

President Hugh B. Brown

I am sure this profound, inspired and inspiring message from our beloved President has found an echo in the hearts of all who have heard it. We congratulate Elder Robert R. McKay

for his excellent and effective reading of his father's message.

We shall now hear from Elder Richard L. Evans of the Council of the Twelve, after which the chorus and congregation will join in singing, "We Thank Thee, O God, for a Prophet."

Elder Richard L. Evans
Of the Council of the Twelve

President McKay, my beloved brethren and sisters, and I include in this salutation my friends worldwide and all mankind everywhere:

We come back from having been on every continent and more than fifty countries, with gratitude for our fellowship with you and for the happiness of homecoming, which is one of the greatest blessings on earth. If the welcome in heaven is as happy as the welcome at home, it will be well worth all the doing and enduring, and well worth waiting for.

Happy homecoming—here and hereafter

If we were to focus on this—a happy homecoming, here and hereafter—we wouldn't go far wrong in this world. May we live to be comfortable in the presence of our Father, with the assurance of a happy homecoming, and reunion with our loved ones everlasting.

We have met worldwide many wonderful people, many in positions of high public responsibility—heads of countries and communities, men of business and professional competence, men who make decisions and who do much to shape the future and much to run the world. Generally, we have felt their earnest sincerity as they carry a heavy complexity of problems. And often this thought has come: Without a source of guidance and inspiration and direction outside themselves, men of themselves, however earnest and able, are not equal to the problems and complexities of the day in which we live.

We have met no infallible men, no indestructible men—just men mostly honest and able, trying to do

their best. And we have come to a deeper awareness than ever before of the need for divine guidance, for inspiration, for revelation, thanking God more fervently for a prophet to guide us in these latter days. We come with a greater awareness that without such guidance there are no adequate answers. Never in the past did we need revelation, inspiration, commandments, standards, principles, and a prophet more than in the present.

To keep the counsels of God

With the charge and admonition and appeal we have heard from President McKay, may we turn our hearts, young and old—indeed, all of us—to live and keep the counsels of God, to live and keep the commandments. In any other way of life there is frustration and sorrow and an empty rationalizing uneasiness within, that never rests and never seems to satisfy. In answer to the question, "Shouldn't the commandments be rewritten?" someone thoughtfully replied, "No, they should be reread." This is true of things physical and temporal, as well as things spiritual and eternal. We need to look closely to the counsel and commandments God has given.

Heed the gospel

It isn't unusual—indeed, it is expected—that the maker of any machine should send a set of instructions on how best to use it, how best to care for it; and this our Father in heaven has done for us, mentally, morally, physically, spiritually. In the gospel are instructions from our Maker on how to care for and keep ourselves at our best for the purpose for which we were brought into being.

As to the physical side: More than a century ago, a prophet of God simply said that some things are not good for man. Now, knowledgeable and intelligent men of science and medicine also say so. But we had just as well have saved all the time and trouble, for the Maker knew it and said it to his servant. And what could be more important than a completeness of health and happiness—happiness and health of the spirit, the body, and the mind of man.

Some say there is no moral question on how we physically live our lives. But isn't it a moral question to abuse what God has given? And what a waste to abuse any useful creation of any kind. If someone were to give us a finely working watch, wouldn't it be foolish, indeed irrational, to put into it that which would corrode and defeat its purpose?

We have only one body. It is irreplaceable, indispensable, sacred. It has to last a mortal lifetime. With it, and the spirit within, we think, we plan, we work, we feel, we live our mortal lives.

It is a miracle and most amazing: the housing for the spirit, the mind, the intelligence of man; the instrument through which we think and plan and pursue life's purpose.

Don't dissipate it; don't impair any part of it. Keep it clean and functioning. Don't quibble about words, about what is counsel and what is commandment. Don't rationalize. Don't clutter life with what is sure to distress and embarrass and lose peace and cause problems. Find what is good, and do it. Find what isn't good, and leave it alone.

If I may cite a phrase: "If a thing is right, it can be done. If wrong, it can be done without."

Beware false lures

Don't let the temptations, the false advertising, the false appeals, the false endorsements, the glamorizing of evil, the cynicism and sophistry of those who would pull man down to the lower levels of life—don't let these impair health and peace and happiness and the everlasting possibilities of life. "If a thing is right, it can be done. If

wrong, it can be done without." Basically, it is just this simple.

