

**What I hope you will teach your children about the temple.**  
**Ezra Taft Benson Ensign August 1985**

The last time I saw President Heber J. Grant was in the Church Administration Building when he was quite aged. President Grant's chauffeur had driven him to the Church Administration Building where the chauffeur called for another brother to help him assist President Grant, one on each arm, to his office.

I was just entering the glass door opposite the Lion House in the Church Administration Building as President Grant was coming toward the door. He said to the two brethren assisting him, "Isn't that Brother Benson coming?"

They replied, "Yes."

He said, "Come here. Come here, Brother Benson."

I walked over to him, and President Grant said, "Did I ever tell you about the mean trick Brigham Young played on your great-grandfather?"

I said, "No, President. I didn't know Brigham Young ever played a mean trick on anyone."

He responded, "Oh, yes, he did. I'll tell you about it."

I could see that these two brethren were practically holding President Grant up, so I said, "I'll come to the house some time. I'd like to hear it."

He replied, "No, I'll tell you right here. These brethren can steady me while I tell you."

He said, "You know where Zion's Bank and ZCMI are over on the corner?"

I said, "Yes."

He continued, "Your great-grandfather built the finest home in Salt Lake City on that corner, with the exception of Brigham Young's home (which, of course, was the Lion House). He had it all finished. It was a beautiful home—two stories with a porch at both levels on both sides of the house. It had a white picket fence around it with fruit trees and ornamental trees and with a little stream running through the yard. He was all ready to move his families in from their log cabins when President Young called him into the office one day. 'Brother Benson,' he said, 'we would like you to go to Cache Valley and pioneer that area and preside over the Saints. We suggest you sell your home to Daniel H. Wells.'

"Now," President Grant said, "Daniel H. Wells was Brigham Young's counselor. Wasn't that a mean trick? Come on, brethren, let's go."

In all the years that I had attended the Benson reunions I had never heard that story. So I had it verified by the Church Historical Department, and they assured me that the facts were as President Grant related them. They told me they had a tintype picture of the old home.

Since that time, I have been most grateful for the so-called "mean trick" of President Young, because were it not for that, the Bensons would not have their roots in Cache Valley.

I love Cache Valley, and I love the Saints in the area. And I am most grateful to be here on this anniversary of the Logan Temple centennial. This beautiful temple has truly been a beacon of light to Cache Valley. If our children and their children are taught well, this edifice will continue to be a symbol of special significance.

The temple is an ever-present reminder that God intends the family to be eternal. How fitting it is for mothers and fathers to point to the temple and say to their children, "That is the place where

we were married for eternity.” By so doing, the ideal of temple marriage can be instilled within the minds and hearts of your children while they are very young.

I am grateful to the Lord that my temple memories extend back—even to young boyhood. I remember so well, as a little boy, coming in from the field and approaching the old farm house in Whitney, Idaho. I could hear my mother singing “Have I Done Any Good in the World Today?” (Hymns, no. 58.)

I can still see her in my mind’s eye bending over the ironing board with newspapers on the floor, ironing long strips of white cloth, with beads of perspiration on her forehead. When I asked her what she was doing, she said, “These are temple robes, my son. Your father and I are going to the temple at Logan.”

Then she put the old flatiron on the stove, drew a chair close to mine, and told me about temple work—how important it is to be able to go to the temple and participate in the sacred ordinances performed there. She also expressed her fervent hope that some day her children and grandchildren and great-grandchildren would have the opportunity to enjoy these priceless blessings.

These sweet memories about the spirit of temple work were a blessing in our farm home, our little rural ward of three hundred, and the old Oneida Stake. These memories have returned as I have performed the marriage of each of our children and grandchildren, my mother’s grandchildren and great-grandchildren, under the influence of the Spirit in the house of the Lord.

These are choice memories to me, and I have often reflected on them. In the peace of these lovely temples, sometimes we find solutions to the serious problems of life. Under the influence of the Spirit, sometimes pure knowledge flows to us there. Temples are places of personal revelation. When I have been weighed down by a problem or a difficulty, I have gone to the House of the Lord with a prayer in my heart for answers. These answers have come in clear and unmistakable ways.

I would like to direct my remarks to you parents and grandparents. I would like to share with you what I would hope you would teach your children about the temple.

The temple is a sacred place, and the ordinances in the temple are of a sacred character. Because of its sacredness we are sometimes reluctant to say anything about the temple to our children and grandchildren.

As a consequence, many do not develop a real desire to go to the temple, or when they go there, they do so without much background to prepare them for the obligations and covenants they enter into.

I believe a proper understanding or background will immeasurably help prepare our youth for the temple. This understanding, I believe, will foster within them a desire to seek their priesthood blessings just as Abraham sought his.

When our Heavenly Father placed Adam and Eve on this earth, He did so with the purpose in mind of teaching them how to regain His presence. Our Father promised a Savior to redeem them from their fallen condition. He gave to them the plan of salvation and told them to teach their children faith in Jesus Christ and repentance. Further, Adam and his posterity were commanded by God to be baptized, to receive the Holy Ghost, and to enter into the order of the Son of God.

