

"That Thy Outgoings May Be in the Name of the Lord": Solving Our Marriage and Family Problems through Celestial Therapy

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The other evening, a friend called on her cell phone to tell me she was stuck in traffic.

"Where are you?" I asked.

"I can't really tell," she said in despair. Then suddenly she relaxed. "Oh, just a minute. Where's the temple?"

Her immediate response was to get her bearings by noting where she was in relation to the temple.

"Where's the temple?" What a marvelous question for us to ask as we journey through life so that we keep our bearings. And I believe this question is absolutely crucial to ask when we are stuck in the traffic problems of daily living—or stalled in our marriage and family relationships.

Where is the temple? And where are we in relation to it?

Thanks to President Gordon B. Hinckley's inspiration from the Lord, temples are dotting the land. One day a temple will again be built in Jerusalem to prepare for Christ's millennial reign. If we could be in Jerusalem today, I would have us gather in what is called the "upper room" of the BYU Jerusalem Center. We would look through the grand windows onto the Old City of Jerusalem and envision the future temple of the Lord.

Prime locations are always selected for the houses of the Lord, but the very best location of any temple is at the center of our lives. When the temple is at the center of our lives, our marriages and families are organized around temple covenants and worship, temple service, truths, and blessings.

The best location of any temple is not a matter of geography. It is a matter of our faith and focus. And our faith and focus are a matter of life and death—if we want eternal relationships.

Where is the temple in our lives? As endowed women, did we "go through" the temple—or did the temple really "go through" us? Is the temple in our cells and in our souls? It needs to be.

When we are weary, worried, in despair, restless, lonely, misunderstood, indecisive, discouraged, overlooked, overweight, overwhelmed, overwrought, underappreciated, underemployed, or undernourished with love, is our immediate question, "Where is the temple?" For women of covenant, it *needs* to be.

When we are in desperate need of freedom, comfort, or direction, when our aching hearts cry out, "How long O Lord?" is our first thought, *Where is the temple? It needs* to be—actually it must be—if we, as women of God, are going to survive the roller-coaster days, now and in the future.

These are days that require us to wake up to the realities of an ever-darkening world. An apostle of the Lord recently warned, "As the forces around us increase in intensity, whatever spiritual strength was once sufficient will not be enough." [1](#) I'm grateful for Elder Henry B. Eyring's words. They have haunted me ever since I first heard them.

The forces around us are wreaking havoc with our marriages and families—and we as women are typically the first to identify the problems. But what then? What do we do about the problems in our lives, once we discover them?

As we look for solutions to our problems, I'm afraid that far too many of us are far too content to live beneath our privileges as women of covenant. *Arise* is a holy and familiar word for covenant-making women. Sisters, as we seek to heal our hearts and homes, it's time to arise and benefit from the privileges of the temple. In fact, I believe it's time for each of us to make sure we are engaged in what could be called "Celestial Therapy."

Celestial Therapy involves regularly participating in temple worship and temple service. It involves keeping our sacred temple covenants with increasing precision and depth. Celestial Therapy is the only therapy that will make a difference—not only to how we live in this world but how and where we live in the next. And while Celestial Therapy is truly out of this world, it is available at a temple near you.

Celestial Therapy Offered Exclusively in the House of the Lord for Everyone

"There is only one aristocracy that God recognizes," said President George Albert Smith, "and that is the aristocracy of righteousness."[2](#) No one is turned away who is willing to comply with the Lord's rules for admission. He, himself, has set the requirements. His injunction is very simple: "Keep my commandments" (Matthew 9:17). The Lord welcomes *everyone* who is willing to show by his or her actions that he or she is really ready for

Celestial Therapy.

We are the ones who, by our telestial choices, keep ourselves out. And what a tragedy that is. All the healing in the world—or better said, all the healing that is out of this world, which will help us with the pains of this world—is right behind the door to every one of His temples.

The Savior waits with open arms and with eternal healing to help us overcome those problems that are to be overcome—and to endure those that are to be endured.

He is waiting to help. What are we waiting for?

The Lord is the Master Healer. He has boundless power to heal our minds and marriages, our hearts and our homes. And what an assurance it is to seek help from Him who knows us better than we know ourselves. He knows our names and pains, our minds and hearts; He knows our friends and those who seem raised up to test us. He knows our spouses—even though we may not; and our children—even those we have not yet borne. He knows *everything* about us and *everything* about this earth, galaxy, universe . . . and beyond. How? Because He created everything. Truly, there was "not any thing made that was made" (John 1:3) except by Him.

Because of the Savior's love for us, He wants to offer us all He knows. The glory of God *is* intelligence. He offers us His eternal laws and ordinances with their accompanying joy and peace. Life has taught me that the more laws we know, and more importantly, the more laws we live, the more joy and peace we experience.

