

years that have followed, we have called upon our Father in Heaven for many “immediate blessings.” Daily, these holy habits and righteous routines have helped steady us on the path that leads back into our Father’s presence. And today I say, “We thank thee, O God, for a prophet to guide us in these latter days.”¹¹

Worthiness for temple blessings

Personal worthiness is essential to enter His holy temples and to ultimately become heirs to “all [the] Father hath.”¹² The Lord has said, “Let virtue garnish thy thoughts unceasingly; then shall thy confidence wax strong in the presence of God.”¹³ When we do this, we can confidently enter the holy temples of God with a knowledge that we are worthy to go where the Lord Himself goes. When we are worthy, we can not only *enter* the temple, the temple can *enter* us. The Lord’s promises of salvation and happiness become *ours*—and our earthly mission becomes *His*.

Just last month our youngest son, Chad, went to the temple with a beautiful, worthy young woman to be married for time and all eternity. As he took her hand and knelt at the altar, I looked into the mirrors on either side, and again I wanted to whisper, “Do you understand why it is so important to be clean and pure?” But this time I didn’t have to remind him, because the Spirit did the whispering.

To the youth of the noble birthright, look into the windows of eternity! See yourselves in the Lord’s holy temples. See

yourselves living worthy and pure lives. Generations are depending on you! I testify that worthiness is possible because of the redeeming and enabling power of the Atonement of Jesus Christ. I pray that it may be said of each one of us, “They shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy.”¹⁴ In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

NOTES

1. See Alma 13:3.
2. Alma 22:15.
3. Alma 22:18.
4. Abraham 3:25.
5. See Alma 37:33; 3 Nephi 7:18.
6. See Doctrine and Covenants 88:40.
7. See Helaman 4:24.
8. See *For the Strength of Youth* (2001), 30.
9. Moroni 4:3.
10. Matthew 11:30.
11. “We Thank Thee, O God, for a Prophet,” *Hymns*, no. 19.
12. Doctrine and Covenants 84:38; see also vv. 35–37.
13. Doctrine and Covenants 121:45.
14. Revelation 3:4; see also v. 5.

President Monson

The choir and congregation will now sing “High on the Mountain Top.” Following the singing, we will hear from Elders Shayne M. Bowen and Daniel L. Johnson of the Seventy. They will be followed by Elder Dieter F. Uchtdorf of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.

The choir and congregation sang
“High on the Mountain Top.”

Elder Shayne M. Bowen

Two beautiful places in Idaho

In Idaho Falls, Idaho, there is a beautiful airport. One of the largest in the region, this airport allows easy access to the

Upper Snake River Valley. I remember as a young man returning from Chile to this very airport and greeting my family after two years of missionary service. Similar scenes have taken place thousands of

times in this airport as the faithful Saints answer the call to serve. It is a very useful, integral part of the city and region.

Near the airport is another very useful and beautiful part of the city—Freeman Park. The Snake River runs along this park for about two miles. There is a walking path that goes through the park and follows on around the river for miles.

Freeman Park has acres and acres of green grass filled with baseball and softball diamonds, swing sets for children, picnic shelters for family reunions, beautiful lanes filled with trees and bushes for strolling sweethearts. Looking down the river from the park, one can see the majestic Idaho Falls Temple, white and clean, standing on high ground. The sound of the rushing waters of the Snake River as it works its way through natural lava outcroppings makes this park very desirable. It is one of my favorite places to walk with my sweetheart, Lynette, relax, contemplate, and meditate. It is very peaceful and inspiring.

Why do I talk about the regional airport and Freeman Park in Idaho Falls? Because they are both built on the same kind of ground; both of these beautiful, useful places used to be sanitary landfills.

A sanitary landfill is where garbage is buried between layers of earth. Webster's dictionary defines a landfill as "a system of trash and garbage disposal in which the waste is buried between layers of earth to build up low-lying land" (*Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th ed. [2003], 699).

Another definition of a landfill is "a place where garbage is buried and the land is reclaimed." The definition of *reclaim* is "to recall from wrong or improper conduct . . . to rescue from an undesirable state" (1039).

