

ASIA LOCAL PAGES

ASIA AREA LEADER MESSAGE

Temple Work—Work of Salvation

By **Chung Hei Patrick Wong**

Hong Kong China Temple President

The third article of faith states, “We believe that through the Atonement of Christ, all mankind may be saved, by obedience to the laws and ordinances of the Gospel.”

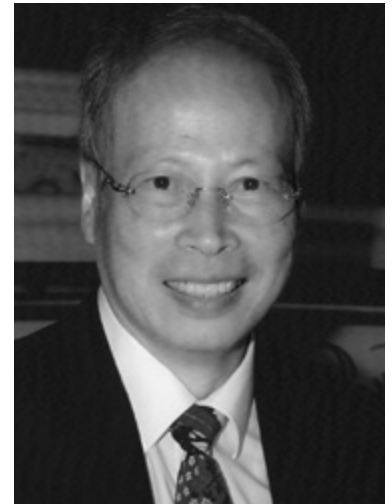
When we were living in Sydney (from 1987 to 1991), my father, who was in Hong Kong, passed away in April of 1988, and my mother passed away one year later. At the end of my mother’s funeral, my sister, Lai Yee, my brother, Chung Chiu, and I discussed performing the temple ordinances of endowment and sealing for our parents, who had been baptized in 1970 but had not had the opportunity to go to the temple. Although it would be easier for me to perform the ordinances in the Sydney Australia Temple, my brother preferred to do it in Chinese for our parents and volunteered that he and his wife would do their work in the Taipei Taiwan Temple, which, being an hour flight from Hong Kong, was the closest temple at the time.

A few months after I returned to Sydney, my wife woke me up one night and said to me, “I have just had a dream. I saw your mother who was very unhappy, sitting alone. I then asked her,

‘Grandma, why are you so unhappy?’ She said to me, ‘Chung Chiu has promised to take care of me but he has not.’ I then said to her, ‘Grandma, if Chung Chiu does not take care of you, then Patrick and I will take care of you.’ I then woke up.” I was very surprised to hear about her dream but did not understand it at the time.

A few weeks later, my wife had another dream. She said, “I saw your father, he said to me in a hurry, ‘Go and tell Chung Hei that I have to get married immediately. Tell him, tell him.’” After my wife told me about this dream, I began to realize something . . . I immediately called my brother and asked if he had done the endowment and sealing for our parents. He told me that he had not been able to go to the temple in Taiwan because his wife had been sick for quite some time. After our discussion over the phone, I decided to do the temple work for my parents with my wife in the Sydney Australia Temple.

Within two weeks, my wife and I performed all the temple ordinances including sealing for my parents, my grandparents, great-grandparents, and my deceased brother and sister.



**Chung Hei
Patrick Wong,
Hong Kong
Temple
president**

Finally in 1996, having worked with three other Church members who have the same last name of Wong, we were able to complete our family history up to 2200 B.C., up to the first ancestor who was knighted by the emperor and was granted the kingdom of Wong. We then submitted all their names to the Hong Kong China Temple.

All these experiences made me realize the urgency and importance of carrying out the plan of salvation for our ancestors, how much our ancestors rely on us to help them, and how much we need them as well, to turn our hearts to the temple.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints affirms that the plan of salvation is not bound by the grave, but that the gospel is deathless and everlasting, reaching back into the ages that have gone and forward into the eternities of the future.¹ The plan of salvation is not for the living only

but also for the dead who did not have a chance to receive it in this life. The restoration of the building of temples has provided this opportunity to the dead.

Never Too Old or Too Weak to Serve

My wife and I served in the Brisbane Australia Temple as temple ordinance workers for three years before we were called to serve in the Hong Kong China Temple. At that temple I witnessed the love and care of members toward their ancestors.

John Jeffreys, an elderly member, always spent his entire Wednesday mornings in the Brisbane temple by attending endowment sessions and sealings. One morning I went down to the car park to pick him up with the wheelchair. As usual, once he entered the changing room, he liked to walk without the wheelchair. So I held his arm to walk with him slowly. Suddenly, looking at me, John started singing the chorus of the hymn, “I Am a Child of God”—“Lead me, guide me, walk beside me, Help me find the way.”² His humor made me laugh. I was sure his service in the temple, given with such a positive attitude despite his own physical limitations, was appreciated by many souls on the other side of the veil.

From the example of Brother Jeffreys and many other patrons,

I understand that we will never be too old or too weak to rescue our ancestors by receiving temple blessings on their behalf.

Temple, House of the Lord

A temple is literally a house of the Lord, a holy sanctuary in which sacred ceremonies and ordinances of the gospel are performed by and for the living and also in behalf of the dead. A place where the Lord may come, it is the most holy of any place of worship on the earth. Only the home can compare with the temple in sacredness.³ In the temple, because of the nature of its sacredness, we can feel the Spirit abundantly there.

