

ASIA AREA PRESIDENCY MESSAGE

Temple Blessings

Elder Chi Hong (Sam) Wong of the Seventy
First Counselor in the Asia Area Presidency

Temple blessings are important for each and every one of us. In order that all may receive the blessings of the temple, the Lord has provided a way that we can help those who do not have the means to travel to a temple. In 1992 the First Presidency established the Temple Patron Assistance Fund to assist members from economically disadvantaged areas of the world to attend the temple.¹ The desire is that they receive their own ordinances as soon as feasible. Approval has recently been given for the Temple Patron Assistance Fund to be used to assist an immediate family member to attend the temple with the member being endowed.

The fund is supported by donations received from members who voluntarily give of their means to help their fellow brothers and sisters. This contribution is above and beyond tithes and a generous fast offering. This is truly an act of godliness, brotherly kindness, devotion, charity, and love as members offer sacred offerings to God in behalf of others.

Members who need assistance from the Temple Patron Assistance Fund are encouraged to contact their local priesthood leaders.

In the temple, through His presence and our drawing closer to the Spirit through performing sacred ordinances, we can find God and know

that He lives. The Lord has revealed: “My presence shall be there, for I will come into it, and all the pure in heart that shall come into it shall see God.”² Additionally, in the ordinances of the priesthood we find that the “power of godliness is manifest,”³ which allows us the opportunity to draw closer to God.

The greater light and knowledge we receive from the blessings of the temple will increase our ability to better discern between truth and error and will increase our ability to find God. President Boyd K. Packer (1924–2015) encouraged us to go to the temple to clear our minds so that we can see more clearly: “At the temple the dust of distraction seems to settle out, the fog and the haze seem to lift, and we can ‘see’ things that we were not able to see before and find a

way through our troubles that we had not previously known. . . . Blessings there will not be limited to our temple service. We will be blessed in all of our affairs.”⁴

President Thomas S. Monson confirmed that attending the temple helps us with the challenges of our daily lives: “As you and I go to the holy houses of God, as we remember the covenants we make within, we will be more able to bear every trial and to overcome each temptation. In this sacred sanctuary we will find peace; we will be renewed and fortified.”⁵

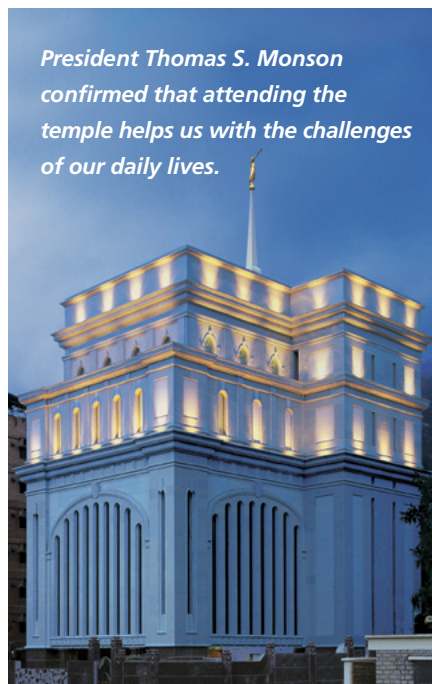
The blessings of temple attendance give us power to overcome our earthly trials and turn them into opportunities for blessing and preparing us for eternal life. Participating in temple ordinances and making covenants helps to sanctify both the living and the dead.

President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008) said: “Just as our Redeemer gave His life as a vicarious sacrifice for all men, and in so doing became our Savior, even so we, in a small measure, when we engage in proxy work in the temple, become as saviors to those on the other side who have no means of advancing unless something is done in their behalf by those on earth.”⁶

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland shared this experience of the sacrifice of



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(Sam) Wong**



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dedicated Saints in South America who are determined to participate in temple worship: “The Punta Arenas Chile Stake is the Church’s southernmost stake anywhere on this planet. . . . For the Punta Arenas Saints it is a 4,200-mile (6,760 km) round-trip bus ride to the Santiago Temple. For a husband and wife it can take up to 20 percent of an annual local income just for the transportation alone. Only 50 people can be accommodated on the bus, but for every excursion 250 others come out to hold a brief service with them the morning of their departure . . . just to sing with, pray

for, and cheer on their way those who [are] going to the temple.”⁷

While not all experiences are so dramatic, each personal sacrifice to attend the temple will bring the promised blessings. ■

NOTES

1. See Heather Whittle Wrigley, “Fund Helps Members Worldwide Receive Temple Blessings,” *Liahona*, Mar. 20212, 74–75.
2. Doctrine and Covenants 97:16.
3. See Doctrine and Covenants 84:19–20.
4. Boyd K. Packer, “The Holy Temple,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Oct. 2010, 35.
5. Thomas S. Monson, “The Holy Temple—a Beacon to the World,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2011, 90.
6. Gordon B. Hinckley, “Closing Remarks,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2004, 104.
7. Jeffrey R. Holland, “Abide in Me,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2004, 30.

LOCAL NEWS

Historic Schade Girls School

By Elder Larry Newton and Sister Darla Newton
Rajahmundry, India

Schade Girls High School is very well known in Rajahmundry; it has been around for over 120 years. This school was established in 1894 by an American missionary, Miss Schade from the

Lutheran Church. The Lutheran Church has long ago forgotten this school, and they have struggled to keep it operating.

The government does help by paying the teachers’ salaries. However, the

13 women who teach at the school use a good portion of their salaries to keep the school running. They teach girls grades K-10 and have 160 students. At least half of the women are graduates from Schade.

