

Sunday, October 3

Third Day

voluntarily begins to pay an honest tithing, his interests and desires are focused toward God.

No one who is selfish can gain a righteous state. The principle of tithing will help one overcome this enslaving power, for at the very base of this principle lies the means of subduing and conquering selfishness. Hence, it is a great blessing to the individual who will honestly live the law.

President Brigham Young once said: "The law of tithing is an eternal law. The Lord Almighty never had his Kingdom on the earth without the law of tithing being in the midst of his people, and he never will. It is an eternal law that God has instituted for the benefit of the human family, for their salvation and exaltation." (*Discourses of Brigham Young*, 1943 ed., p. 177.)

In 1831 the Lord, in a revelation through the Prophet Joseph Smith, said: "And if ye seek the riches which it is the will of the Father to give unto you, ye shall be the richest of all people for ye shall have the riches of eternity; and it must needs be that the riches of the earth are mine to give; but beware of pride, lest ye become as the Nephites of old." (D&C 38:39.) You will recall the Nephite nation was destroyed because the people sought to gratify their own pride and vain ambitions. They were unable to resist the appeal of wealth and the things it could buy, loving power and gain more than God.

President McKay has counseled: "Tithing should not be given with a selfish end in view. A man who pays tithing just to keep his name on the record will receive his reward, of course; he will have his name on the record. 'Verily, he hath his reward,'

as the man who prayed to be seen and heard of men. But he who gives because he loves to help others and to further the cause of righteousness, who gives cheerfully with thanksgiving in his heart, also has his reward; for in giving he is really obtaining. In losing his life for Christ's sake, he finds it.

"If all would thus lose themselves unselfishly in the law of tithing, there would be sufficient in the Lord's storehouse to insure the comfort and education of every person in need in the Church. The Church would thus become the best, the safest insurance society in the world. The time will come when tithing as a sufficient means of protection will be even more fully understood than it is today. . . ." (David O. McKay, *Treasures of Life*, pp. 284-285.)

May God bless us that we may catch the vision and the spirit of the Savior's admonition: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal:

"But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:

"For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." (Matt. 6:19-21.)

May this be our lot, I ask in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President N. Eldon Tanner:

The Presiding Bishop, John H. Vandenberg, has just spoken to us.

Elder Franklin D. Richards, Assistant to the Twelve, will now speak to us.

ELDER FRANKLIN D. RICHARDS

Assistant to the Council of the Twelve Apostles

My dear brothers and sisters, the Lord has said, ". . . if you keep my commandments and endure to the end

you shall have eternal life, which gift is the greatest of all the gifts of God." (D&C 14:7.)

In a glorious vision to Moses we learn that it is God's work and glory ". . . to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man." (Moses 1:39.)

Even though this is God's work and glory, life seems to be a mystery to most of God's children. Men wonder, "Where did we come from, and what is the object of life?" The answers to these questions are essential in order for each of us to achieve the maximum benefits, happiness, and peace that this life affords.

The Object of Life

But to us God *has* revealed the object of life. He has revealed the great truth that he is our Father and that we are his spirit children. I am indeed grateful for this knowledge; and as we appreciate that we are spirit children of our Father in heaven, unlimited possibilities lie before us.

Through the restored gospel of Jesus Christ, we learn that we enjoyed a pre-mortal existence as spirit children of God the Father.

In our first estate or premortal existence we had our free agency, and because of our choice and worthiness we were eligible to come to this earth—our second estate. Thus, at the time of our earthly birth our spirit entered into our mortal body and became the life of our body.

Concept of Eternal Progress

The knowledge that this life is the second estate opens up the great concept of eternal progress. This is a basic truth of our religious thought. What a tremendous vision this gives us.

And why did we come to this second estate? To be proved and tested—to see if we will do all things whatsoever the Lord commands us. (See Abraham 3: 25.)

Jesus said, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." (Matt. 5:48.)

Salvation and Exaltation

I bear witness to you that Jesus is the Christ, our Savior and Redeemer, and that all of God's children will in-

herit immortality through the atonement of the Christ, *but* that only those who keep God's commandments and endure to the *end* will inherit eternal life and exaltation in the celestial kingdom.

How many experiences, pleasant and unpleasant, must we have, and how much knowledge must we attain to become perfect, even as our Father in heaven is perfect? Let us consider this matter before answering.

Experience Can Be A Blessing

Great blessings come from the knowledge that we obtain and the experiences we have, and it should be remembered that every experience has a value.

The Prophet Joseph was proved the same as each of us is. He encountered intense opposition and what appeared to be insurmountable obstacles.

When he was crying to the Lord in Liberty Jail in March 1839, the word of the Lord came to him, saying:

" . . . if the very jaws of hell shall gape open the mouth wide after thee, know thou, my son, that all these things shall give thee experience, and shall be for thy good." (D&C 122:7.)

I am sure that it was difficult for the Prophet Joseph at that time to appreciate how this most difficult experience would be for his good, but it undoubtedly was a preparation for greater tests that came later.

I love the Prophet Joseph Smith and bear witness that he was one of the great prophets of all time.

Zion's Camp

You may recall that historic and memorable journey of Zion's Camp to Missouri. Since it failed of its purpose to reinstate the Saints in possession of their lands in Jackson County, it was regarded by some as being an unprofitable episode.

"A brother in Kirtland—one too weak in the faith to go with the camp—meeting Brigham Young on his return from Missouri, said to him, 'Well, what did you gain on this useless journey to Missouri with Joseph Smith?' 'All we went for,' promptly

replied Brigham Young." (*Comprehensive History of the Church*, 1, 370.)