As we go through different rooms in the temple to perform different ordinances, we may understand the purpose of the temple:

- “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.
- “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.

- “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.
- “In a sealing room, a bride and bridegroom are married not only for this life but also for eternity.”⁴

During my three years of service in the Brisbane Australia Temple, I understood more about the Atonement of Jesus Christ and the purpose of our lives than any other time in my life. Having served as the president of the Hong Kong China Temple for one year, I confirmed that the house of the Lord is watched over and guided by the Spirit of God. ■

NOTES

1. See James E. Talmage, *The House of the Lord: A Study of Holy Sanctuaries Ancient and Modern*, (2013), 61.
2. “I Am a Child of God,” *Hymns*, no. 301.
3. See Bible Dictionary, “Temple.”
4. Temples of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (booklet 2010), 61–66; “Things Pertaining to This House,” *Ensign or Liahona*, Oct. 2010, 61–66.

Now Is the Accepted Time

by Elder Ezra Anderson
India Bangalore Mission

The Raman family was prepared to receive the gospel long before I ever met them. Many missionaries speak of “golden investigators,” but it was not until I met the Raman family that I came to know what that phrase really means. In my eyes, this family is golden from head to toe.

When I first came to Bangalore, Elder Pilli and I regularly visited Sister Vijaya. This sister was baptized just a few weeks prior to my arrival and was anxious to progress further in the gospel. One evening she told us about her friend, Sister Manjula. Her friend was not satisfied with her current church and was looking for a change. Sister Vijaya, knowing the joy that comes from the restored gospel, was quick to refer her to us. This is a wonderful example of the way the Lord wants us as members to participate in the work of salvation. We love our friends so much that we cannot help but share the gospel with them.

Sister Vijaya accompanied us on our first visit to Sister Manjula’s home. We taught her family the Restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ and extended a baptism invitation to Sister Manjula, her son, Dinakaran, and her daughter, Vidya Sree. To my uttermost delight, all three of them accepted our invitation! Sister Manjula said she was not happy with her previous baptism, and Dinakaran and Vidya Sree had never been baptized, so they were happy to accept our invitation for baptism.

In our next visit we explained the Book of Mormon in greater depth to them. We invited them to pray and ask God to know that the Book of Mormon is true. Vidya Sree asked us if she had to pray about the Book of Mormon, because she



already knew our message was true. We asked her how she knew that. She told us that on Sunday morning, before she had ever come to church, she prayed to know if this is what God wanted her to do. She then opened the Bible to find her answer. The very first scripture she opened to was 2 Corinthians 6:2, “I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.” I could hardly believe it. What a marvelous answer! In a very timely and powerful manner, God had given her the answer she needed. She knew she had to come to church that day, and she knew this was the path she had to follow.

As missionaries, it takes a lot of faith to give others the bold promise found in Moroni 10. We can do everything we can, but in the end it is only God who can give them the answer they need. Fortunately, we know that God always keeps His promises. Time and time again He reveals the truth

Elder Anderson and Elder Pilli with the Raman family

to those who earnestly seek after it. I know with a certainty that God answers our prayers.

Throughout the next couple of weeks, we continued to teach this incredible family. Each week they felt the Sprit, and as time passed they made considerable changes in their lives. However, Satan was working just as hard as we were. I was amazed by how consistently distractions would arise as soon as we got to the spiritual climax of each lesson. Whether it is a dog barking outside or a neighbor who wanted to come in and visit, Satan proved himself as the true master of distraction. But these were small disturbances compared to what lay ahead. A week before their baptism, 40 pipes were stolen from their father's work place. All of the employees were under close suspicion, including Brother Raman. Because of this, it was nearly impossible for us to visit their home.

Elder Anderson and his missionary companion with Sister Manjula, her son, Dinakaran, and her daughter, Vidya Sree.



However, through their faith they overcame all of these obstacles and made it into the waters of baptism. On January 26, all three of these wonderful children of God were baptized.

After their baptisms, all three of them began to share the good news with those around them. Sister Manjula took us to her friends' homes, Vidya Sree introduced some of her own friends, and Dinakaran began to accompany the Elders on exchanges. Through their efforts, many other people have come closer to Christ. I believe you can know how strong someone's testimony is by how many people they share the gospel with. By this measuring stick, these three are truly converted to Christ.

Brother Raman has also made incredible changes in his life. As of now he has not made baptismal covenants, but that does not stop him from being a great spiritual leader in his home. Since the time of his family's baptisms, he now follows the Word of Wisdom and reads the scriptures every day. In fact, he also ensures that his children read their scriptures every day as well! He is truly coming unto the Savior.

