

top of a mountain down in southern Utah where I was tending a theodolite in the service of the US Coast and Geodetic Survey. Finishing it, I felt I had a fair understanding of the gospel principles contained in it.

Once I sat with General Authorities of the Church and heard President Joseph Fielding Smith say, in substance, "Brethren, all of us have to read the Book of Mormon. We are asking the members of the Church to do it, so we brethren must do it, too."

One of the brethren moaned, saying, "Must we who have read it so many times take time out to read it again?"

"Yes," replied President Smith, "we can't ask the members to do something we are not willing to do."

I turned to the brother sitting next to me and asked him how many times he had read the Book of Mormon. He answered, "Forty-five times."

"May I quote you?"

"Not until I go home and check."

The next day he told me I could quote him: "I have read the book fifty times." That brother is Milton R. Hunter. "I taught," he said, "the Book of Mormon in seminary and institute classes. That accounts for my reading it so many times."

How many times have you read it? Read it again. And this time read it *slowly*, so you can digest the spiritual calories you will find in it. Read it

*personally*, putting yourself in the shoes of Lehi, who was told to take his family into the wilderness. What would you have done were you in his shoes? Put yourself in Nephi's shoes. He was instructed to go after the brass plates. What would you have done in his shoes? Yes, read it personally.

Read it *purposefully*, and let your purpose be to discover its spiritual calories and the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Read it for *pleasure*. Discover how it testifies of the Christ. Somebody said his name is mentioned 526 times therein. It testifies also of the Bible. Turn off the TV, turn off the radio, and read the Book of Mormon. You will enjoy it.

I bear you my witness: In the Book of Mormon you will find the gospel of Jesus Christ. You may discover, reading it, that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is true. I did. May you so find it, I humbly pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

### President Hugh B. Brown

Thank you, Brother Critchlow, for those sermonettes and storiettes and very worthwhile instructions to us.

Elder Gordon B. Hinckley of the Council of the Twelve will be our concluding speaker.

## ELDER GORDON B. HINCKLEY

### *Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles*

I seek the direction of the Holy Spirit, that the things I say may be in harmony with the inspirational things to which we have listened.

To the Galatian Saints Paul wrote these stirring words: "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." (Gal. 5:1.)

I thought I witnessed something of this bondage recently while riding in the lounge of a crowded plane with three other men.

### A Yoke of Bondage: A Panel of the Enslaved

As the jet began the fast climb to its assigned altitude, I noticed that the man across the table had his eyes fixed intently on the "No Smoking" sign. The instant it went off, he reached for his cigarets. As he began smoking, the man next to me became nervous. He clenched and opened his fists, looked out the window, turned to look at the man across the table, and his face reddened. The air was a little bumpy. I thought he might have been frightened. I took a closer look. He was

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a man of good physique, well-dressed, immaculately groomed. He did not look the kind who would be frightened by a little bumpy air.

Then the fourth member of our quartet took a pack of cigarets from his pocket. He offered me one, and I declined. He then offered my seat companion one, and he replied, "I'm trying to quit, and it's nearly killing me."

That started a conversation.

The first man to light up told how he had resolved to quit after hearing in January 1964 the report of the Surgeon General of the United States. He recounted a tale of agonizing days and sleepless nights and of a final surrender to a habit that had held him for many years. He placed his cigaret between his lips, inhaled long and deeply, then lowered his head as the smoke drifted slowly from his lips and nostrils. "I couldn't lick it," he said with an evident air of defeat.

The next smoker took up the conversation. "I almost quit. I'd been burning two packs a day. I thought I could taper off. I cut down to one cigaret after each cup of coffee. That was my formula. It lasted for a time, but I found myself drinking too much coffee. Now I'm back to a pack a day."

He had the manner of an educated man. He held in his hands a business journal. He said that the report of the Surgeon General had frightened him also, but then he had read counteracting statements. Perhaps, he concluded, the relationship between cigaret smoking and cancer is only coincidental; the disease could just as likely come from the exhaust fumes we breathe. Then with an impulsive display of self-mastery, he crumpled his half-smoked cigaret into the ash tray, snapped shut the lid, and commented, "Just the same, I wish I could quit."