The laws the Lord offers us in His temple bring us out of the world. As we live them, we are able to remain or rise above telestial living, that kind of living which predictably brings such grief and darkness into our lives. What a feeling to be released from that darkness. No wonder one sister said, "I'm addicted to the temple!"

Celestial Therapy is the only kind of therapy we want never to have end.

Why would we ever want it to end when it brings us priesthood blessings, blessings we can neither quite fully comprehend nor deny? In Doctrine and Covenants 109:22, the Lord tells us of four priesthood blessings that accompany faithful keeping of temple covenants. He promises that when we go forth from His house we can leave

1. armed with His power,
2. with His name upon us,
3. with His glory round about us, and
4. with His angels having charge over us.

Through these blessings, we can do the otherwise impossible in our lives, so that we can build marriages and families that will build Zion. *That's* the power of Celestial Therapy.

What difference can these promised temple blessings make in our lives? Let's consider how His power and His name may influence a woman and her family who are suffering from years of being under the influence of her rage and criticism. She feels misunderstood and rejected. Her husband feels alone and worthless. Her children, now grown adults, show impatience with themselves and others or flog themselves regularly with the soul-searing memory of their mother's verbally and emotionally abusive voice of authority.

What happens as this mother commences to regularly participate in temple worship? According to the Lord's promises, this woman has the opportunity to access His power. Armed with the Lord's power, this woman has the power to see—to see herself perhaps as she has never seen herself before. When she reads Jacob 2:35, perhaps she now reads it this way: "Ye have broken the heart of your tender husband, and lost the confidence of your children, because of your bad example before them." The house of the Lord is indeed a house of revelation.

This woman could also plead for and be given power to cast away contention—contention which she now knows, through temple experiences, prohibits the Spirit of the Lord from being present. She can then understand why even though she *feels* love for her family, they have not *experienced* her love. The Spirit is the messenger of love. When the Spirit flees because of contention, so does the perception of love. Now, however, armed with the power of the Lord, this woman can grow in her ability to do what she has previously not been able to do, namely, apologize, commend, forgive, and express love.

How can the second promise of the Lord—that His name will be upon us as we leave His house—help this woman? What happens when she leaves the temple and remembers that every action of hers is now done in the name of the Lord? What happens when in the midst of yelling and raging, this woman catches herself with the thought, *As an endowed mother, I am now yelling and calling my children names—in the name of the Lord! Is this really the way I want to represent the Lord?* Perhaps these questions could be called "Kolob Shock Therapy."

As this woman applies her sacred covenants day by day, we can predict that her confidence will wax stronger and stronger in the presence of the Lord *and* her family. Her heart will be set neither upon herself nor upon the things of the world. Rather, her heart will be turned to her husband and to her children. Her concern will be to do everything she can do to enliven her husband's spirit and to strengthen her children's hearts. Her desire will be to breathe life into her family members rather than to knock the wind out of them.

One or two trips to the temple won't bring these results, but, as this woman continues to immerse herself in temple worship, she will experience a power and protection unlike anything she has ever experienced before. Because of Christ's protective power, she will tenderly withstand the impulses of retaliation and win her fight against fighting. She will be able to contend against contention. "Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband

also, and he praiseth her" (Proverbs 31:28).

And what is true for this woman and her anger, is true for

- a woman and her procrastination.
- a man and his lying.
- a woman and her unforgiveness.
- a man and his struggle with pornography.
- a woman and her battle with weight.
- a man and his indecisiveness.
- a woman and her grief.

And what is true for all these women and men is true for you and for me. Through temple experiences, *each* of us can access the Lord's power and other priesthood blessings.

The Lord's Altar and Symbols Are Part of Celestial Therapy

Celestial Therapy heals with the help of the Lord. The Lord can *alter* whatever we are willing to put on His *altar*. A woman struggled with chronic bitterness toward her husband. With a longing for change, she fasted and prayed. With power and knowledge gained through temple worship, she knew how to pray to lay her bitterness on the Lord's altar. Her husband noticed an almost immediate difference in her behavior toward him. With the bitterness removed, she was able to reach out to him in ways she had not done for many years. And he responded in kind.

Celestial Therapy also heals with the help of symbols. The temple is filled with symbols. Temple symbols invite us to consider that there are many ways to interpret something. We learn that what we are able to see is much more a message about ourselves than about the thing we are viewing. What a grand, liberating truth this is for our marriage and family relationships!

As we wrap our minds and hearts around the mighty symbols of the temple, we ask the Lord earnestly and ourselves reflexively: "What does that symbol mean for me now? What message is the Lord trying to give me through that symbol?" Truman Madsen asks himself two other questions: "Do I understand the symbol the way I should?"³ and "Do I feel about the symbol the way I should?" The unlayering of possible meaning in temple symbols invites us to dig for deeper meaning in our own lives.