The Raman family has set their lives on a new eternal path. I readily wait for the day to hear of Brother Raman's baptism, Dinakaran and Vidya Sree's mission calls, and the day they are sealed together as a family for all time and eternity. I know they will do wondrous work in the kingdom of God.

Whenever I visit this family, I feel like I am back at home. I love them all so much. They have blessed my life forever. Because of them, I have been able to see how the gospel can quickly and powerfully change a family's life. Because of them, I now have a testimony that God is preparing His children to receive the gospel. All we have to do is find them. ■



The Spiritual Reactions of Life

By Elder Bayyvarapu, Lakshmanudu

Visakhapatnam Second Branch

I have been a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints for the past five years. Great changes in my life started with my complicated decision to be baptized.

I grew up in a different sect of religion. One day, one of my friends invited to me to his church activity, so I went. When I was there, I felt greatly loved and

respected by the brothers and sisters there. I was treated like a family member, and I never felt like I was a stranger. Then missionaries started to teach me and I was baptized on September 13, 2009. Attending church and fulfilling my Church calling as a branch clerk shaped me and made a huge change in my life, so I decided to go on mission

and help all my brothers and sisters to have this same change and happiness in their lives. I applied for my mission, waited, and got my call letter. I was called to serve in India New Delhi Mission. I started on December 12, 2012 to serve the Lord and to invite others to come unto Christ.

My life started changing as I started engaging myself in the work of the Lord as a full-time missionary. I taught many families of the Restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ and I have seen their faith in Jesus Christ and His Atonement and what a blessing it is in changing their lives.

I have thought of the word *change* several times on my mission. The real change will come only by our own decision and personal conversion. It is not an easy process, but God will help us. It's a spiritual reaction that changes our lives and it happens "line upon line," just like Alma compared the experiment of faith unto a seed in Alma chapter 32. My life has been blessed so much because of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ. I know that Joseph Smith is a prophet of God, I know Jesus is the Christ and He loves us. His mercy is unconditional and His grace is eternal. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen. ■

*Elder
Bayyvarapu*

My Wonderful Experience in the Philippines Manila Mission

By Pavitra Verma

“The vital role of our mission is to establish the Church.”



Sister Pavitra Verma

My family was going to a Pentecostal church before joining this true Church. I always had a desire to serve God, but I never had a chance to do so. But when I came to know about this true Church through missionaries I felt so blessed. When I saw missionaries that had come from different places and cultures, away from their families and friends to serve the Lord, my desire to serve God became even stronger. I decided to go on a mission to serve the Lord. I received my mission call in October 2010 to serve in the Philippines Manila Mission. I am really grateful to God that He has given me this wonderful opportunity to serve Him and to become a part of His plan to bring Him glory on this earth. It was a great blessing to teach those brothers and sisters in the Philippines, to bring them back to His fold. I love the Philippines and love the people there. They are very humble and kind people. They want to listen to the gospel and want to know more about God’s kingdom. Yes, I can say that the Philippines Manila Mission is the best mission!

I know that everything is planned and has a purpose. It was planned that I come to this place to save our friends who do not know about the truth. I was called to serve here because God wants me to serve here. After coming to the Philippines, I really felt that souls were waiting to hear to the

gospel from me. I saw many miracles and wonderful works of our Heavenly Father unfold. My mission had goals, and I wanted to fulfill those goals—that is, “To Baptize, To Reactivate, and To Rescue.” We baptized many, we rescued many, and also reactivated many. I believe that they were the lost sheep who came back to His fold and I wish they will always stay in His fold and not go back, as it talks about in my favorite hymn, “Dear to the Heart of the Shepherd” (*Hymns*, no. 221). My companions and I worked really hard to do our work diligently and to save as many souls as we can while on the Lord’s errands.

In my first area, the Pasay Second Ward, we had many investigators. One of them was the Revilla family. I love this family as my own family. It was little hard to teach them, but God has a plan for everything in the right time. We gave them a baptism date many times; they refused it because they said they were not ready yet and wanted to be baptized when they felt they were ready. We continued to teach them, and one day they decided to be baptized. First their daughter, Klendy, was baptized and afterwards other family members were baptized. I was transferred to another area, but they remained firm and active in the Church. Brother Boris and his wife received callings in the Church.

After one year, they decided to be sealed in the holy temple of the Lord. When I was teaching them with my companion, I shared something about temple sealings. I said, “You are very lucky to have a temple in the Philippines near to your home so you all can be sealed as a family for time and eternity. I am from India and there is no temple. We have desire to be sealed in the temple, but they are very far away. However, I may or may not be sealed in the temple with my family one day, but I want your family to be sealed in the temple before I go and I

want to be part of it. I want to be with you when you are sealed as a family.”

