

“Temple Worship in Our Lives”

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My dear sisters, and brave brethren that are here today, humbly and gratefully I stand before you—grateful for outstanding women such as you—humbled by the magnitude and privilege of the task before us as women in an increasingly difficult world. In this audience we have women of all ages, all situations, and all stages of life, and all have challenges. Adversity is part of the package of mortality. Temple Worship allows us to feel and understand our eternal promises drenched in joy.

As we dwelt with our Heavenly Father before this world, we came to understand his plan that we would have to leave his presence in order to gain it again forever. We would have to experience the desires of mortality, the temptations of the world, and the influences of the adversary around us, so that righteous agency could be our choice. We were told that we would not be alone if we would follow his teachings.

It is likely that most of us could not imagine that we would not have chosen the Savior and the plan of the Father. How thrilled we were with the divine role and possibilities of women. I like Sister Julie B. Beck’s words, quote The half of Father’s plan that creates life, that nurtures souls, that promotes growth, that influences everything else was given to us. We can’t delegate it. We can’t pass it off to any one. It’s ours. We can refuse it, we can deny it, but it’s still our part and we’re accountable for it. There will come a day when we will all remember what we knew before we were born. We will remember that we fought in a great conflict for this privilege, close quote. Don’t forget that the adversary was in that fight for his own plan, and he is aware of our mission, and his effort is to grey, veil, and destroy the whole vision of women’s great destiny. The adversary has acquired more tools as weapons in our day than ever before to create an illusion that the world’s way is popular, exciting, and desirable. Goethe stated even back in the 1700 that Truth must be repeated again and again because error is constantly being preached round about.

We were probably not aware of the power of the weapons that the adversary would use in our day, in our experience for mortality; such as the availability of pornography and drugs. Those two weapons alone can destroy us and our families, but there are more. The far reaching power of the internet can be a blessing or a curse. Immorality, rudeness, and vulgarity are displayed as normal actions by media, books, and people. The cell phone technology to call, text, use the

internet, take photos, and reach the whole world with one touch of a button is both fabulous and terrible.

Paraphrasing a remark by Elder Maxwell, It would be nice if in our lives all the lights were green, no stop signs, and a parking place in front. It is not so, however, as we direct our homes, our lives, our goals, we navigate through this maze of filth armed with the scriptures, our daily prayers, the power of the Holy Ghost, the Holy Temple, and our participation in the church under the direction of the Prophets. Never in any time of history have we had so many blessings and opportunities for success.

Recently, I received one of those home magazines which are mostly advertisements about opportunities and businesses of the area. It had a total of 24 pages. Ten of the pages told me what women want: permanent makeup, lazar cosmetics, ready melt weight systems, spas for age defying tans, and new and exciting fashions for all. What an age we live in where technology and science can cure every flaw, if it matters. How huge in our world is status, and how thin is character. How front row is sports and body perfection, and somewhere lost on the back row is exactness and honor. However, if we savor the scriptures, we are not fooled. They always return us to the right perspective. We read in Mark 8:36, For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?

We were living in England when 9/11 occurred. Being away from home and hearing news from a foreign perspective, I read what I could about the event. One article caught my eye. U.S. News & World Report told of a 26 year old young man, Scott Johnson, who was on the 89th floor of the twin towers. He was a stock analyst, and a rising star. He was single, and came from a great family. He had grown up in Montclair, New Jersey, in a large Federal style home with a white picket fence and a hilltop view of the twin towers 19 miles to the east. He spoke that morning to his father, Dad, I'm OK, he said, It was the other tower that was hit. They quickly got off the phone. Four minutes later Tom Johnson, the sixty year old father, watched on television as the second plane flew into the south tower. I felt in my heart that it had hit him. Johnson says. I wasn't 100 percent certain that it had hit right at his level, but if it wasn't his level, it was below his level. It was the last time Tom Johnson would talk to his son. Scott's name appeared on a survivor's site, and the family raised their expectations. That evening, 14 friends and relatives gathered around the Johnson dining room table, Scott, we love you so much, said Tom Johnson, His normally steely banker's voice cracked and became louder. Lord, we want Scott back RIGHT NOW, he practically shouted. We want him BACK FOREVER.

