

ELDER RICHARD L. EVANS

Of the First Council of the Seventy

I AM sure that the sense of expectancy, of which Brother Bowen spoke, is indeed overpowering to all of us, and that we are all well aware that of ourselves it will not be satisfied. I pray that it may be satisfied through the direction and blessing of him in whose name we are met here.

There has been running through my mind a sentence spoken by President McKay during the last few days: "Give encouragement to the people." It came before me again as the combined choruses of Brigham Young University so beautifully sang here yesterday, "He watching over Israel, slumbers not, nor sleeps. Shouldst thou walking in grief languish, he will quicken thee."

The adverse and long winter; the uncertainties of the times and seasons, the perplexities and problems of our young people have suggested another long-cherished passage of scripture found in Genesis in a promise to Noah:

While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease. (Genesis 8:22.)

I am sure that there are many other things also which shall not cease including truth, association with those we love, the possibilities of progress, and a glorious future to work for and to live for, and I am indeed grateful.

We can find encouragement despite some of the physical facts that we face.

A thoughtful person who lives across the mountains to the east (George W. Olinger) has sent within the last two or three days a statement or two that I should like to read briefly into the record. I wish I knew who wrote them so I could give credit. One sentence carried this thought: We may be faced with a lowered physical standard of living, but we need not be faced with lowered standards of thinking. And

there was enclosed this series of simple suggestions:

Learn to like what doesn't cost much.

Learn to like reading, conversation, music.

Learn to like plain food, plain service, plain cooking.

Learn to like fields, trees, brooks, hiking, rowing, climbing hills.

Learn to like people even though some of them may be . . . different from you. . . .

Learn to like to work and enjoy the satisfaction of doing your job as well as it can be done.

Learn to like the songs of the birds, the companionship of dogs.

Learn to like gardening, puttering around the house, and fixing things.

Learn to like the sunrise and sunset, the beating of the rain on the roof and the windows, and the gentle fall of snow on a winter day.

Learn to keep your wants simple, and refuse to be controlled by the likes and dislikes of others.

We are reminded of another beautiful thought accredited to H. G. Wells by a contemporary writer, and which suggests that man should not allow "the watch and the calendar to blind him to the fact that each moment of his life is a miracle and a mystery."

I think we can take encouragement in the many marvelous things there are to enjoy regardless of other physical facts that we may face.

I think we can take encouragement in some other things also. Some of the ponderable problems, the unanswered questions, the seeming injustices and discrepancies and uncertainties, some of which President Smith and Brother Kimball spoke of yesterday, which we often have a difficult time in reconciling, will find answer and solution and satisfaction if we are patient and prayerful and willing to wait. Part of them are the price we pay for our free agency. We pay a great price for free agency in this world, but it is worth the price we pay. One of the

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cherished sentences I recall from the utterances of the Prophet Joseph Smith is that one which says that "an hour of virtuous liberty on earth is worth a whole eternity of bondage." So long as men have their free agency, there will be temporary injustices and discrepancies and some seemingly inexplicable things, which ultimately in our Father's own time and purpose will be reconciled and made right.

There are many other things that give us cause for encouragement—and I shan't take time to name them now—I know that President McKay is under the pressure of time but I shall pass over to one last one quickly: Encouragement to our young people in the uncertainties they face. I should like to say to them before I close that our Father in heaven sent us here not to fail but to succeed, and he has made it possible for us to succeed. He knows us better than we know ourselves, and he knows the circumstances and uncertainties we face. It is his declared purpose to bring to pass our immortality and eternal life, and to give us joy, if we will, and he hasn't presented any impossible set of circumstances or any impossible plan or purpose for us to achieve.

Despite all the uncertainties and difficulties, there is a glorious and worthwhile future for all of these young people of ours, if they will set their sights on

some permanent, worth-while goal, look a decade or two ahead, pay the price they have to pay to achieve it, accept the interruptions as they come, and have faith, to work, to prepare, to pray, to keep the commandments of God, to pursue their lives with calm, quiet purpose. If they will do this they will be blessed; they will find great, rich treasures in life, of knowledge, and of other things also; they will surmount all the difficulties and discouragements of the day, and all the interruptions, and all else, if they will continue in faith.

It is, after all, a wonderful world that our Father has given us, in which everything is possible on the basis of repentance and obedience, and on observance of the principles on which the blessings are predicated.

Life passes quickly. I pray that we may all endure to the end, and keep the spirit of encouragement, many more reasons for which we might have mentioned and all of which are contemplated in our Father's plans and purposes for us and are within our reach, according to our obedience and our devotion to the gospel of Jesus Christ, notwithstanding what environment or what companions or what conditions we find ourselves faced with. May God be with us and bless us and give us the courage and the wisdom to endure to the end in faith, I pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

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As I awoke this morning and looked out over this beautiful valley, conscious, as no doubt all of you are, of the hard winter that we have had, I opened the Bible, and read the nineteenth Psalm:

The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork.

Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge.

There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard.

Their line is gone out through all the

earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun.

Which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race.

His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it: and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof.

The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.

The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoic-