

ELDER ELDRED G. SMITH

Patriarch to the Church

BROTHERS AND SISTERS, I sense very keenly the responsibility in standing here before you, and needless to say, I seek your faith and prayers in my behalf.

It is truly a responsibility and an honor to stand before you, and one cannot help, in standing here, but be conscious of the developments of this age and the many blessings that are ours. Truly this is a choice time, a choice generation in which to live. We have many blessings, beyond our ability to count them.

We have our troubles and difficulties, yet there is none of us who would care to exchange our opportunities in this generation for those of another. There are opportunities, for example, in education, beyond anything we have ever had in the history of the earth. We have educational buildings, school buildings, university buildings, much better equipped than they have ever been before. We have instructors better prepared, with a greater knowledge and a better method in teaching, than we have ever had before. We have books which contain knowledge which has never been given to man before. We have greater opportunities to go to school, to get knowledge and education. There are more scholarships offered. The opportunities for the masses to receive a higher education are increasing. A larger percentage of people are receiving a higher education all the time.

God has poured out knowledge in abundance. This is very evident in the field of science, and especially in medicine, in communication, in transportation. These scientific developments are the minor blessings of this generation. Add to these blessings that of the gospel, with the priesthood and the blessings of eternal sealings.

We have a knowledge of the plan of life. We know where we are going. We then should know that this life

should be full of hardships and trials, and only thereby can we grow. Trials which come to us are not those which came to our ancestors. Our posterity will have still different trials, yet we would not care to trade our opportunities of living in this generation for that of living in any other generation we have known of.

Yet, when we look ahead of us in this world of confusion and chaos, my heart goes out in sympathy especially to the youth who have a war and military service staring them in the face. They say, "What is the use of all this education, training, preparation for the future?" We look ahead, and we see political and economic confusion, so complicated, I wonder whether mortals have the ability to solve the problems at hand.

Satan is always trying to thwart the work of the Lord, and the Lord repeatedly uses Satan's efforts to fulfil his own purposes. Satan tried to break up our missionary work, but the Lord is at the helm, directing the affairs of man, and especially his work on earth. What was the source of our missionary supply, was taken and put into one of the greatest mission fields of the day, the armed services. There is a most important missionary work among the servicemen that can be done by none other than the servicemen, themselves. If these servicemen will but live the gospel and teach it to their associates, teach it to those with whom they come in contact, they will do a very great missionary service, that no one else can do.

We have had innumerable experiences from World War II, where people have joined the Church because of watching some serviceman who lived the gospel. And if the servicemen who are members of the Church will be real Latter-day Saints and live the gospel, using what leisure time they may have in a productive, beneficial man-

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Second Day

ner, and in teaching others by example as well as by precept, they will be doing a most important missionary service.

After reading the Book of Mormon, ask yourselves, how long would this Korean conflict last if ten percent of the United Nations armed forces were living righteous lives? Then go another step in your imagination, say, if ten percent were Latter-day Saint men living the gospel, and about fifty percent of all the servicemen were living righteous lives, the power of God would touch the hearts of men and bring peace into the world. And I do not know how we can have real peace any other way.

Circumstances are so complicated I wonder whether mortal man has the ability to solve them without the help of the Lord.

We as Latter-day Saints must keep the faith in the future, faith in man, faith in God, live the gospel so that everyone who sees our actions will have a desire to be as we are. They will then sense the happiness and the joy that come to us as the result of our knowledge of the gospel and that are displayed in our everyday life. Thus we will be teaching the gospel.

God will never permit trials to come upon us beyond our power to withstand them, as long as we will put our trust and faith in him.

I think the story of Job is a very good example of that, an example of what life is here on the earth. Briefly and without quoting exactly, the story of Job, to me, tells the story of Satan making the statement to the Lord: Yes, Job is a righteous man; you surrounded him with so much I cannot reach him, but if you would let me go just a little way, if you would take just a little from him, I would show you that Job would curse the Lord. And so the Lord said, All right, I will permit you to go just so far. And so much was taken from Job, and Satan tried again and came back again, and said: If you would let me go just a little farther, I will show

you that Job will curse the Lord. And each time, the Lord permitted Satan to go only so far. Satan could not go beyond that which the Lord permitted him. And time after time repeating it, until finally the Lord said, all right, Satan, you may have full control over Job except you cannot take his life. Job by this time had become so strengthened, the Lord had permitted only that to come upon him which Job had strength to resist. Job had thereby been strengthened from it until he had the ability to withstand all the trials of Satan. He had come to a state of perfection. And is that not the state which we all seek to attain? Then, without trials, how can we get there?

