

ASIA LOCAL PAGES

ASIA AREA LEADER MESSAGE

“Always Having a Temple Recommend”

By Elder Djarot Subiantoro
Of the Seventy



Elder Djarot
Subiantoro

My wife and I were having our morning walk when she suddenly reminded me that it had been about 40 years since both of us entered adulthood. To further expound on the significance of “40 years,” my wife mentioned how the Israelites spent 40 years in their journey from Egypt to the promised land. It also took our pioneers 40 years to build the Salt Lake Temple.

We might not be walking through a wilderness like the Israelites or building a temple by hand like the pioneers, but we are all going through our own personal life journey. Just

like our predecessors, we experience not only joy and happiness but also difficulties, temptations, and afflictions as we try to reach our end goal. We are grateful for temple ordinances that help us keep an eternal perspective throughout our journey and for a temple recommend that keeps us in the strait and narrow path, even when the journey seems long.

Among the numerous denominations and churches of the present day, the Latter-day Saints are distinguished as builders of temples.

President Howard W. Hunter (1907–95) said, “It is the Lord Himself who,

in His revelations to us, has made the temple the great symbol for members of the Church.”¹

“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).

The Lord has commanded us to make the temple the center of our lives, which in turn requires us to always keep a current temple recommend.

Anciently, the prophet Ezekiel declared, “Thus saith the Lord God; No stranger, uncircumcised in heart, nor uncircumcised in flesh, shall enter into my sanctuary” (Ezekiel 44:9). Similarly, the Prophet Joseph Smith prayed, “And that no unclean thing shall be permitted to come into thy house to pollute it” (Doctrine and Covenants 109:20).

A temple recommend is not simply a piece of paper; it reflects our willingness and worthiness to receive the blessings of the temple.

President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008) explained, “This small document, simple in its appearance, certifies that the bearer has met certain precise and demanding qualifications

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and is eligible to enter the House of the Lord and there participate in the most sacred ordinances administered anywhere on earth. . . .

“What a unique and remarkable thing is a temple recommend.”²

“It would please the Lord if every adult member would be worthy of—and carry—a current temple recommend. The things that we must do and not do to be worthy of a temple recommend are the very things that ensure we will be happy as individuals and as families.”³

The key to unlock the enormous blessings that come from temple service is the temple recommend. Temple recommend interviews are held by local ecclesiastical leaders to determine our worthiness, and the questions include whether:

- We have faith in and a testimony of God the Eternal Father; His Son, Jesus Christ; and the Holy Ghost;
- We testify of the Restoration of the gospel through the Church;

- We sustain general authorities of the Church: the First Presidency and the Twelve Apostles;
- We obey God’s commandments and laws;
- We repent of our sins and are worthy to enter the Lord’s house and participate in temple ordinances.

If we are striving to be true and faithful to the principles of the gospel, then we will always be temple worthy, and the Lord and His holy temples will be the great symbols of our discipleship.

What does it mean to always have a temple recommend? Having a temple recommend is a good indication of our worthiness for celestial glory. No matter where we are, we need to prioritize having a current temple recommend and make the temple the great symbol of our membership in the Church.

If we strive to keep our recommend current and live the gospel to its fullest through faith, repentance, and renewal of covenants throughout our lives, we will qualify for eternal life.

May the Lord bless us that we may firmly resolve to always be temple worthy. This is the Lord’s work. He lives. God is our Eternal Father, and Jesus Christ is the Savior and Redeemer. ■

NOTES

1. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Howard W. Hunter* (2015), 179.
2. Gordon B. Hinckley, “Keeping the Temple Holy,” *Ensign*, May 1990.
3. *Teachings: Howard W. Hunter*, 180.

MINISTERING

Ministering Focus

The Bengaluru Stake presidency wanted to visit members as part of their ministering efforts. One Sunday they went to a hospital to visit a member who needed a surgery. They had a pleasant visit giving hope to the family to know that all will be well. The surgery could not happen as the sugar levels were not within the level needed. A priesthood blessing and a promise was given that his surgery would take place soon. After a day, the surgery was performed and it was successful.

After that visit, they did not have any member in mind, so the counselor, by inspiration, suggested a name of a member who had not attended church for a long time. With pure inspiration we went to visit the member. Good conversation was exchanged and the Spirit was present as the invitation to come back was given to him. The member told the presidency that he had to work on Sundays for three more years to clear debts that had incurred and asked that he be excused. But he assured his family would continue to attend church. ■

Ministering Miracles

Brother Samuel D. Nixon

Ramamurthy Nagar Ward, Bengaluru Stake

A message in the ward WhatsApp group informed members that brother Laveti's daughter was admitted into the intensive care unit of a hospital. A few minutes later, I received a call asking me to visit the family immediately.