My seat companion then spoke: "I'm convinced there's some truth in what I've seen and read on the subject. We take the government's word for an awful lot these days, conclusions based on less convincing evidence than this. I don't believe you can deny the facts. There is a hazard in smoking. But I'm having a terrible fight. I never dreamed a habit could be so tough to break.

One of them looked at me. "What about you?" he asked.

I replied: "I've never used them."

"How lucky can you be?" was his response. Without wishing in any way to appear self-righteous, I thought the same thing—"How lucky can I be!" And I thought of a day long ago when as a boy I sat in this Tabernacle and heard President Heber J. Grant speak with moving conviction on the "Little White Slaver," as he bore eloquent testimony of the Word of Wisdom as a divine law. I was greatly impressed that day, and that impression gave me resolution.

Who could question the bondage in which these men found themselves? Our conversation indicated that all three were educated, able men who made important decisions every day. But in a matter admittedly affecting their own lives and health, two already had conceded defeat, and the third was fighting a terrible battle, the victim of a habit that would not let him go.

One study indicates that among men who had stopped smoking, 37½ percent reported they were smoking again. And even among those who reported that they had gone for as long as 12 to 24 months, nearly 18 percent had relapsed into the old habit. (*Consumer Reports*, March 1964, pp. 112-113.)

#### Cigarette Smoking—a Health Hazard

Commenting on the January 1964 report of the Surgeon General, an editor concluded: "No longer can reasonable men argue whether smoking is or is not a major health hazard. It is. The remaining topic for consideration is what can be done about it." (*Ibid.*, p. 112.)

A veritable mountain of evidence has been produced by the Surgeon General's office, the Federal Trade Commission, the American Cancer Society, the American Medical Association, the National Tuberculosis Association, and many other groups and individuals. Responsible officers are concerned over the grim statistics indicating that somewhere between 125,000 and 300,000 people a year die in the United States from diseases that may be associated with the smoking of

cigarettes, that your chances of death from lung cancer are 70 percent greater if you smoke cigarettes, that the hazards of other diseases are seriously increased.

It is an issue of serious magnitude when the American Cancer Society estimates that "one-pack-a-day smokers die five years earlier than non-smokers. . . . Heavy smokers, two packs a day or more, die seven years earlier. This means that each pack shortens life five to seven hours." (*The Evidence is Clear*, p. 13.)

Much of this shocking statistical data has been repeated in Washington during the past two weeks where public hearings have been going forward on proposals to nullify to a degree the effect of cigaret advertising with health warnings.

Notwithstanding the flood of evidence, there has been determined and skilful opposition.

#### Millions to Advertise the Slave Master

Well might this be expected. Involved in this problem are the 8 billion dollar a year tobacco industry, the 200 million a year spent with advertising media, the millions paid in taxes, much of it to the federal government. This creates the strange anomaly of a government that is doing little if anything to reduce the smoking of its citizens and thereby safeguard their health, even though its own official agencies have produced alarming evidence of the hazards inherent in the continued use of cigarettes.

Britain has been more forward. It has placed a governmental ban on cigaret advertising, as has Italy.

The American tobacco industry recently set up a new advertising code. But make no mistake about it, advertising continues, with as much as 10 million dollars being spent to launch a single new brand. Pleas are made that as long as the manufacture of a product is permitted, its advertising should be permitted. To which comes the rejoinder that in cases where serious hazards are clearly indicated, there is a responsibility also to indicate those hazards.

#### Emancipation from Tobacco Slavery, a Health Issue

To the many able and devoted men and women across the nation who are concerned with this problem, it is not a religious issue. It is a health issue.

But with all that has been said, with all the statistics that have been accumulated, with a constant and painful parade of surgery cases through the nation's hospitals, the consumption of cigarettes increases. There was a decrease in 1964 for a time, but the trend again is upward. There is belief but there is no faith.

