

Prophet Joseph Smith, and so we do not just travel, we know how to travel, because God has pointed the way, and he has revealed that to us in these latter days.

Coming back to this association of loved ones—you remember the promise made by Malachi as the Lord spoke through him. He told of the great day of judgment when the wicked and all the proud and they that do wickedly should be as stubble and the day that cometh shall burn them up and shall leave them neither root nor branch, and then he goes on and says that before the coming of this great and dreadful day of the Lord,

“ . . . I will send you Elijah the prophet . . .

“And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.” (See Mal. 4:1, 5-6.)

Just think of the consequences if the hearts of the fathers are not turned to their children and the hearts of the children turned to the fathers, and no one in this world outside of this Church can tell you the true meaning of those words, nor would we be able to do so except for the fact that Elijah did come and appeared to the Prophet Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery in the Kirtland Temple, and he revealed these great truths to them. That accounts for our building these holy temples all over the world, so that with the power of the priesthood of God that has been restored in our day, men and women can be sealed together for time and for all eternity and know that their children shall be born under the new and everlasting covenant and shall be theirs throughout the countless ages of eternity.

Are not these the heavenly things? Surely Isaiah understood that when he saw our day and said that it should come to pass in the last days that the mountain of the Lord's house should be established in the top of the mountains and that all nations would flow unto it, and they would say:

“ . . . Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: . . .” (Isaiah 2:3.)

Thus, our people have come from all over the world to learn of his ways in order that they might be able to walk in his paths. These are some of the heavenly things Jesus must have had in mind when he said to Nicodemus:

“If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things?” (John 3:12.)

I bear my witness to you, my brothers and sisters and friends, that the God of heaven has revealed many, many heavenly things to his people in this day which we offer freely to all the world, and we ask nothing in return except that you might share with us the glorious truths of the gospel.

I bear my witness of the truth of this work and that we are being led by a prophet of God today, and I do it in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

We have just listened to Elder LeGrand Richards of the Council of the Twelve. Elder Henry D. Taylor, Assistant to the Twelve, will now speak to us. He will be followed by Elder William J. Critchlow, Jr.

ELDER HENRY D. TAYLOR

Assistant to the Council of the Twelve Apostles

One of the most beautiful principles of the gospel is that of repentance. It holds out hope and encouragement to each of us, the descendants of Adam and Eve. Because we are mortal and live in a world where temptations abound,

it is not difficult to make mistakes and commit errors. Through the atonement effected by Jesus Christ, our Savior, we are assured that our errors and mistakes may be rectified by displaying Godly

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sorrow and abandonment of unrighteous ways.

One of the most vital qualities of the principle of repentance is forgiveness. Unless each of us can learn to forgive others for real or imagined trespasses against us, we cannot properly repent. Someone has said, "Humanity is never so beautiful as when praying for forgiveness, or else forgiving another." The Savior's teachings to us are replete with admonitions always to be ready and willing to forgive. In instructing his disciples to pray, he suggested they petition the Father: "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors."

Then he counseled: "For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: . . ." And he added a word of caution, "But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." (Matt. 6:12, 14-15.)

At another time the Lord instructed: "Wherefore, I say unto you, that ye ought to forgive one another; for he that forgiveth not his brother his trespasses standeth condemned before the Lord; for there remaineth in him the greater sin.

"I, the Lord, will forgive whom I will forgive, but of you it is required to forgive all men." (D&C 64:9-10.)

One cannot hold grudges and unkind feelings without harming himself. He becomes bitter; his vision is distorted; and his soul becomes cankered. Harsh and sharp words can leave a sting behind, a pang of unhappiness and regret in the heart and conscience of the offender. "Little, vicious minds abound with anger and revenge and are incapable of feeling the pleasure of forgiving their enemies," said a wise man.

A person holding grudges hurts himself more than he does his enemy. A prophet has wisely counseled: ". . . let not the sun go down on your wrath:" (Eph. 4:26.)

To forgive a person once or twice may not be too difficult, but to continue to forgive many times when one has been wronged may become a real test of character. Upon one occasion when Jesus was teaching his disciples, Peter approached him and posed this question: ". . . Lord, how oft shall my brother

sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?

"Jesus saith unto him; I say not unto thee, Until seven times; but, Until seventy times seven." (Matt. 18:21-22.) By this declaration we may be assured that the Savior meant that we should forgive without number or limit.

The poet, Alexander Pope, has written: "Good nature and good sense must ever join; to err is human; to forgive divine."

