

approached him. To my surprise I heard myself saying, "Welcome home, son!" and I extended my hand as a greeting. And then in a formal style I invited him to sit close to me in the living room for a personal talk. I heard myself expressing my love for him. I talked with him about the battle that every one of us has to fight each day within ourselves.

As I expressed my confidence in him, he broke into tears, confessing his unworthiness and condemning himself beyond measure. Now it was my role to put his transgression in the proper perspective and to comfort him. A wonderful spirit came over us, and we ended up crying together, hugging each other in love and finally in joy. What could have been a disastrous confrontation between father and son became, through the help from the powers above, one of the most beautiful experiences of our relationship that we both have never

forgotten.

Brothers and sisters, I know that God lives, that this is his church, that these are the days of preparation and warning; and I testify that when we are not fully exercising the love of God as a power as he has commanded us to do, our marriages will not be strong, our families will be weak, and our own salvation will be in jeopardy. I bear you this testimony in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

President Hinckley

Elder F. Enzio Busche has just spoken to us.

We shall now be pleased to hear from Elder William Grant Bangerter of the First Quorum of the Seventy, who will be followed by Elder David B. Haight of the Council of the Twelve Apostles.

Elder W. Grant Bangerter

Others today here have spoken about the temple, but last November, at the dedication of the Jordan River Temple, we held three services a day for five days, and we didn't say it all. This is a good time to talk about temples, and I would like to explain what temples are for. As a people, the Latter-day Saints have accomplished a magnificent work in the temples. They serve with commendable devotion to find the names of deceased relatives, to work in extracting names from the records, and then to perform the ordinances for the redemption of the dead as well as for themselves. Over sixteen thousand temple workers give voluntary service in the temples, thus approaching in numbers the force of full-time missionaries who are proclaiming the gospel.

Serve in house of the Lord

This is a day of prophetic fulfillment. As Isaiah said twenty-seven hundred years ago:

"It shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it.

"And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." (Isa. 2:2-3.)

The meaning, depth, and power of that expression can only be per-

ceived by those who know about temples.

We are passing through a remarkable period in connection with the temples. Four more new temples were announced last week. The past two years have seen the number of temples, including those in operation and those in planning or under construction, increase from twenty-one to forty-one. Three of these have been dedicated and have commenced their operation in the same period. Nothing of like nature has taken place in the entire history of the Church. The stake conferences now being conducted throughout the Church are to teach the Latter-day Saints more about our mission to serve in the house of the Lord.

Doctrine of the temple

I think it will serve a purpose, however, to mention some generalizations and misconceptions about temples which have developed which show a less than perfect understanding. For example, it is sometimes said:

1. My genealogy has all been done.
2. Computers and the name extraction will do the work for me.
3. Temple work is for the dead.
4. Temple work is for old people.
5. We go to the temple to do a name.
6. Going to the temple is optional.

As we study the scriptures, we learn that the doctrine of the temple requires the following of the Latter-day Saints:

First, the building of temples.

Second, going to the temple for our blessings.

Third, returning to perform the ordinances for deceased relatives.

Fourth, doing the work for others as well.

Fifth, frequent attendance for per-

sonal spiritual benefit.

What are all these temples for?

Temples are for the living

First: *Temples are for the living members of the Church.* Going to the temple is *not* optional. Temples are "a place of instruction for all those who are called to the work of the ministry . . . that they may be perfected in [their] understanding . . . in all things pertaining to the kingdom of God on the earth." (D&C 97:13-14.) "Therefore, verily I say unto you, that your anointings, and your washings, . . . your solemn assemblies, . . . and . . . your oracles in your most holy places . . . [are] for the glory, honor, and endowment of [Zion's] municipals [or in other words, her citizens, and] are ordained by the ordinance of my holy house, which my people are always commanded to build unto my holy name." (D&C 124:39.)

The endowment in the temple is a necessary and sacred blessing as essential for the members of the Church as baptism. Thereafter come the sealings of wives to their husbands and of children to their parents. Without these blessings there is no fullness of the gospel. Without them, said Moroni, the "earth would be utterly wasted at his coming." (D&C 2:3.)

Countless families in distant areas have never had this privilege. Even in areas where temples have been established for generations, half of the families have never been sealed together. *Temple work is for the living members of the Church.*

Redemption of the dead

Second: *Temple work is for the redemption of the dead.* The scriptures and the doctrine, however, refer more specifically to a particular group of the dead. Malachi spoke about "binding" fathers to children and children to

fathers. (See Malachi 4:6.) Joseph Smith emphasized temple blessings for our *kindred* dead, *our* dead. (See D&C 124:32-36, 127:5-6; 128:8, 14-15.) The emphasis is on the family. The priority is to seek out our own deceased relatives.