I left for the hospital. I saw the little girl lying down on a bed surrounded by doctors. The doctors struggled to diagnose her as they could not find the reason for her sickness. I prayed all along for the little girl. I felt inspired to give her a blessing. So I went into the ICU, where only doctors, nurses, and patients' attenders are allowed. But trusting in God, I went inside. The security at the gate did not stop me nor did he ask me any questions. Brother Laveti was surprised to see me inside the ICU. We decided to give his daughter a priesthood blessing. Brother Laveti anointed and I acted as the mouthpiece to bless the child who was struggling with much pain, agony, restlessness, and even had a hard time breathing. With faith and as the Spirit prompted, I blessed her and soon after the blessing I had a very special and strong feeling that a "great miracle" would take place. I shared the same



feeling with Brother Laveti. Soon after the blessing was pronounced on her, the doctors were able to find out the real cause for her sickness and started giving her the right treatment.

This was the “real miracle,” and it happened with the holy and sacred power of the priesthood that we brethren hold. The whole family was greatly comforted.

Ministers First

A recent convert was hospitalized, the ward WhatsApp message said. Bishop called me and said that this new convert fell unconscious at home and was rushed by his wife and daughter to a nearby clinic for first aid. He asked if I had time to visit. I made my time available for such a cause. I went to the clinic to help these two sisters who did not have any other male member to assist them. These two sisters had a hard time making decisions. They were already worried and it was difficult for them to think what to do next. It was a blessing for me to assist them during their greatest need. As I was there assisting the family, Brother Vivek joined me.

We moved this brother to a hospital for better treatment. We administered to him. He was kept in the ICU for 24 hours and got treated. Members of our ward visited him and his family and offered prayers and comforted

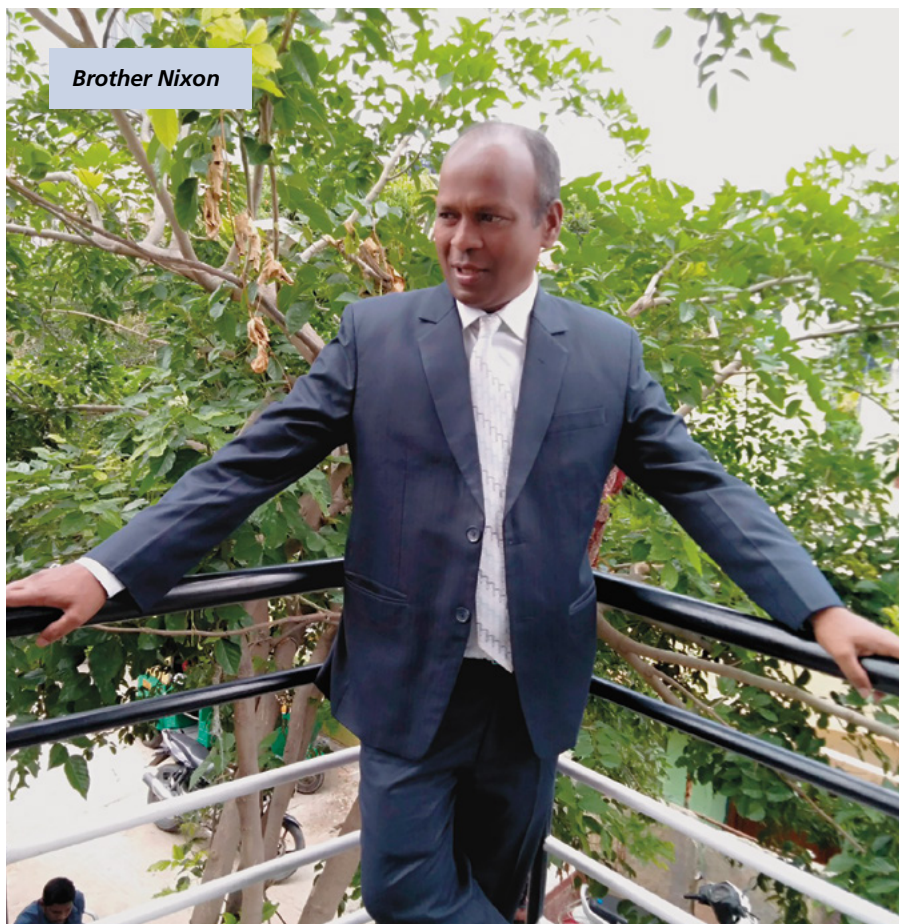
them with much prayers. Again the Lord helped this new convert and his family. It was nothing but a miracle, for he got discharged the next day. He was back home healthy and strong. This was again done because of the love of our Savior by following His example, love for the gospel, love for our own fellow beings and an opportunity to minister to others.