Digging up old garbage

I have lived in Idaho Falls nearly my whole life. I have contributed a lot of

garbage to those landfills over the course of more than 50 years.

What would the city fathers think if on a given day I showed up on one of the runways of the Idaho Falls airport or the middle of one of the grassy fields in Freeman Park with a backhoe and started digging large holes? When they asked me what I was doing, I would respond that I wanted to dig up the old garbage that I had made over the years.

I suspect they would tell me that there was no way to identify my personal garbage, that it had been reclaimed and buried long ago. I'm sure that they would tell me that I had no right to dig up the garbage and that I was destroying something very beautiful and useful that they had made out of my garbage. In short, I don't think they would be very pleased with me. I suppose that they would wonder why anyone would want to destroy something so beautiful and useful in an attempt to dig up old garbage.

The reclaiming power of the Atonement

Is it possible to reclaim a life that through reckless abandon has become so strewn with garbage that it appears that the person is unforgivable? Or what about the one who is making an honest effort but has fallen back into sin so many times that he feels that there is no possible way to break the seemingly endless pattern? Or what about the person who has changed his life but just can't forgive himself?

Referring to the Atonement of Jesus Christ, the prophet Alma taught the people in Gideon:

"And he shall go forth, suffering pains and afflictions and temptations of every kind; and this that the word might be fulfilled which saith he will take upon him the pains and the sicknesses of his people.

"And he will take upon him death, that he may loose the bands of death which bind his people; and he will take

upon him their infirmities, that his bowels may be filled with mercy, according to the flesh, that he may know according to the flesh how to succor his people according to their infirmities.

“Now the Spirit knoweth all things; nevertheless the Son of God suffereth according to the flesh that he might take upon him the sins of his people, that he might blot out their transgressions according to the power of his deliverance; and now behold, this is the testimony which is in me” (Alma 7:11–13).

Also speaking of the Atonement, Jacob, the brother of Nephi, taught: “Wherefore, it must needs be an infinite atonement—save it should be an infinite atonement this corruption could not put on incorruption. Wherefore, the first judgment which came upon man must needs have remained to an endless duration. And if so, this flesh must have laid down to rot and to crumble to its mother earth, to rise no more” (2 Nephi 9:7).

The Atonement of Jesus Christ is available to each of us. His Atonement is infinite. It applies to everyone, even you. It can clean, reclaim, and sanctify even you. That is what infinite means—total, complete, all, forever. President Boyd K. Packer has taught: “There is no habit, no addiction, no rebellion, no transgression, no apostasy, no crime exempted from the promise of complete forgiveness. That is

the promise of the atonement of Christ” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1995, 23; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 20).

Accepting and using gift of repentance

Just as the landfill requires dedicated work and attention, laboriously applying layer after layer of fill to reclaim the low-lying ground, our lives also require the same vigilance, continually applying layer after layer of the healing gift of repentance.

Just as the city fathers in Idaho Falls would feel bad about a person trying to dig up his old garbage, our Father in Heaven and His Son, Jesus Christ, feel sorrow when we choose to remain in sin, when the gift of repentance made possible through the Atonement can clean, reclaim, and sanctify our lives.

When we gratefully accept and use this precious gift, we can enjoy the beauty and usefulness of our lives that God has reclaimed through His infinite love and the Atonement of His Son and our brother, Jesus Christ.

I testify that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God, that His Atonement is real, and that through the miracle of forgiveness, He can make each of us clean again, even you. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

Elder Daniel L. Johnson

Our tithing obligation

My remarks this afternoon are intended as an invitation to those who have not yet gained a personal testimony of the full payment of tithing. There are many reasons that are used to not pay tithing, such as medical emergencies, debts, car or home repairs, educational expenses, and

insurance. These reasons and others like them are very real and are lived and dealt with every day by many, if not most, of us. These tax our limited financial resources and, if we are not wise stewards of these resources, may result in the inability to meet our tithing obligation to the Lord. A lack of compliance with this eternal law is not to be taken lightly and can not only se-