To enter into the order of the Son of God is the equivalent today of entering into the fullness of the Melchizedek Priesthood, which is only received in the house of the Lord.

Because Adam and Eve had complied with these requirements, God said to them, “Thou art after the order of him who was without beginning of days or end of years, from all eternity to all eternity.” ([Moses 6:67](#).)

Three years before Adam’s death, a great event occurred. He took his son Seth, his grandson Enos, and other high priests who were his direct-line descendants, with others of his righteous posterity, into a valley called Adam-ondi-Ahman. There Adam gave to these righteous descendants his last blessing.

The Lord then appeared to them.

The vast congregation rose up and blessed Adam and called him Michael, the prince and archangel. The Lord himself declared Adam to be a prince forever over his own posterity.

Then Adam in his aged condition rose up and, being filled with the spirit of prophecy, predicted “whatsoever should befall his posterity unto the latest generation.” All this is recorded in section 107 of the [Doctrine and Covenants](#) (verses 53–56) [[D&C 107:53–56](#)].

The Prophet [Joseph Smith](#) said that Adam blessed his posterity because “he wanted to bring them into the presence of God.” (Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, sel. Joseph Fielding Smith, Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1938, p. 159.)

Here is an illuminating passage from Section 107 of the Doctrine and Covenants which tells us how Adam was able to bring himself and his righteous posterity into God’s presence:

“The order of this priesthood was confirmed to be handed down from father to son, and tightly belongs to the literal descendants of the chosen seed, to whom the promises were made.

“This order was instituted in the days of Adam, and came down by lineage in [order] ... that his posterity should be the chosen of the Lord, and that they should be preserved unto the end of the earth.” ([D&C 107:40–42](#); italics added.)

How did Adam bring his descendants into the presence of the Lord?

The answer: Adam and his descendants entered into the priesthood order of God. Today we would say they went to the House of the Lord and received their blessings.

The order of priesthood spoken of in the scriptures is sometimes referred to as the patriarchal order because it came down from father to son.

But this order is otherwise described in modern revelation as an order of family government where a man and woman enter into a covenant with God—just as did Adam and Eve—to be sealed for eternity, to have posterity, and to do the will and work of God throughout their mortality.

If a couple are true to their covenants, they are entitled to the blessing of the highest degree of the celestial kingdom. These covenants today can only be entered into by going to the House of the Lord.

Adam followed this order and brought his posterity into the presence of God. He is the great example for us to follow.

Enoch followed this pattern and brought the Saints of his day into the presence of God.

Noah and his son Shem likewise followed the same pattern after the flood.

Abraham, a righteous servant of God, desiring as he said, “to be a greater follower of righteousness,” sought for these same blessings. Speaking of the order of the priesthood, he said: “It was conferred upon me from the fathers; it came down from the fathers, from the beginning

of time ... even the right of the firstborn, or the first man, who is Adam, our first father, through the fathers unto me.” ([Abr. 1:2–3](#).)

So Abraham declared: “I sought for mine appointment unto the Priesthood according to the appointment of God unto the fathers.” ([Abr. 1:4](#).)

Moses taught this order of priesthood to his people and “sought diligently to sanctify his people that they might behold the face of God;

“But they hardened their hearts and could not endure his presence; therefore, the Lord in his wrath, for his anger was kindled against them, swore that they should not enter into his rest while in the wilderness, which rest is the fulness of his glory.

“Therefore, he took Moses out of their midst, and the Holy Priesthood also.” ([D&C 84:23–25](#).)

We learn through the Joseph Smith Translation that the Lord further instructed Moses: “I will take away the priesthood out of their midst; therefore my holy order, and the ordinances thereof.” (JST, Ex. 34:1; italics added.)

This higher priesthood, with its attendant ordinances, was taken from Israel till the time of Jesus Christ.

My purpose in citing this background is to illustrate that this order of priesthood has been on the earth since the beginning, and it is the only means by which we can one day see the face of God and live. (See [D&C 84:22](#).)

Between Moses and Christ only certain prophets possessed the right to the higher priesthood and the blessings that could bring men into the presence of God. One of these prophets was Elijah.

Elijah held the keys of the sealing power and did many mighty miracles in his day. He had power to seal the heavens, raise the dead, relieve the drought-stricken land, and call down fire from heaven.

He was the last prophet to hold the keys of the priesthood, according to the Prophet Joseph Smith. He was subsequently translated and taken up into heaven without tasting death.

He, as a translated being, restored the keys of this priesthood to the Savior’s chief Apostles—Peter, James, and John—on the Mount of Transfiguration. But within a generation, the Church was destroyed by a major apostasy, and the blessings of the priesthood were removed from the earth.

It took a new dispensation from heaven to restore this blessing to our day.

It is significant that the first revelation given in 1823, recorded as section 2 of the Doctrine and Covenants, gave this promise about the priesthood:

“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.