Just two weeks before I left my mission, I heard from the Revilla family that they were going to be sealed in the temple and wanted me to join them. My companion and I got permission from our mission president and we went to be a part of their family sealing. I know that God lives and hears our prayers. My companion and I really did pray for this beautiful family and now they are active members and also fulfilling their callings in the Church.

Another experience was when I was serving in the Carmona Branch. I had many great experiences which strengthened my testimony. There was one brother named Jopelito Paglinawan. He shared his testimony with us: He was searching for the true church since age 19, when he became very sick. His family members considered him dead, but he was in the spirit world, waiting in the queue to move forward. All the people were clothed in white, in full sleeves, and one woman behind him was pushing him to go faster so that she could go inside. There that brother saw one building and he heard one voice calling him by his name and telling him, “Your time has not come yet, so go back to your own place.” Everyone was mourning his death, but when he woke up, he came to know what had happened to him. For many years, he searched but he did not get the answer anywhere.

After many years, he met missionaries from our Church, and they invited him to church. He went to church with his wife and children. When he saw the church building, the very first thing that he said was, “I know this building. I saw this building in my dream. I know this is Lord’s Church and God wants me to be here. For so long, I was searching for this place and now the right time has come and I am



here.” Whenever we were teaching this brother, he always shared his testimony that “I know this Church is true and that the Prophet Joseph Smith was the true prophet of the Restoration.” Even before his baptism, he had a strong testimony.

Whenever I remember his testimony, my eyes are filled with tears. The Lord has prepared so many souls to know about the Restoration, and how He works in their lives is a wonder. This strengthens my testimony.

In this same area, I saw many other miracles. We reactivated the Murillo family. Brother Murillo was blind, and he had a wife and four sons. He did not

Sister Pavitra Verma with the Revilla family and her companion

The Murillo family with Sister Verma and her missionary companion



have a job because of his blindness, so his wife did household work to earn money to feed her family. The financial condition of the family was terrible.

My companion and I started to teach their family. When Brother Murillo started coming to church, his son who was nine years old helped him to come to church. Every fast and testimony Sunday, he used to bear his testimony. Later, we taught his older son, and he wanted to get baptized. For his baptism we wanted Brother Murillo to baptize him, as he is a priesthood holder. Brother Murillo was very excited to baptize his own son, but his wife said, “How will you baptize him? You are blind and cannot see.” Brother Murillo was discouraged that he could not baptize his son, but we encouraged him that he could do it! We told his wife that the Lord would take care of everything, so do not worry and just have faith. Brother Murillo was able to baptize his son. The family was very happy and were crying while sharing their testimonies after the baptism service. His wife cried a lot and gave thanks to God and even to Brother Murillo and his son. After one week, Brother Murillo’s eight-year-old son was also baptized.

This family was reactivated and very happy. Whenever we visited their home, we would teach them as a family. Brother Murillo always said, “I have four sons, and they are like Ammon, Aaron, Omner, and Himni as Mosiah’s four sons.” Later Brother Murillo had a surgery on his left eye. The surgery was successful, and he was able to see from his own eye.

I was really happy to see this beautiful family receive showers of blessings from heaven. I know that the Lord prepares a way for everything and that He loves each one of us.

I know that all the ordinances in the holy house of the Lord are very sacred and true. The souls are

waiting for those sacred ordinances. One of the sacred ordinance is baptism for the dead.

I know that the people who are in the spirit world are really waiting for us to do temple work for them. We are really blessed by the true gospel in our lives. I would like to remind you all that God has given us this wonderful opportunity and we need to utilize it very wisely. We should go to temple and do holy ordinances for our ancestors. If we are not able to go then we can send their names so someone else who will do these ordinances on their behalf. They are waiting for someone to do these holy ordinances for them.

I know that the gospel is true and that God loves each one of us. He has plans for each one of us. Sometimes we think that nothing is happening right with us, but it is happening according to His plan. God has something very special for us and He is preparing us for that. So always have faith in Him and keep praying. God has given us prophets in these last days so we can follow His path and not go astray. Always listen to the prophet. I have applied all these things in my life and I know all these things I shared are true. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen. ■

Sister Pavitra Verma is a member of the New Delhi Third Branch

AN EASTER GIFT FOR YOU AND YOUR FRIENDS

This This Easter season, the Church will be releasing a video and website on March 29 that focuses on the Resurrection of the Savior and the importance His Atonement has in our lives. We invite all to *discover His sacrifice, embrace His teachings, and share His joy* by visiting easter.mormon.org. ■