

Saturday, October 11

Second Day

Brother and Sister LeGrand Richards. Here is her witness:

"I really love the gospel, and it is the most powerful influence in my life. It seems that the older I get, the deeper the spirit of the gospel penetrates my soul, and the more beautiful life becomes.

"I certainly do admire Daddy for the way he lived the gospel and the example he set for others, and Mother, who is so unselfish. I just hope that someday I can learn to be that kind of person and give something to others in return for what has been given to me."

These words we have heard, my brethren and sisters, are words to live by. They bring peace and joy and hope in our hearts, regardless of what the conditions in the world may be. As we follow truth and abide by gospel teachings, we have no need to fear, I assure you. Regardless of who we are, we must keep alive this testimony in our hearts.

In conclusion, I will give you an experience that came to me from my colleague, Elder Clifford E. Young, a year or so ago. It seems that before President Heber J. Grant passed away, and many of you know that he was ill for many months, but three or four weeks before he passed away, Brother Young was in his home visiting him. President Grant uttered this prayer: "O God, bless me that I shall not lose my testimony and

keep faithful to the end!" Here was the prophet of the Lord at that time, holding the keys of the kingdom, praying that he would not lose his testimony, that he would remain faithful to the end, even though he lay on his sickbed and must have known that he would never be well again.

Does it behoove us, then, brothers and sisters, to be faithful to the end that we may keep alive our testimonies through our works? The Holy Spirit will keep us feeling good if we do our part and remain faithful to the end.

I bear witness to you that I know that good feeling because I know God lives, that Jesus Christ is his divine Son, that Joseph Smith was and is a prophet of God and those who have succeeded him down to President David O. McKay are prophets of God, and he, President McKay, has the mantle of authority and holds the keys of the kingdom of God in the earth. And I bear this testimony in the name of Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

Elder John Longden, Assistant to the Council of the Twelve, has just spoken to us. Elder George Q. Morris of the Council of the Twelve will be our next speaker. He will be followed by Elder S. Dilworth Young.

ELDER GEORGE Q. MORRIS

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

My dear brethren and sisters, I am wholly dependent upon your faith and the blessings of the Lord in directing me to say what I shall say upon this occasion. I have been thrilled with the proceedings of this conference. Many things have been referred to, and among them was the testing that we undergo in this life. Patriarch Smith referred to that, and in the few moments for me to speak I should like to make some reference to the uses of adversity. We are all subject to adversities. I need not enlarge upon that.

The Lord said to Adam that for his sake the earth was cursed and that he

should eat his food in sorrow all the days of his life. The scriptures say that man is born unto trouble as the sparks fly upward, which means that it is in the design of God that we should have these adversities and experiences in the world. In the midst of life, death and a sea of trials and troubles are ever with us. So none of us are free from them, and it follows that we should find some way of meeting them successfully. As the Lord planned this earth, and in these plans were these problems, trials, and difficulties, he would not leave us without the means of meeting them, and so sent his Only Begotten Son, the Lord

Jesus Christ, to the world to bring us the means of meeting all the conditions that we have to meet in this world.

As the Apostle Paul in the midst of Mars' hill was declaring to his pagan listeners the unknown God, he said: "For in him we live, and move, and have our being; . . ." (Acts 17:28) and the Lord Jesus Christ in whose hands the Father gave all things has said, "I am the light and the life of the world." (See John 8:12.) It follows that if we are truly intelligent we will center our lives in him.

I should like to read to you a few short testimonies of those who may have done so. The scriptures say: "It is better to go to the house of mourning than to the house of feasting. . . ."

"Sorrow is better than laughter; for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better." (Eccl. 7:2-3.)

I wonder if we realize the truth of that. Let me read these testimonies. There are a number of them, but they are very short and to the point, and they may have messages that will uplift and bless many who are here or who will hear them, who are in need of them.

"Sweet are the uses of adversity, which, like a toad, though ugly and venomous, wears yet a precious jewel in its head." (Shakespeare.)

"Affliction is the wholesome soil of virtue, where patience, honor, sweet humility, and calm fortitude, take root and strongly flourish." (Mallet.)

"Paradoxical as it may seem, God means not only to make us good, but to make us also happy, by sickness, disaster and disappointment." (C. A. Bartol.)

This short one, which evidently came from the heart of the woman who expressed it struck me forcibly: "Ah! If you only knew the peace there is in an accepted sorrow." (Mde. Guion.)

"It is a great thing, when the cup of bitterness is pressed to our lips, to feel that it is not fate or necessity, but divine love working upon us for good ends." (E. H. Chapin.)