The work is just beginning

Your genealogy has not all been done. My own grandparents performed "all" the temple work for their deceased relatives fifty-five years ago. Since that time our family has discovered sixteen thousand others. In areas where new temples are being built, this work is just beginning. The controlled extraction process being carried on in many of the stakes of the Church with such great devotion and success does not touch those of the more recent generations and will not save those of our own close relationship. It is, however, of immeasurable value as the more distant generations are reached.

And may we always remember that we perform the temple ordinances for people and not for names. Those we call "the dead" are alive in the spirit and are present in the temple.

Preparing a people

The purpose of the Church, then, is to have a prepared people, ready to receive the temples as they are completed. It would be unfortunate to build temples around the earth and have them stand largely idle. One way to prepare people is to give a strong sermon. Sometimes the result is that we feel guilty. Then after two weeks this feeling wears off, and we get over it. The answer to having a prepared people lies with the leadership of the priesthood.

In Chile, for example, where I served at the time the temple in Santiago was announced, it was found that among one hundred thousand

members only three thousand men had been ordained to the priesthood. Thus, since they must have the priesthood to enter the temple, only a limited number would be qualified. We determined, therefore, that we would prepare at least ten thousand men to be thus ordained so that they with their faithful companions could then go to the temple.

The Saints in Chile have also undertaken the responsibility to prepare one hundred thousand names of their deceased relatives to take with them to the temple by the time it is ready. Similar preparations are being made in other areas.

Renewed and continued preparation

Now, where temples have long been established, it is time for a renewed and continuing preparation. This is the work of home teachers, quorum presidents, bishops, and especially high priests, as well as all others involved in teaching the gospel. I remember one elders quorum president who determined that his leadership objective would be to help every member in his quorum to go to the temple. His initial report stated that all but six had qualified. He later reported that all but three had gone before he was released. After his release, however, they "got" the other three.

Having the privilege of working each day in the administration of the temples, I am constantly impressed with the richness, the holiness, and the glory of the blessings administered there. Questions come to us about the ordinances performed in the temple. We, of course, are not permitted to discuss them outside the temple, because of their sacred nature. Others press for a preparatory orientation so that those who enter the temple will not be confused. I want to emphasize that *the preparation to enter the temple lies in the gospel*. Nothing is said or

done in the temple which does not have its foundation in the scriptures.

Teach them the gospel

The gospel is *faith in the Lord, Jesus Christ*. This implies a willingness to accept His doctrine and take upon us His name, being obedient to His commandments. *The gospel is repentance* and a cleansing from all iniquity. *It is baptism* whereby we have made the covenant and promise. It is the right to have the *companionship of the Holy Ghost*, which, when we have a correct frame of mind, will teach us as we go through the temple. *The gospel is the scriptures*. The answer to almost any appropriate question about the temple will be found in the scriptures for those who seek it. *The gospel is prayer, humility, teachableness, charity*. It is *commitment* and it is *covenant* and *ordinances*. It is also *blessings*.

Now may I give some counsel to teachers, bishops, and stake presidents. No one, of course, will learn all

about the temple by only one experience; but if you want to prepare your people for the temple, teach them the gospel. Don't try to teach them what goes on in the temple—we go to the temple to learn about that. If these gospel principles are properly established in our lives, we will understand the temple all right. If they are not in place, nothing else can help, and those lacking that knowledge ought not yet to go.

May God bless this people to embrace the blessings and perform the sacred service provided in the temples, is my sincere prayer in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

President Hinckley

Elder William Grant Bangerter has just addressed us.

Elder David B. Haight, a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, will be our next speaker. We shall then hear from President N. Eldon Tanner, First Counselor in the First Presidency.

Elder David B. Haight

I'm going to ask you to pause for a moment and recall the feeling that you just had as you stood and joined in the singing of "We Thank Thee, O God, for a Prophet" (*Hymns*, no. 196), as you looked upon our living prophet.

Love for prophet

Never have I experienced the spontaneous outpouring of love that we witnessed during our singing of that great song. We felt the love taught by the Savior.

I hope that all of you will recall this experience, will remember it, will

write it down. Perhaps you might say that words really cannot describe the way you felt as you looked up here at our prophet. Maybe you felt as I did—that my heart would burst. May that become part of your history.

In the hearts of all mankind, of whatever race or station in life, there are inexpressible longings for something they do not now possess. This longing is implanted in man by a loving Creator.

Jesus Christ, Savior and Redeemer

It is God's design that this longing of the human heart should lead to