Ministering to Sister Rebecca and Brother Vivek

We heard of the passing away of sister Rebecca’s father at their native place, Tiruchi. Members of the ward visited to offer their condolences to

them and to their extended family.

As ministering brethren, Brother Raja Ganapathy and I were able to offer a small prayer of comfort and safe travel for their family who were traveling to Trichy. During the same day, Brother Karthikeyan, and Brother Raja Ganapathy, and I decided to travel to Trichy to represent our ward and offer our silent comfort to the family. This sudden travel arrangement had to be made without any bus or train reservations. We made our way to reach Trichy by travelling in various trains and buses. After many hours of travel, we joined their family around midnight.



This travel was purely to give moral support to their family members at their time of need. The next day in the early morning, even much before their family made their traditional funeral service at an Roman Catholic Church, we members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints gathered together and were able to comfort Sister Rebecca's family by singing our Church hymns, and a wonderful prayer was offered in Tamil by Brother Raja Ganapathy.

"Ministering is always needed. We may not know when, but we must always be prepared to minister to others."

600+ kilometers to Ministering

Recent floods had caused devastation in Kerala. The Kerala flood relief camp was organized by our Bengaluru Stake to provide relief to people in the Wyanad area. I accompanied other Saints of our stake to offer humanitarian aid.

One morning as I was at the relief camp, I read a message on the ward's WhatsApp group. I felt shocked after reading the message that Brother Michael's health was in serious condition, and he was taken to his native place, Madurai, Tamil Nadu, for hospitalization. I offered a silent prayer for his health to improve and that I would get an opportunity to visit him. Brother Michael and Sister Rabi were

diligent members in attending the regional language Sunday School in our ward.

The very next Sunday after returning from relief work, Brother Karthikeyan approached me and asked me if I would be interested to join with him to visit Brother Michael. I immediately accepted the offer to visit and was so happy. We travelled by train and reached Madurai the next day morning. We then went from the railway station straight away to the Madurai Meenakshi Mission Hospital. Before we reached hospital, we heard his second son, Allwyn, was also admitted in the same hospital in a different ward due to his health problem. The same morning we visited both of these brethren. They were lying on their beds, and Brother Michael's condition was very critical. He was not able to recognize who we were, and the doctors were not able to let us know his condition. All they told us was that he needed to be in medical observation—which means each part of his body function needed to be observed. We as priesthood brethren administered priesthood blessings with faith to both father and son, and we comforted Sister Rabi and their older son.

We then headed to the train station where we refreshed ourselves at the railway station waiting room, and we headed to visit a nearby place in the

local train. While we were halfway there, Brother Karthikeyan told me that we need to head back to the hospital. It was purely an inspiration. We reached the hospital and to our surprise, for we just could not believe our own eyes, Brother Michael had gotten up from his bed and was sitting. What a miracle! He was unable to get up from his bed before, but he was able to now. Our beloved Heavenly Father, through the Holy Spirit, had blessed him.

Now the same day in the evening he was able to recognize who we were, and he spoke to us a few words. I was able to shoot some videos with him, and when I asked him what he would like to convey to our ward members, he showed a "thumbs up" sign and asked me share the videos I recorded of him in the hospital to the regional language Sunday School class members.

Yet another miracle happened with the blessing of the priesthood, and this didn't end with him. Afterward we visited his son Allwyn. He told us that the doctors wanted him to get discharged the next day, while his health was fine and he had recovered sufficiently to go home.

"Ministering and exercising the priesthood at the right time with faith brings blessings. I believe blessings to others will never stop . . . miracles will never cease."

And this is my real experience in just one month, and I am thankful to our Savior and our beloved prophet for bringing the program of ministering to bless the lives of our members and our leaders (stake leaders, bishops,

and elders quorums), and my ministering companions in the ward who strengthened my own testimony in the gospel about ministering.