"Affliction comes to us all not to make us sad, but sober; not to make us sorry, but wise; not to make us despondent, but by its darkness to refresh us, as the night refreshes the day;

not to impoverish, but to enrich us." (Henry Ward Beecher.)

The Prophet Joseph Smith one time said, when someone had remarked that somebody had affliction because of their sins, that it is an unhallowed statement to make, that afflictions come to all. And M. Henry said: "Extraordinary afflictions are not always the punishment of extraordinary sins, but sometimes the trial of extraordinary graces. Sanctified afflictions are spiritual promotions."

I wonder if we may not at some later time envy those splended people who have had so many afflictions. "No Christian but has his Gethsemane; but every praying Christian will find there is no Gethsemane without its angel." (T. Binney.)

The final one: "Strength is born in the deep silence of long-suffering hearts: not amid joy." (Mrs. Hermans.)

The Lord has expressed himself about these adversities that come, and I speak, for example, of the Prophet Joseph Smith, who had adversity from the moment he delivered his glorious message of the vision in the grove. You will remember in Liberty Jail he cried out, "O God, where art thou? And where is the pavilion that covereth thy hiding place?"

"Yea, O Lord, how long shall they [thy Saints] suffer these wrongs and unlawful oppressions, before thine heart shall be softened toward them, and thy bowels be moved with compassion toward them?" (D & C 121:1, 3.)

What was the Lord's answer to this prayer? "My son, peace be unto thy soul; thine adversity and thine affliction shall be but a small moment;

"And then, if thou endure it well, God shall exalt thee on high; thou shalt triumph over all thy foes." (*Ibid.*, 121:7-8.) Then the Lord held up before him other trials and difficulties that were to come, some even worse than he had had, but then said to him: ". . . know thou, my son, that all these things shall give thee experience, and shall be for thy good."

"The Son of Man hath descended below them all. Art thou greater than he?" (*Ibid.*, 122:7-8.)

So, in adversity we may have that which will exalt us, or we may have that which will degrade us. We may

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Second Day

have that which, "if we endure it well," will ennoble us, and we may have that which, if we indulge in self-pity and bitterness, may destroy us. In all our adversities there are these two elements, and the determining factor is how shall we endure them? Shall we endure them well? If not, they may destroy us.

The Lord Jesus Christ, the one perfect being in the world, was described by Isaiah as "despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows; and acquainted with grief." (Isaiah 53:3.) That describes his life, the one perfect life lived in the world, full of love and of service. President Clark referred to his Gethsemane, and I will read the detail of it, the Savior crying to the Father:

"Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.

"And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him.

"And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling to the ground." (Luke 22:42-44.)

And then on the cross, in the loneliness and terrible suffering of his dying moments, he cried out, using the words of the twenty-second Psalm, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Matt. 27:46.)

Someone has said that in every great soul there must come a moment when he is left to himself, and no doubt at that time that was the feeling of the Lord Jesus Christ. The purpose of the Father in not removing the cup from the Savior in the depth of his suffering and the place sorrow may have in our lives is made clear in his answer to the Prophet Joseph's prayer, and in the testimony of the Apostle Paul as follows:

ELDER S. DILWORTH YOUNG

Of the First Council of the Seventy

With all my heart I find echo in the testimonies which have been borne yesterday and today respecting the mission of Joseph Smith, the Prophet, and his relationship to the Son of God, even Jesus Christ. In the same breath I

"Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered;

"And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." (Hebrews 5:8-9.)

"For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings." (*Ibid.*, 2:10.)

I should like to close with the testimony of President David O. McKay.

"Upon the membership of this Church rests the obligation to teach the divinity of Jesus Christ, in whose perfection we find every virtue; in whom are combined in wonderful harmony all the powers of the soul; in whose life and teachings we can find every comfort, and if we go to him in humility and faith, every guidance and inspiration we need.

"Our Lord, our Savior, Jesus Christ, is the head of this Church. I know the reality of his existence, of his willingness to guide and direct all who serve him."—"The Man of Nazareth," *The Improvement Era*, December 1957.

I add to that testimony my humble testimony that Jesus Christ, the Redeemer of the world, organized this, his Church, through the Prophet Joseph Smith, and in it is the power of God unto salvation, and that he is directing it as here implied, through his servant, President David O. McKay, I bear this witness in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

We have just listened to Elder George Q. Morris of the Council of the Twelve. Elder S. Dilworth Young of the First Council of Seventy will conclude this session.

wish, also, to tell President McKay, so that he can hear me say it, that I uphold and sustain him as a successor of Joseph Smith and a prophet of the living God. And I pledge myself, as I have in the past, to support him, his