Have faith and show your faith in your works. Be of good cheer, Satan cannot stand cheerfulness which comes from righteous living. Accept the present as having the greatest opportunities of life and the future to become greater.

The modern scientific developments are a testimony to me that God is assisting the growth of his work on earth. Most of which has come since the restoration of the gospel. How would it be possible to carry on the administrative affairs of the Church, all over the world, and keep the Church in the unity of one faith and one doctrine, without the benefits of modern methods of scientific developments which we enjoy. How important is the press which makes possible standard instructions in doctrine, and through which we have the scriptures, and other methods of keeping our doctrine a unity all over the world.

How, too, could we do the abundance of sealing work for our dead, without microfilm and other like methods of obtaining records. How blessed are we that the Authorities can travel through the stakes and missions the world over and return so often to report and keep the unity of the doctrine together all over the Church.

How great are the blessings to the world because we have means of travel which permitted President McKay to make this wonderful trip to the mis-

sions of Europe, and in such a short time.

Thank the Lord for his blessings. May his choicest blessings be upon us, his people, with ever increasing faith and trust in him, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

Elder Eldred G. Smith, Patriarch to the Church, has just addressed us. We shall now hear from Bishop Thorpe B. Isaacson, of the Presiding Bishopric.

BISHOP THORPE B. ISAACSON

First Counselor in the Presiding Bishopric

PRESIDENT MCKAY, President Richards, President Clark, and my beloved brothers and sisters, I am very grateful and thankful for the opportunity of being in attendance at this great conference of the Church, where we can be spiritually built up and strengthened in our faith, for surely we have felt the Spirit of the Lord here in every session of the conference, and we have been built up in our faith, and strengthened in our testimony.

We are here to receive instructions and to listen to the words of the prophets, seers, and revelators and servants of God, our Father.

The Lord said in the Doctrine and Covenants, 88 and 63:

Draw near unto me and I will draw near unto you; seek me diligently and ye shall find me; ask, and ye shall receive; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.

It is my humble and sincere desire and prayer that my Father in heaven will draw near unto me while I speak to you today, and I shall be grateful for an interest in your faith and prayers. This is always a very difficult assignment for me, and I am grateful to the Lord for his sustaining influence on previous occasions. The Spirit of the Lord has been here in rich abundance. Before the conference started, the General Authorities met together, and with the beautiful prayer offered by Brother Lee, surely we felt the Lord's influence. We are meeting in his name. We are meeting to bear testimony as to the truthfulness of his work.

Before I say more, I should like to pay tribute, as suggested by Brother

Stayner Richards and Brother Cowley yesterday, to my wife. I am one of that type of men who have a hard time saying the things I ought to say as often as I ought to say them. It is her birthday today, and I want her to know that I am grateful for her. I am grateful that she took me by the hand, as Brother Cowley so beautifully portrayed to us. I am grateful that she has given me encouragement when she has known that I was discouraged and down. I am grateful for her faith. Everything that I do of any consequence, I must credit in a large measure to her and to my Father in heaven.

Sometime ago I had in this great Tabernacle a man and his wife and a boy from the East, a man with whom I have been associated in business but who had never been here before. As he came in here and stayed awhile, after the recital, he said, "There is something different here. What is it?" I gave him a Book of Mormon, and then we walked around, and he asked me again, and I said, "It is a little hard to explain, but I would like to tell you what I think it is. This is a house of worship, and if you could read the prayer that was offered at the dedication, you would know that this is a sacred building, and the thing that makes it different is that the Spirit of the Lord is here." It was not long until he spoke and said: "Well, it has to be something like that."

I want to say just a word to the youth of the Church, the young men and women, the young married couples. I would like to say a few words with reference to the value of your personal