When we arrived at the school, we were greeted with music, singing, and dancing. These beautiful young girls are from very poor families. The teachers are working hard to help them lift their status in life and to teach these young ladies that they can become successful in whatever they undertake.

The Head Mistress of the school, Miss Anni, was very happy to have a hand pump for their well and to have the 20 fans that were installed to help in the scorching heat in Rajahmundry. The teachers were very happy to receive a printer to aid in their teaching.

The brethren from the Rajahmundry Second Branch prepared a garden spot so the girls can grow different plants as part of their botany class.

To finish the project, we had a wonderful cultural celebration with traditional dances, scripture readings, and singing of the national anthem. ■



Days for Girls

By Barry and Jennifer Hubbard

Noida, India

On October 25, 2016, LDS Charities donated 100 Days for Girls kits to one of the girls-only orphanages run by Udayan Care of New Delhi, India. Days for Girls is a “dynamic grassroots network of tens of thousands of volunteers worldwide on six continents empowering girls, women, and communities to find sustainable menstrual health solutions.”

Days for Girls volunteers travelled from Taipei, Taiwan, with the girls’ hygiene kits and were soon in front of 22 girls of Udayan Care. A short teaching session concerning girls and women’s health was given, and then the kits were distributed.



Udayan Care orphanage is run by Ms. Kiran Modi of New Delhi, India. Ms. Modi “acts as a role model to those who would serve these lovely girls. For her, it is a passion of care, of service, and of love,” said Mr. Deepak Sharma, director of one of the Noida Udayan houses, where 37 girls reside. Udayan Care takes special care to provide a “family-type environment” to all the kids.

All the girls from this orphanage are adopted in the Udayan family, and all girls are required to attend school.

According to Mr. Sharma, “70–80 percent of these girls go on to graduate from high school, a trade school, or some kind of vocational training.” Some of the girls get their vocational training right at Udayan. It’s of no coincidence that the fundamental pillars for both Udayan Care and Days for Girls are empathy, education, and empowerment.

One of the older girls of Udayan, Ms. Sheetal Pal Udayan, said, “This whole learning experience was great. This kind of training is almost unknown for most of us. And the kit is washable and reusable. I will take care of my kit. Thank you so much.”

The donated Days for Girls kits were assembled by the Asia Women’s Conference attendees in March 2016 in Hong Kong. ■

Magnifying the Priesthood at Home

By Sister Danita Edwin

White Field Ward, Bengaluru India Stake

By nature my husband is pleasant, soft, and extremely loving and caring to my kids and me. He is the same to everyone around us—also to friends, relatives, and Church members.

My husband has always been a huge support throughout my spiritual journey. He strengthened my faith because I had a lot of doubts before joining the Church. When my husband was trying to know more about the Church, I argued about us spending time with him, but he spent more

time with the scriptures. We had arguments and always he said, “Don’t stop me.” I kept asking him to spend time with us, but he remained silent. The squabbles went on, and all of sudden my mouth was shut. I couldn’t speak for a few minutes, and then I became normal. That’s when I really knew that this is the true gospel. The Book of Mormon is true word of God.

As a responsible priesthood holder, he cares for us by how he teaches my children and me about the gospel. If I



Sister Danita Edwin

make any mistakes, he will correct me and help me. When I am sick and tired, he helps me a lot in so many ways.

The Edwin Family



One time we visited our native place to see his parents and relatives. After we had stayed for a week, we decided to return back home to Bangalore. When we were waiting for the arrival of the train, an old man was lying on the platform without proper clothing. It was a very dark and cloudy day. We didn't have much time to help him, but the old man asked for water. My husband took his bottle, ran quickly to another platform, and came with the water to give to the old man. He also opened our suitcase, took out his clothes, and gave it to the old man, asking him to cover his body. The man cried at that very moment—this moved me so much that I cried as well. I am always thankful to God that he gave me a

wonderful husband who magnifies his priesthood by showing Christlike love to the needy.

President David O. McKay (1873–1970) said, “No other success [in life] can compensate for failure in the home” (quoting J. E. McCulloch, “Home: the Savior of Civilization,” in Conference Report, Apr. 1935, p. 116).

I believe what President David O. McKay said is true, for my husband stands as a living testimony of it. He spends much time with the family and also serves in the Church by fulfilling his calling. His character is an inspiration to me. He seeks Heavenly Father in the early morning, says a prayer before heading to the office, and reads the scriptures before going to bed. Priesthood blessings are not only

given to me when I am sick but also to our children during their exams to help them overcome any fear and sickness. Thus, my husband tries to fulfill his priesthood duties at home to the best of his abilities.

This reminds me of another small incident that strengthened my faith in God regarding the priesthood. During our visit to our hometown, my cousins were not happy that we were attending The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, because of wrong opinions they had about our Church.

My second sister was also that way—every time my husband would talk about the gospel, she would listen but finally say something. One day she fell really sick. There was some small swelling on her wrist and finger. My sister had no idea why it had happened. She knelt down right in front of us and cried, “Oh, God, what happened to me. Please forgive my sin, Lord.” She kept crying. I asked my husband to give a priesthood blessing to her. I spoke with my sister, and she agreed and pleaded with faith, “Please pray for me.” My husband gave her a priesthood blessing, and immediately we saw that her hand was perfectly fine. We were shocked, and so was my sister. She thanked God and my husband. It was a miracle that happened right in front of my eyes. Filled with joy, I thanked God immensely for giving me a wonderful faithful and worthy priesthood holder. ■