132 Years Ago, God Said, "Tobacco is not good for man."

In contemplating all of this, one appreciates the incomparable wisdom of the Lord who in 1833 in a rural town on the frontier of America spoke these simple and encompassing words: ". . . tobacco . . . is not good for man, . . ." (D&C 89:8.)

He did not say that one would get lung cancer, develop heart or respiratory problems if he smoked. He did not produce mountainous statistics or recite case histories. He simply declared that ". . . tobacco . . . is not good for man, . . ."

That declaration was given as "a principle with promise." (V. 3.)

#### "In consequence of evils and designs"

It was given as a warning and a fore-warning, "in consequence of evils and designs which do and will exist in the hearts of conspiring men in the last days, . . ." (V. 4.) How aptly descriptive these words are in light of what we today observe.

#### The Way to Liberty

God be thanked for this declaration and the promise that accompanies it. Can there be any doubt that it is a Word of Wisdom when great forces, with millions of dollars at their command and some of the cleverest minds in the art of advertising, promote that which sober men of science also now say "is not good for man"?

One cannot read the testimony with-

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out recognizing that true freedom lies in obedience to the counsels of God. It was said of old that "... the commandment is a lamp; and the law is light; ... ." (Prov. 6:23.)

The gospel is not a philosophy of repression, as so many regard it. It is a plan of freedom that gives discipline to appetite and direction to behavior. Its fruits are sweet and its rewards are liberal, as I am confident my friends on the plane would have been happy to have testified.

"Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." (Gal. 5:1.)

"... where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." (2 Cor. 3:17.) In the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

### President Hugh B. Brown

Elder Gordon B. Hinckley of the Council of the Twelve has been our concluding speaker. We wish to make an announcement that this evening at 7:00 the General Priesthood meeting of the Church will convene in the Tabernacle, and in addition to the overflow meeting in the Assembly Hall, proceedings of the priesthood meeting will be relayed by closed circuit broadcast originating in the Tabernacle to members of the Aaronic and Melchizedek priesthoods assembled in approximately 400 separate locations in all parts of the United States and Canada. It is estimated that approximately 12,000 holders of the priesthood will be on Temple Square, and approximately 60,000 others will gather in other locations from coast to coast.

The singing for this session has been furnished by the Brigham Young Uni-

versity Combined Choruses, with Ralph Woodward conducting and Roy M. Darley at the organ. We wish to express our sincere appreciation to this chorus. I would turn around and face them but if I did they would not be able to hear me, but we want them to know that we greatly appreciate the contribution they have made to the spirit of this occasion. Their vibrant young voices have brought comfort and inspiration and hope to all who have assembled and we thank them very sincerely. We also want to thank Brother Maughan McMurdie and Ralph Woodward, the conductors, for the excellence of their performance and their thorough preparation; also Brother Frank Asper and Roy M. Darley who performed at the organ so well. Very often when we are listening to choruses and sometimes to soloists, we forget the important parts played by the accompanists. The organists throughout the conference have been exceptional, and we want Brother Asper and Brother Darley to know that their work is thoroughly appreciated.

The choruses will now sing "The Song of Praise," after which the benediction will be offered by President M. Dover Hunt of the Orem Stake, and the conference will be adjourned until 7:00 this evening at priesthood meeting.

The Combined Choruses sang as a concluding number, "The Song of Praise."

President M. Dover Hunter of the Orem Stake offered the closing prayer. Conference adjourned until 7:00 p. m.

## GENERAL PRIESTHOOD MEETING

The General Priesthood Meeting of the Church was held at 7:00 p. m., Monday, April 5.

President David O. McKay was present and presided. At his request, President Hugh B. Brown, First Counselor in the First Presidency, conducted the meeting.

The choral music for this session was furnished by the Men of the Tab-

ernacle Choir, Richard P. Condie, Conductor, Alexander Schreiner, Tabernacle Organist, accompanist.

### President Hugh B. Brown

This is the General Priesthood session of the 135th annual conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. All of you who are as-