Member and non-member alike when all the worldly possibilities are striped away want the principle of FOREVER. What women really want is not what came as a magazine to my home a short time ago, but to know and have the faith that those we love and care for can be ours FOREVER. Assuredly and peacefully with this knowledge we are drenched in joy. There is a price to be paid for that blessing as is the case for every blessing. With all I have previously mentioned about the dangers of our particular time, sisters, we live in the most wonderful era of opportunities ever presented to man, because the principle and path to

FOREVER has once again been restored. Because of choices, errors, or circumstances, some ay feel like the only way that the, FOREVER BLESSING, could be their's is through a huge miracle. I believe in miracles.

An important principle never to forget is found in Ether 12:12, For if there be no faith among the children of men, GOD CAN DO NO MIRACLE among them; wherefore, he showed not himself until after their faith. I want to emphasize the words, God can do no miracle. Is not God perfect? Can he not do all things? This scripture seems to limit his power. No, God made the laws, and because he is perfect, he will not break his own laws. One of the great laws given to us not only here, but also in the pre-existence, was the law of agency. It is a gift. Another essential law is faith. If we choose to have faith and be believing, and demonstrate that faith by studying, praying, serving, and receiving every ordinance required by the Lord in the Lord's time table, MIRACLES will happen in our lives. Faith and Agency are two great keys. Every blessing will be ours. As Moroni writes in the closing chapters of the book of Mormon, Behold, I say unto you that whoso believeth in Christ, doubting nothing, whatsoever he shall ask the Father in the name of Christ it shall be granted him; and this promise is unto all.... Doubt not, but be believing, ...Be wise in the days of your probation.

Do we think that we are an exception to the promises of the Lord, or that perhaps our situation is more difficult. We all have our own type of Gethsemane or a Liberty Jail trial, but even in those grave moments the Lord said through His prophet, Joseph Smith,

Therefore, dearly beloved brethren, let us cheerfully, CHEERFULLY, do all things that lie in our power; and then may we stand still, with the utmost assurance, THAT GREAT FAITH STATED IN ETHER, to see the salvation of God, The events in church history at that time were full of tragedies, and that statement of the Lord to do all we can, and do it cheerfully seemed impossible, but what a celestial message to us.

I love the words of the Lord through Paul, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. What has God already prepared for us? Exaltation, Eternal life, Home, and it is so magnificent that there is nothing in this life that we will ever see, hear, or feel that will be as great. It is worth every effort and sacrifice in our mortal life. It has everything to do with the temple. I was helping a beautiful bride in the Boise Temple. As she looked in the large mirror in the brides' room, seeing herself so exquisite in white, she said, Sister Hillam, I have waited my whole life, perhaps 20 years, for this moment. I replied, not just this life, you have been waiting hundreds of years. This is the most important day of your life!

Shortly after President Spencer W. Kimball became President of the Church, speaking at a fireside for youth held in the Tabernacle he said, If you understood the ordinances of the House of the Lord, you would crawl on your hands and feet for thousands of miles in order to receive them! Our challenge is in the words, if you understood the ordinances of the House of the Lord. How do we understand them? No one ever comprehended them at first experience, but because of the unique gift granted to us in this dispensation, the privilege of proxy service, and the increased number of temples, we can return and refresh our spirits in the holy temples again and again. There the Lord has promised to teach us, if we ask and listen. You see the Lord reserves the right to reveal to each of us, individually through the Holy Ghost the symbols and ordinances of the temple. We learn about the temple the same way we learn about the gospel, line upon line, precept upon precept, NOW THE NEXT TWO STATEMENTS ARE VERY IMPORTANT, as we return and when we are ready. As we return to the temple, the Lord will teach us; and because the Lord knows us perfectly, he knows when we are ready. Regular attendance brings regular revelation if we ask and are prepared.

