

Of Patriarchal Blessings and Covenants

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It is wonderful to be on this campus today. This Marriott Center was dedicated while I was here as a student, and I have fond memories of basketball games, concerts, and amazing devotionals in which I was taught by apostles and prophets.

In 1977, David and I packed our belongings into a Ryder truck and moved from here to Indiana for him to pursue graduate work. As we tearfully closed the back of the truck, we both had a distinct impression that we would return to BYU someday. Never did we imagine that it would be in this capacity!

When our middle son was a first-year student at BYU and was here without a car, he used to say, “Mom, that sign you see when you enter the university that says ‘The World Is Our Campus’ should say ‘The Campus Is My World!’” For David and me, the world has become our campus, and we entered to learn and have gone forth to serve in ways we never could have imagined.

Today I want to share two key lessons I learned on this campus when I was a student that have blessed my life and will hopefully benefit yours.

Lesson number one: Your patriarchal blessing will guide you.

Just days before coming to BYU in 1970 for my first year, I received my patriarchal blessing. Some of the phrases in this blessing influenced which classes I took and the interests I pursued during my time here. I was even directed in my decision to marry David because of an important and inspired line in this treasured document.

I remember missing a question on a religion class exam that went something like this: “Why is section 139 of the Doctrine and Covenants important to you?”

The answer was supposed to be “Because it is my patriarchal blessing—my own personalized section of the Doctrine and Covenants.”

President Thomas S. Monson taught that a patriarchal blessing

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may be brief or lengthy, simple or profound. . . . It is the Spirit that conveys the true meaning. . . .

*Your patriarchal blessing is your passport to peace in this life. It is a Liahona of light to guide you unerringly to your heavenly home.*¹

If you don't have a patriarchal blessing, I invite you to prepare to receive one. If you have one, I encourage you to prayerfully read, ponder, and study it often. This blessing can help you better understand your relationship with our Heavenly Father and His Beloved Son and connect you to the ancient prophets. I testify that it will be a guide to you throughout your life.

Lesson number two: Covenants strengthen you.

During my sophomore year, in February 1972, I was blessed to attend a dedicatory session of the Provo Temple. It was brand-new back then; it is way old now. I was nineteen years old and had never experienced a meeting like that before. I remember the spirit I felt that fueled my desire to live worthily to make covenants in the house of the Lord.

A year after graduating from BYU, I received my own endowment in the Provo Temple, and I entered into a covenant marriage with David in the Salt Lake Temple the next day. Fourteen months later we brought our newborn son home to married student housing here on campus.

It has been fifty-two years since the Provo Temple dedication. I wish I could emphasize adequately to you the importance of staying true to your covenants. I testify that through our covenant connection with Christ, we can experience amazing joy and happiness and also have access to His strengthening power, comfort, and peace when difficulties and disappointments arise.

President Russell M. Nelson said it beautifully: "Whenever any kind of upheaval occurs in your life, the safest place to be *spiritually* is living *inside* your temple covenants!"²

I have lived long enough to know that President Nelson's teachings about covenants are true.

Brothers and sisters, I know that God lives. I know that He loves us and hears and answers our prayers. I bear testimony that His Son, Jesus Christ, died that we might live. He is our Savior and our Redeemer. And I also bear witness that the Holy Ghost is real. He is a guide, a teacher, and a comforter. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

Notes

1. Thomas S. Monson, "Your Patriarchal Blessing: A Liahona of Light," *Ensign*, November 1986.

2. Russell M. Nelson, "The Temple and Your Spiritual Foundation," *Liahona*, November 2021; emphasis in original.