One woman found herself using " temple symbol meaning questions" to help her with her family relationships: "What does my daughter's withdrawal really mean?" "What message is

the Lord trying to give me through this experience with my husband?" She found, through Celestial Therapy, that the meanings she began to attribute with her *temple* eyes were increasingly benevolent—and very different from her initial beliefs. She came to understand more fully that things are not always the way they initially appear to be.

A husband had been hiding a habit of lying. His habit was actually hidden more from himself than from his wife, but he became a man of integrity the day Celestial Therapy helped him fully acknowledge the meaning his wife attributed to his habit. For her, his lies were a symbol. He realized that to his wife his lies meant, "I don't really love you or our children and I don't really want to be with you through the eternities. I love these lies more than I love you."

Faced with this chilling symbolic meaning, the man called upon the power and blessings of the temple through prayer. He pleaded with the Lord, "I don't want to lose this fight with this habit. I don't want to lose my wife and children. Please help me." He experienced a marvelous strengthening and power. He wrote a heart-to-heart letter of apology to his wife about his years of past dishonesty.

Now the challenge: How does a husband who has lied for years, and *lied about lying*, win the trust of his wife so that she really believes he is telling the truth when he finally apologizes? As a symbol of his sincerity, he wanted to offer her his apology in a place where he knew she would believe him. He chose the celestial room of the temple. This symbolic act strengthened his resolve and his wife's confidence in him, and he commenced enjoying what he termed "the best relationship I've ever had with my wife and children."

For *every* problem in our life, there is power and knowledge in the temple to help us. One sister said, "As covenant women of God, our motto should be: Got a problem? Go to the temple!"

I offer three ways Celestial Therapy heals our hearts and homes:

1. It frees us,
2. It comforts us.
3. It reveals to us things we have never before considered about ourselves and others.

Celestial Therapy Heals Us As It Frees us

Through its freeing influence, we can save time and energy . . . and perhaps even money. How? Because after commencing Celestial Therapy, many ideas, projects, and passions that previously consumed our time, energy, and financial resources are no longer on any of our "wanna do," "gotta do" lists. Celestial Therapy can even change our measuring rod that determines when enough is enough.

A temple was recently built in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. There has been a grand response

from the Saints rededicating their lives to serving the Lord and their families. One sister, one of our true "northern lights," said, "We've all sold our recreational vehicles, and now, we're all happily working in the temple!"

Celestial Therapy can also free us and save us time and energy by turning many "hot issues" of the world into "non issues" for us. One wonders exactly how many talk shows, prime time news panels, books, and/or government programs it takes to resolve a hot issue!

Consider many of the topics with which the world presently wrestles. Now consider the truths taught in the temple. In fact, try this Celestial Therapy prescription: Take one world "hot issue." Immerse it in temple truths. What is the result? Most often, a nonissue; at the very least, such an abundance of eternal clarity that prolonged debate is reduced to a Post-it Note-sized comment.

Celestial Therapy can free us *and* our ancestors. I am fascinated with the Lord's economy. As we participate in the privilege of proxy ordinances to set our kindred free, we are freed. Think about it. We vicariously bring to women who no longer live in this world, the saving ordinances they absolutely need to be freed from death and the chains of hell. And in the process, *we* are freed.

We are freer when we leave the temple than when we entered. Freer to do what the Lord requires of us and to discern good from evil. Freer to fill the measure of our creation and experience joy. Freer to solve our problems, and freer to freely give our will to the Lord.

We are also freer to put aside telestial relationship behaviors that shrink our spirits and grieve the Spirit. Eliza R. Snow and Zina Diantha Huntington Young were great advocates of temple worship for women. Was it the effect of Zina's temple experiences that allowed her to respond so lovingly to an emotionally cruel comment? The situation was this: Zina was told by an informant that a certain woman didn't like her. Her response? "Well, I love her . . . and she can't help herself."⁴ When someone is unkind, judges us unfairly, and persistently undermines our best efforts, can we respond as Zina did? Through Celestial Therapy we can.

Celestial Therapy Can Heal Us through What It Reveals to Us

Celestial Therapy can give us insights into ourselves and others that we never considered before and tell us what to do in difficult situations. The Lord generously manifests to us those things we are seeking—just as soon as He perceives we are ready. At times His revelations show us even more than we believe we requested.

One woman fervently prayed during her temple worship for further purifying so she could fill the measure of her creation. She was not prepared for the Lord's refining instructions. During the proxy endowment session and for a full week following, the whisperings of the Spirit invited her to become a "pride detective" in her life. She was embarrassed to find obvious pride manifested in judging others and in unforgiveness. But things really started to change when her temple lenses allowed her to see pride as the root of so many things she

struggled with—from feeling left out to fat-making.