My travel bag is already packed and ready. My shoes are washed

and kept ready to be worn again. And my mobile phone is on, ready and awaiting to receive any call from my bishop or just for a text saying, “Hi! Brother Nixon, I want you to minister.” ■

Ministering to Members Bring Miracles—M³

By **Samson Putturaj**

Content Editor

Brother Raja Doraiswamy called Brother Sunil and asked if he could join him in ministering to Brother Paul Mahendran and Lawrence. Brother Sunil was tired but enthusiastically said he would be delighted to join. Paul was not available, so they decided to go to Brother Lawrence’s house.

Brother Lawrence had not been attending church for quite some time. Efforts were made to encourage him to come back, but Brother Lawrence needed more time. Brother Raja and Sunil met him and his wife. They invited them again to church. Brother Raja said, “If you can find the richness of the gospel elsewhere, you can go, but if you know the Church has all that you need for your salvation and happiness, then please come back.” His wife admitted that no other church gives peace than The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

As part of their ministering efforts, Brother Raja and Brother Sunil were inspired to share a part of the general conference talk given by Elder Uchtdorf titled “Believe, Love, Do,” discussing with this family about

imperfect people, but they are welcoming, loving, kind, and sincere people as they strive to build and help one another to improve and draw closer to the Lord, our Savior, even Jesus Christ.



Raja Doraiswamy with his wife

The invitation was given and testimonies borne. Questions like, “Why you did not come?” “Are you reading your scriptures?” “Are you praying?” etc. were not asked, but inspired testimonies were borne. An invitation was given for them to come back to church.

There were moments of anxiousness when Sunday came. Brother Raja looked around to see if Lawrence and his family were present. To his utter astonishment, he saw Brother Lawrence and his wife at church! His heart was lifted up in gratitude for being an instrument in God’s hands to help his brother come back. He remembered the verse “when thou are converted, strengthen thy brethren”

(Luke 22:32). He just followed what Jesus wanted him to do. Likewise, Brother Sunil also was anxious to see if they had come. After seeing them he said, “Indeed I was very happy to see Brother and Sister Lawrence at church, and I feel confident that they will stay strong and active, showing examples to others around them.”

Both these brethren have not stopped dreaming. Their next ministering efforts is focused to bring back their sons and his sister’s family. Brother Raja always in his teachings and talks has emphasized M³, meaning, “Ministering to members will bring miracles.” This testimony has come true and Brother Raja believes and is confident that if members do ministering diligently, then miracles will follow. ■

Brother Raja Doraiswamy and Sunil are from the Lingarajpuram Ward, Bengaluru Stake

seen many things in these many years. I see the time is moving fast. There is not much to time to accomplish things. Responsibilities have increased. Expenses have increased. Hope for the future has increased. Satan’s power increases. Amidst all these, there are some constants that have marked my life. These constants have been an anchor in my life to keep me strong in the gospel. I wish to share these constants that have strengthened and given hope for the future.

My first constant is an abiding faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. I read John 17:3, “This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou has sent.” This verse has sustained me always to help me know that God and Jesus Christ are there and that with faith I can move forward. I have to “know” Jesus, and that will happen only if I “search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me” (John 5:39). I have to read the scriptures so I can “know” Jesus to follow Him.

The second constant is to believe in the restored gospel. I am always grateful for Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, visiting the Prophet Joseph Smith to restore that gospel. What a blessing it is. The gospel holds so many promises

Constants amidst Change

By **Samson Putturaj**

Content Editor

Many new years have passed me. The season is just beautiful. A week after Christmas, we celebrate and welcome a new year. My heart is filled with gratitude for God to yet make me see another year. I have



Brother Sunil

and blessings for me. I am grateful for modern-day prophets to lead us and the temples to be an anchor. How blessed I am for these gifts of a loving Heavenly Father to help us. The plan of salvation gives me a solid foundation to know I am here on this earth for a purpose. This purpose has helped me to know that life on this earth is only to prepare myself to go back to God's presence.

The third constant is to serve in the Lord's kingdom. I have never missed a chance to serve in Church callings. I have always given my best in my callings because I know I have a responsibility to build the kingdom of God.

These constants have shaped my life to be in the straight and narrow

path. As I welcome another year, I know there will be challenges that I have to face, but I am grateful there is a God who loves me and will guide me. With this assurance, I can confidently step into another beautiful year.

Happy New Year!

*Keep the smile,
Leave the tear,
Hold the laugh,
And forget the fear,*

*Trust in God
Then you will be happy
Throughout the New Year.
Wishing you a wonderful year!*

Welcome 2019! ■

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CALL FOR ARTICLES

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