The Lord has always looked upon sin with emphatic disfavor and has exclaimed, "For I the Lord cannot look upon sin with the least degree of allowance;" then he continues: "Nevertheless, he that repents and does the commandments of the Lord shall be forgiven." (D&C 1:31-32.) And while the Lord regards sin with disfavor, nevertheless, he always displays a spirit of charity and kindness for the sinner.

When a woman taken in sin was brought before Jesus, he faced her accusers with the challenge: "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her." Being smitten by their consciences, one by one those guilty hypocrites slunk away, and when Jesus raised his head he asked the woman: "Woman, where are those, thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee?" She replied, "No man, Lord." And Jesus said unto her, "Neither do I condemn thee; go, and sin no more." (John 8:7, 10-11.)

True forgiveness cannot be partial nor halfhearted. It must be wholehearted, genuine, and without reservation. "The narrow soul knows not the godlike glory of forgiving," one has said.

I like the story of total and complete forgiveness related by the warden of a western prison. A friend of his happened to be sitting in a railroad coach next to a young man who was obviously depressed. Finally, the young man revealed that he was a convict returning from a distant prison. His imprisonment had brought shame on his family, and they had neither visited him nor written often. He hoped, however, that this was only because they were too poor to travel, too uneducated to write. He also hoped, despite the evidence, that they had forgiven him.

To make it easy for them, however, he had written them to put up a signal for him when the train passed their little farm on the outskirts of town. If his family had forgiven him, they were to put up a white ribbon in the big apple tree near the tracks. If they did not want him back, they were to do nothing, and he would stay on the train, go west and probably become a hobo. As the train neared his home his suspense became so great, he could not bear to look out of the window. His companion changed places with him and said he would watch for the apple tree. In a minute, he put his hand on the young convict's arm. "There it is," he whispered, his eyes bright with sudden tears. "It's all right. The whole tree is white with ribbons." (*Reader's Digest*, March 1961.)

The most magnificent lesson ever taught respecting forgiveness was given by the Savior. Jesus was subjected by his enemies to what is considered to be the cruelest and most horrible form of death. Crucifixion is excruciatingly

painful, with the victim lingering on in increasing agony and torture for hours or even days. Yet, in spite of the humiliation and intense pain he suffered on Calvary's cross, Jesus, with compassion, in Godlike mercy, prayed for his tormentors, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." (Luke 23:34.)

Now, with the Savior's great lesson fresh in our memories, may each one of us purge from our hearts any feeling of hatred, envy, or bitterness, so that we may with a clear conscience and utmost confidence approach our Heavenly Father and ask for forgiveness of our shortcomings and mistakes. For which I humbly pray, and bear you my testimony that I know that the gospel is true, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President David O. McKay:

Elder Henry D. Taylor, Assistant to the Twelve, has just spoken to us. Elder William J. Critchlow, Jr., Assistant to the Twelve, will now speak to us.

ELDER WILLIAM J. CRITCHLOW, JR.

Assistant to the Council of the Twelve Apostles

President McKay, brethren and sisters:

Under the hands of President McKay, I was set apart an Assistant to the Twelve and was charged to be a special witness of Jesus Christ in all the world. These next few minutes give me an opportunity to be about the business of that charge.

Will Mary, the mother of the babe, Jesus, born in Bethlehem away from home, please come to the witness stand?

While she is coming to the stand, let me explain: I am pretending that you, under the sound of my voice, are another informal court of the people in which Jesus is on trial—should I say on trial again or still on trial?

In the minds of many people, Jesus is still on trial. Two-thirds of this earth's inhabitants are non-Christian. To them, he is not the Son of God. Among the skimpy Christian third are many who accept him merely as a great moralist, a great teacher, a great spiritual leader,

perhaps a prophet. To them, he is not the Son of God.

On trial 2,000 years ago, Jesus said: "I am"—the Son of God. (See Mark 14:61-62.) With cries of "Crucify him, crucify him," the earlier court of the people—the rabble—sealed his doom. (See *ibid.*, 15:14.)

If Jesus is not the Son of God, he did blaspheme; he also lied. Why not compound the charge of blasphemy with perjury? Add fraud, deceit, or whatever else you will, the truth must come out, for every knee must bow and every tongue confess that Jesus is the Son of God. (See Phil. 2:10-11.)

Let me pretend that I am counsel for the defense, calling witnesses to prove—*He is the Son of God*. Now please stretch your imagination and in your mind's eye see Mary on the witness stand. I shall now address her.

Counsel: Mary, when you were "... a virgin, espoused to . . . Joseph, of the House of David; . . ." an angel came