In the camp's journey of more than a thousand miles there were many experiences. There were fatigues, hardships, and disappointments to overcome; all of these experiences were valuable to the men who participated in them. Many became the leaders in two great exoduses involving the removal of 12,000 Saints from Missouri to Illinois and of more than 20,000 from Illinois to the Salt Lake Valley.

In another way also this Zion's Camp experience was profitable. In February 1835 a conference was held in which the Prophet explained "that the trials and sufferings endured on that journey to Missouri were not in vain, for it was the will of God 'that those who went to Zion with a determination to lay down their lives, if necessary, should be ordained to the ministry, to go forth to prune the vineyard for the last time.'" (*Ibid.*, 1, 372-373.) Thus it was from this group that the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles was selected.

Again it was the knowledge obtained and faith and strength that was developed that prepared these men for the great work that was ahead of them.

Yes, it is essential that each of us learn from our experiences as we are tried and tested by the afflictions of this life. God has explained that this is an important part of this life.

It seems, however, that human nature wants to follow the easy paths, but each of us should thank the Lord for the difficulties we encounter.

I know that as we look back upon our lives, we will acknowledge that those experiences that were the most difficult were in the end the most profitable. The lessons learned and faith developed in such hours of hardship will prove to be of eternal value to us in our path of eternal progress.

Many of us recall the dark days of the depression in the early nineteen thirties. The loss of one's possessions is a humbling experience, especially with the responsibilities of a family, but the lessons will never be forgotten.

Likewise, the loss of loved ones are sad experiences, but these difficult

tests build great faith, courage, and humility. In the presence of death we are made humble, for then we realize our own helplessness and our dependence upon our Heavenly Father for comfort.

Those who have fulfilled missions understand the difficulties and disappointments in bringing souls into the kingdom of God. But none would deny the great opportunities for personal growth and development as well as eternal joy and happiness.

Service to mankind through activity in the Church affords one of the great opportunities for experience. This type of experience develops love, faith, wisdom, understanding, discernment and invariably results in increased knowledge.

The Savior said, "Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! . . ." (Luke 6:26.)

Adversity

The Church and the people of the Church have encountered and will encounter many trials and tribulations, but as the Lord explained to the Prophet in Liberty Jail, ". . . all these things shall give thee experience, and shall be for thy good." (D&C 122:7.)

We should not expect all to speak well of us or expect all to be well with us continually. Let us prepare steadfastly to face adversity regardless of the form it takes, recognizing that such experiences are necessary to the progress of the Church as well as ourselves as individuals.

God has not promised us that we won't have problems and troubles, but he has promised us comfort, increased faith and knowledge, as well as growth and development as we successfully meet each challenge of life.

What may appear to be a small problem to some may be a major one to another. The important thing about a problem is: How do we react to it?

As we pursue the study of the gospel of Jesus Christ, we perceive that it is a grand philosophy of life, yes, the plan of life.

President McKay has said that the purpose of the gospel is to change

men's lives, to make bad men good and good men better, and to change human nature. (Film *Every Member a Missionary*.)

The Blessing of the Spirit

How much learning and how many experiences do we need to become godlike? The answer is that we need all we can receive on this earth; and as we successfully meet this life's challenges, we will be prepared for more as we leave this estate and move into the next estate in the hereafter.

Our Father has sent us here for a short period of mortal experience. He has given us principles to guide us and has endowed us with free agency to choose our paths. As we choose the right we are promised eternal progress and love and peace with our families and friends. And he has promised us that as we keep his commandments his spirit will be with us.

Words cannot describe the happiness that comes into our lives when the spirit of God is with us. This happiness includes a peace that passeth understanding except to the person that receives it.

Let us truly appreciate the object of this life and endure to the end by meeting life's challenges with a determination to make each experience of eternal value to us and thus contribute to our eternal progress.

ELDER BERNARD P. BROCKBANK

Assistant to the Council of the Twelve Apostles

Brothers and sisters: It is a blessing and a privilege to be in the talented and spiritual atmosphere of this great [Tabernacle] Choir. We fondly remember their great strength back at the [Mormon] Pavilion at the World's Fair. They are still talking about it in many of the areas.

It is also a heartfelt joy and blessing to have a living prophet of God on earth today and to have a quorum of Twelve Apostles. This is a unique organization in this world of many varied religions, one that conforms to God's plan and to the scriptures.

I thank the Lord for the prophet, our beloved President David O. McKay, who stands at the head of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints today. May the Lord sustain him in his great calling, and may we all have the good judgment and courage to follow his inspired advice and counsel, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President N. Eldon Tanner:

Elder Franklin D. Richards, Assistant to the Twelve, has just spoken to us.

Brother Jay Welch will now lead the choir and congregation in singing, "How Firm a Foundation."

After the singing, Elder Bernard P. Brockbank, Assistant to the Twelve, will address us.

Will you all stand, please.

The Choir and Congregation joined in singing, "How Firm a Foundation."
(Jay E. Welch, conducting.)

President N. Eldon Tanner

Elder Bernard P. Brockbank, Assistant to the Twelve, will now address us, and he will be followed by Elder Thomas S. Monson of the Council of the Twelve.

Prophets of God

The scriptures and ecclesiastical history reveal that many men are willing and anxious to accept the prophets and apostles of other ages. Many today are willing to accept Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jacob, and others as prophets of God, but few of the people living at the time these prophets lived accepted them as prophets of God.

Many men today accept Jesus Christ as the Savior and Son of God, but few accepted him when he lived on this earth.