questions are very similar to the standards found in *For the Strength of Youth*.”

Support the Work of the Temple

There are many ways to support temple work, even if you can’t go to the temple often yourself. You can learn about your ancestors and see that temple ordinances are performed for them. You can offer to take care of young children so their parents can attend the temple. Because temple service focuses so much on families, you can work to strengthen your own family. And you can share with others your testimony that the temple truly is the house of the Lord.

Live Worthy to Enter the Temple

Because the temple is such a sacred place, the Lord has set high standards for us to live by before we can go inside. President Dieter F. Uchtdorf explained that “the standards set by the Lord in the temple recommend questions are very similar to the standards found in *For the Strength of Youth*. In times of calmness but also in times of greatest temptation, these standards and the guidance of the Holy Ghost will help you make the right choices. . . . How you apply these standards will say much about who you are and what you seek to become.”²

Live the Lord’s standards, and you’ll be worthy to enter the temple. Having the desire to enter the temple in the future can help you turn away from temptation today. “It gives you

a reason to stay worthy,” said Marlon Ruiz, age 16, of Sunrise, Florida. “As long as you have that goal, you always think about what you do because you can’t go into the temple when you’re not worthy.”

Plan for a Temple Marriage

“I see the temple and think of being married there someday,” said Annika Reithmeier, age 16, of Oslo, Norway. “I know that the promises you make in the temple are promises with the Lord. The things you learn there won’t just change or disappear.”

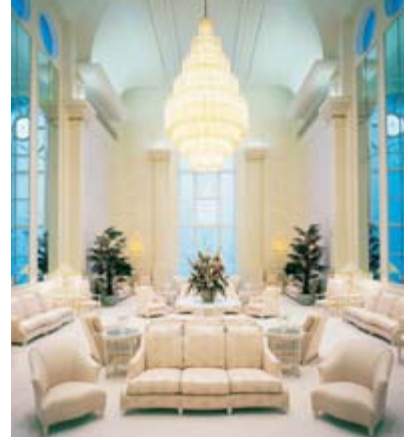
Keep a picture of the temple someplace where you will see it often, and look forward to the day when you can receive your own temple ordinances.

When she was 14 years old, Jody Hazelbaker of American Fork, Utah, visited the Mount Timpanogos Utah Temple during the open house. “When I was walking through the bride’s room, I paused for a moment and gazed into the mirror,” she recalled. “As I looked, I could see myself in the future, wearing a beautiful wedding gown and a big smile. I knew this was the place where I was going to be married, in the temple, close to my Father in Heaven.”

Notes

1. Thomas S. Monson, “Your Celestial Journey,” *Ensign*, May 1999, 97–98.
2. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, in Conference Report, Apr. 2006, 46–47; or *Ensign*, May 2006, 44.

Commonly Asked Questions



What do people do in the temple?

In the temple we are taught, we make covenants, and we are promised blessings. We receive ordinances that enable us to live in the presence of God.

One ordinance we receive in the temple is the endowment. The word *endowment* means “gift” or “bestowal.” As part of this ordinance, we are taught about the purpose of life, the mission and Atonement of Jesus Christ, and Heavenly Father’s plan for His children. We gain a glimpse of what it will be like to live in His presence as we feel the peaceful atmosphere of the temple.

Another temple ordinance is the sealing ordinance, in which husbands and wives are sealed to each other and children are sealed to their parents in eternal families. This means that if we are faithful to our covenants, our family relationships will continue for eternity.

In addition to receiving these ordinances for ourselves, we can receive them for our deceased ancestors. In this way, people who

died without receiving essential ordinances such as baptism and confirmation, the endowment, and sealing have the opportunity to accept these ordinances.

What is it like inside the temple?

The temple is a peaceful, sacred place, set apart from the cares and turmoil of the world. All areas of the temple are beautifully and carefully maintained to preserve a spirit of reverence. Because it is the Lord’s house, and because of the sacred work performed there, in the temple we can feel the Spirit abundantly and feel close to the Lord.

There we can receive personal revelation and spiritual strength to help us overcome our trials. This is part of the reason we are encouraged to attend the temple regularly.

How should I dress when I go to the temple?

Wear modest Sunday dress when you attend the temple. Avoid extremes in dress and grooming,

just as you would in a sacrament meeting. You show reverence and respect for the Lord and His house and invite the Spirit by being clean and presentable.

In the temple there are private dressing rooms where you change out of your Sunday clothing and put on white clothing. This change of clothing serves as a reminder that you are temporarily leaving the world behind and entering a holy place. White clothing symbolizes purity, and the fact that all are dressed alike in the temple creates a sense of unity and equality.

When should I receive my endowment?

Most likely you will receive your endowment shortly before you serve a full-time mission or before you are married in the temple. Single members in their late teens or early twenties who have not received a mission call and are not engaged to be married in the temple are generally not recommended to receive their own endowment.

▲ Celestial room, Mount Timpanogos Utah Temple.

New members wait at least one year after their baptism and confirmation before receiving their endowment.

Receiving your own endowment is an important matter. Discuss it with your bishop. Pray and ponder to know when you are ready.

What can I say to others about my experience in the temple?

You can talk about what the interior of the temple looks like, and you can freely share the feelings you have in the temple. However, temple covenants and ordinances, including the words used, are too sacred to be discussed in detail outside the temple. By avoiding discussion of these sacred things outside the temple, we protect them from mocking, ridicule, or disrespect. Do not be casual when talking about your experiences in the temple.

Why is symbolism used in the temple?

During His earthly ministry, the Savior often taught in parables to represent eternal truths symbolically. He has directed that we be taught in a similar way in the temple. There is symbolism in the temple ordinances and covenants, their presentation, the physical setting, and the clothing worn. If you ponder the meaning of these symbols with the guidance of the



Holy Ghost, they can help you recognize truth, learn about Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ, and grow spiritually.

I have family members who cannot enter the temple. What can I do to help them feel included in my temple marriage?

This can be a tender subject. Since the temple is the house of the Lord, dedicated to Him, those who enter must hold a current temple recommend, which certifies that they are living by the standards He has set. However, those who do not have a current temple recommend are welcome on temple grounds, and most temples have a room where they can wait while family members are being sealed. A couple with family members who cannot enter the temple may invite their bishop

or another Church member to stay with them in the waiting room.

A couple may also arrange with their bishop to hold a special meeting afterward for relatives and friends who do not have a recommend. This meeting provides an opportunity for them to feel included and to learn about eternal marriage. Although no ceremony is performed and no vows are exchanged, rings may be exchanged at such a meeting.

What should I do to prepare to receive temple ordinances?

You can prepare by attending the temple regularly to participate in baptisms for the dead, by participating in a temple preparation seminar organized by your bishop, and by studying the scriptures and the articles in this booklet.

You can also prepare by living the Lord's standards of temple worthiness. Nurture your testimony of God the Father and of Jesus Christ and His restored gospel. Obey the Word of Wisdom and the law of chastity. Sustain your Church leaders, pay a full tithing, and attend your Church meetings. Be honest in your dealings with others, and ensure that your family life is in harmony with the teachings of the Church. Keep your baptismal covenants so that you will be ready to receive the higher covenants of the temple.

▲ Jordan River Utah Temple. Dedicated Nov. 16, 1981.

► Nauvoo Illinois Temple. Dedicated June 27, 2002.





THE CHURCH OF
JESUS CHRIST
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