When we study the scriptures, and the unfolding history of the restoration, we begin to understand that the Lord was leading the Prophet Joseph Smith principle by principle to the greatest blessings ever given to man which are the blessings of the temple. In his first communication with Moroni, after instructing him about the plates of the Book of Mormon, he quoted the fifth verse of Malachi.

Behold, I will reveal unto you the Priesthood, by the hand of Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. Moroni repeated it three more times. The prophet knew something wonderful was coming. Who was this Elijah?

He lived 900 years before the Savior and did not taste of death, but was translated. We learn from latter-day revelation that Elijah held the sealing power of the Melchizedek Priesthood, and was the last prophet to do so before the time of Jesus Christ.

Elijah appeared on the Mount in company with Moses also a translated being, and conferred the keys of the priesthood on Peter, James and John..

The Savior, himself, revealed to the people in third Nephi the mission of Elijah, Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord;

After a tremendous amount of instruction, and even a rebuke to the Prophet Joseph Smith the first Temple in this dispensation was finally completed. It truly was a miracle for the saints of that day. The Prophet Joseph Smith was instructed to dedicate that temple. He had never had such a privilege, and it was given him by revelation. It is now the 109th section of the Doctrine & Covenants.

The message of that section is also for us today. In it was a great promise to us that the Son of Man might have a place to manifest himself to his people. Not just to manifest himself to the Prophet Joseph Smith, but to us. It further states in verse 15, That they, MEANING US, may grow up in thee, AS WE ARE TAUGHT IN THE TEMPLE, WE WILL BECOME STEADFAST AND IMMOVABLE, and receive a fullness of the Holy Ghost. We already have the gift of the Holy Ghost, but what a blessing to have a fullness of the Holy Ghost. In verse 22, And we ask thee, Holy Father that they servants may go forth from this house armed with they power, and that thy name may be upon them, and thy glory be round about them, and thine angels have charge over them. With such a promise, we would want to be his servants. It will drench our life in joy regardless of trials.

One week after the dedication of the Kirtland temple, the Prophet Joseph Smith with Oliver Cowdery received the following vision, The veil was taken from our minds... We saw the Lord. What did the Lord say to them in the temple? I have accepted this house, and my name shall be here (not just the Kirtland Temple, but all temples); and I will manifest myself to my people in mercy in this house.....Yea the hearts of thousands and tens of thousands shall greatly rejoice in consequence of the blessings which shall be poured out, and the endowment with which my servants have been endowed in this house. Who else came? Moses, Elias, and yes Elijah each with their keys.

Therefore, the keys of this dispensation are committed into your hands; and by this ye may know that the great and dreadful day of the Lord is near, even at the doors. We are so blessed to live in the day of temples, and the time of the restoration of sealing keys.

President Packer has said, No work is more of a protection to this Church than temple work...No work is more spiritually refining. No work we do gives us more power. No work requires a higher standard of righteousness...If we will accept the revelations concerning temple ordinance work, if we will enter into our covenants, ... the Lord will protect us. We will receive inspiration sufficient for the challenges of life....

May we find our sacred space in the Holy Temple, and through our preparation, faith, and devotion teach our children to have the desire and vision of FOREVER. Children emulate that which we love. They see where we spend our time.

Those lasting and eternal blessings are only available to those who are willing to come to the temple and claim them, and then to return to serve others, and learn to understand Eternity drenched in joy. I so testify of this greatest of all blessing, the Holy Temple for us and our children, in the name of Jesus Christ Amen.

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Ether 12:12

Mormon 9:21-27-28

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Corinthians 2:9

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JSH 1:38 (Malachi 4:5-6)

Mathew 17:3

3 Nephi 25:5

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President Boyd K. Packer, PREPARING TO ENTER THE HOLY TEMPLE, p.37

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