“And he shall plant in the hearts of the children the promises made to the fathers, and the hearts of the children shall turn to their fathers.

“If it were not so, the whole earth would be utterly wasted at his coming.” ([D&C 2:1–3](#).)

What priesthood was Elijah to reveal? John the Baptist restored the keys to the Aaronic Priesthood. Peter, James, and John restored the keys of the kingdom of God. Why send Elijah?

“Because he holds the keys of the authority to administer in all the ordinances of the priesthood,” or the sealing power. (Teachings, p. 172; italics added.) So said the Prophet Joseph Smith!

The Prophet Joseph said further that these keys were “the revelations, ordinances, oracles, powers and endowments of the fulness of the Melchizedek Priesthood and of the kingdom of God on the earth.” (Teachings, p. 337; italics added.)

Even though the Aaronic Priesthood and Melchizedek Priesthood had been restored to the earth, the Lord urged the Saints to build a temple to receive the keys by which this order of priesthood could be administered on the earth again, “for there [was] not a place found on earth that he may come to and restore again that which was lost ... even the fulness of the priesthood.” ([D&C 124:28](#); italics added.)

Again the Prophet Joseph said: “If a man gets a fullness of the priesthood of God he has to get it in the same way that Jesus Christ obtained it, and that was by keeping all the commandments and obeying all the ordinances of the house of the Lord.” (Teachings, p. 308.)

So the Kirtland Temple was completed at great sacrifice to the Saints.

Then, on 3 April 1836, the Lord Jesus Christ and three other heavenly beings appeared in this holy edifice. One of these heavenly messengers was Elijah, to whom the Lord said he had “committed the keys of the power of turning the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to the fathers, that the whole earth may not be smitten with a curse.” ([D&C 27:9](#).)

Elijah brought the keys of sealing powers—that power which seals a man to a woman and seals their posterity to them endlessly, that which seals their forefathers to them all the way back to Adam. This is the power and order that Elijah revealed—that same order of priesthood which God gave to Adam and to all the ancient patriarchs which followed after him.

And this is why the Lord said to the Prophet Joseph Smith, “For verily I say unto you, the keys of the dispensation, which ye have received, have come down from the fathers, and last of all, being sent down from heaven unto you.” ([D&C 112:32](#).)

In a later revelation the Lord explained:

“In the celestial glory there are three heavens or degrees;

“And in order to obtain the highest, a man must enter into this order of the priesthood [meaning the new and everlasting covenant of marriage];

“And if he does not, he cannot obtain it.

“He may enter into the other, but that is the end of his kingdom; he cannot have an increase.” ([D&C 131:1–4](#); italics added.)

When our children obey the Lord and go to the temple to receive their blessings and enter into the marriage covenant, they enter into the same order of the priesthood that God instituted in the very beginning with father Adam.

This order entitles them to the same blessings of Abraham, of whom the Lord said that he “hath entered into his exaltation and sitteth upon his throne.” ([D&C 132:29](#).)

Then He significantly added: “This promise is yours also, because ye are of Abraham.” ([D&C 132:31](#).)

So again I emphasize: This order of priesthood can only be entered into when we comply with all the commandments of God and seek the blessings of the fathers as did Abraham by going to our Father’s house. They are received in no other place on this earth!

I hope you would teach this truth about the temple to your children and your grandchildren. Go to the temple—our Father’s house—to receive the blessings of your fathers that you may be

entitled to the highest blessings of the priesthood. “For without this no man can see the face of God, even the Father, and live.” ([D&C 84:22.](#))

Our Father’s house is a house of order. We go to His house to enter into that order of priesthood which will entitle us to all that the Father hath, if we are faithful. For as the Lord has revealed in modern times, Abraham’s seed are “lawful heirs” to the priesthood. (See [D&C 86:8–11.](#))

Now let me say something else to all who can worthily go to the House of the Lord. When you attend the temple and perform the ordinances that pertain to the House of the Lord, certain blessings will come to you:

- You will receive the spirit of Elijah, which will turn your hearts to your spouse, to your children, and to your forebears.
- You will love your family with a deeper love than you have loved before.
- Your hearts will be turned to your fathers and theirs to you.
- You will be endowed with power from on high as the Lord has promised.
- You will receive the key of the knowledge of God. (See [D&C 84:19.](#)) You will learn how you can be like Him. Even the power of godliness will be manifest to you. (See [D&C 84:20.](#))
- You will be doing a great service to those who have passed to the other side of the veil in order that they might be “judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit.” ([D&C 138:34.](#))

Such are the blessings of the temple and the blessings of frequently attending the temple.

So I say at this centennial commemoration of the Logan Temple: God bless Israel! God bless those of our forebears who constructed this holy edifice. God bless us to teach our children and our grandchildren what great blessings await them by going to the temple. God bless us to receive all the blessings revealed by Elijah the prophet so that our callings and election will be made sure.

I testify with all my soul to the truth of this message and pray that the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob will bless modern Israel with the compelling desire to seek all the blessings of the fathers in the House of our Heavenly Father.