She realized that pride invited her to believe that the Lord's laws of health really didn't apply to her. She didn't have to exercise and eat healthfully to have increased health and fitness. Pride made her believe she was above that, and thus pride invited excessive poundage and ill health to become part of her life.

This woman also learned that on occasions when she felt left out, it was really her pride telling her that others should be more interested in her. Pride's myopic stance isolated her. A major revelation for this woman was that feelings of low self-worth, selfishness, and pride are a tragic trio.

While the temple is the place where the mysteries of God are unfolded, the biggest mystery for most of us is how to master ourselves—how to rise above the temptations which so easily beset us. One woman privately assisted her husband's struggle with the adversary's temptations to view pornography. Through temple worship this woman learned how to deal with the adversary. One day in a moment of despair, she used this knowledge to free her home from the adversary's grip. She couldn't believe what happened. As the darkness disappeared, her husband's ability to resist temptation was magnified, and a feeling of safety and light reentered her home.

Another woman was continually in emotional upheaval and even despair because of a very difficult relationship with her mother-in-law. By immersing herself in intensive Celestial Therapy, she was able to give up defending herself and making critical comments about her supposed enemy. How? One day, as this woman was reflecting on her temple covenants and on this anguishing situation, a question came to her mind that totally changed her view of her mother-in-law's difficult behavior. The question was, "How would I respond to her gross misinterpretations of everything I do if I were to discover that one of my mother-in-law's premortal assignments was to help me prove myself to the Lord and, in the process, truly come to know myself?"

She mused further and wondered, "What if my mother-in-law's premortal commitment to me and love for me is actually the driving force behind her troubling behavior? What if she was so devoted to me in premortality that she was willing to behave in such a way as even to risk not receiving love from me here on earth? If this were true, how could I restrain myself from running to her and thanking her? How could I withhold my love from her anymore?"

These celestial thoughts freed this woman's mind and heart and allowed her to extend kindness and love, even in the midst of continuing accusations from her mother-in-law.

Celestial Therapy Can Heal Us by Comforting Us

One way we are comforted is through anticipatory joy. Celestial Therapy was the healing balm for a barren woman ravaged with the pain of childlessness, the grief of believing both she and her body had betrayed her loving husband, and the anguish induced by the all-

seeing eyes of her neighbors who cruelly questioned her devotion to home and family.

One day in temple worship she was given the comforting thought that her children were indeed waiting on the other side of the veil for her. She had been told something similar before by friends but had never really believed it, passing it off as a trite way to dismiss and even negate her pain. But, because of previous temple experiences, she knew this thought was a personal truth mercifully given to her by Him who *really* knew. As she contemplated this truth, she felt impressed that her children were so desirous of her being their mother that they were willing to wait until the next life.

Her pain and grief fell away, and she started to think of all the ways she could groom herself into a great mother in this life by nurturing and bearing with others—even in their most unlovable moments. With majestic confidence borne of celestial tutoring, she continues to move through her life, blessings others and no longer shrinking from the violets offered on Mother's Day.

Celestial Therapy can indeed heal us through its freeing, revealing, and comforting power. Inside the temple, the Lord's altar and symbols are part of Celestial Therapy. When we depart from the temple, Celestial Therapy continues as we leave with the Lord's power and name upon us and with His glory and angels round about us.

Through Celestial Therapy the Savior's atoning sacrifice becomes real to us in a manner we have never before experienced. We come to know *Him*, not just know about Him. And we come to *love* Him—above everyone and everything else. Truly, the ultimate motivation in our lives comes when we want to live closer to the Lord than we ever have, closer to Him than to anyone else—and thus He brings us closer to everyone.

As we center our love and lives on the Savior and His temple, we experience an anchoring and a direction in our other relationships. The effect of such singleness of heart—and clarity of mind—was spoken by a young father. As he named and blessed his newborn son, he prayed, "Pedro, you will know your wife because she will love the Lord *more* than she loves you."

The Savior has promised to manifest himself in mercy in His temples (see D&C 110:7). We also know that He will suddenly come to His temple (see Malachi 3:1; D&C 36:8). And sisters, it is our privilege to create homes and families to prepare for His millennial reign.

May we always know where the temple of the Lord is and where we stand in relation to it. May we stand in these holy places and seek Celestial Therapy to solve our problems. And as we do so, may we arise and shine forth as women of light.

1. Henry B. Eyring, "Always," *Ensign*, October 1999, 9.
2. George Albert Smith, *Sharing the Gospel with Others* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1948), 198.
3. Truman Madsen, personal communication, April 2000.
4. Susa Young Gates, Diary, 25 July 1879, holograph, Archives of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City. See also Janet Peterson and LaRene Gaunt, *Elect Ladies* (Salt Lake City:

Deseret Book, 1990), 57.

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