And don't expect life to be easy. It never was for anyone, and never was intended to be, so far as I know. On this point I quote from President McKay: "I am grateful for membership in a Church whose religion fits men for the struggle with the forces of the world," he said, "and which enables them to survive in this struggle."

Strength from struggle

Of course there are temptations, problems, things to overcome. Learning is a long and perennial process. The pursuit of excellence requires the best of all our effort. Life is for learning, and the lessons are clearly there to learn. The rules, the basic laws of life, have been given. The choice is ours. There is a law of cause and consequences. We realize the results of the lives we live. And we must live to respect ourselves and others also.

I would cite a sentence or two from Harold B. Lee: "Oh, God, help me to hold a high opinion of myself." That should be the prayer of every soul: not an abnormally developed self-esteem that becomes haughtiness, conceit, or arrogance, but a righteous self-respect, a belief in one's own worth, worth to God and worth to man.

Sometimes we may feel that it is easier for others than it is for us. But we all have our struggles. We all have our problems. We all have things to overcome, decisions to make, need for self-control.

Many years ago Phillips Brooks said: "But . . . some men live strongly and purely in this world, you say, and then go safely and serenely up to heaven . . . [men] who never know what struggle is. What shall we say of them? . . . you may search all the ages. . . . You may go through the crowded streets of heaven, asking each saint how he came there, and you will look in vain everywhere for a man morally and spiritually strong, whose strength did not come to him in struggle. Will you take the man who never had a disappointment, who never knew a want . . . ? Do you suppose that

[any] man has never wrestled with his own success and happiness . . . ?" There are no such.

The gospel, the way of life

Blessedly, as we engage, each of us, in this struggle, we have the principles and the purposes. God help us to live by them, to live what we teach, for our own sake as well as for the sake of others.

There is no place, no people anywhere on earth, that would not be benefitted and blessed by the gospel of Jesus Christ. And ours is the opportunity and obligation of example, of sharing it with others. How can we be a light unto men if we don't live according to the light that God has given?

Gratitude for a bounteous heritage

May I say, before concluding, how grateful I am for those who gave us this Tabernacle, with its organ, its traditions, and all that pertains to Temple Square, this year being the hundredth anniversary of this great building, at which thoughtful men the world over have marveled. It has been my privilege to spend much of my life here, for 38 years, at every hour of the day and night, at every season, meeting visitors who have come from worldwide, and reaching out worldwide by radio and television through the facilities God has given.

We have performed in many of the great concert halls of Europe and America, and have talked in many auditoriums around the world, and find nothing to exceed this building in uniqueness of structure, in remarkable versatility, in its most pleasing and responsive acoustic qualities, in its simplicity and beauty and spirit. There have been some who would change it, some who have thought to "improve" it, so they say, even as to some of its basic essentials; but it satisfies my soul, and I thank God for the minds that conceived it, for the inspiration given them to do so, for the hands that fashioned it in their poverty and loving care and skill and devotion.

Many of the great artists and engineers and architects of the earth have commented on it. I give you one from

Eugene Ormandy, director of the Philadelphia Orchestra, that he sent in a letter addressed sometime ago to Brother Isaac Stewart, president of the Tabernacle Choir. "We have, as you probably know," said Mr. Ormandy, "performed in almost every great hall in the world, but we have found no better hall anywhere than the Tabernacle. Its acoustics are superb, and I only hope that no human hands will alter them in trying to make improvements. It is as near perfect now as any hall can be, and it is a joy to perform in it for your wonderful audiences."

This is typical of many, many more, and I hope we may always preserve it in its simple and basic qualities and character.

With you I thank my Father in heaven for the heritage from our fathers, for the restoration of the gospel, for a prophet to guide us in these latter days, for devoted parents, for wholesome homes, for faithful young people, for our opportunities, for the beauty of the earth, for the commandment to subdue it. May we also subdue and control ourselves and realize the highest possibilities of life, physically, spiritually, mentally, and morally, in a completeness of the greatest possible attainments, now and always and forever.

God bless President McKay and these my brethren, and all of you, and your families, and our beloved friends, worldwide, that the spirit of truth may move upon us all and bring us closer together in a oneness of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and in the brotherhood of mankind.

And may we remember how many there are yearning in their hearts for what we have or could hold in our hands, and never turn away from our opportunities for education, for preparation, for improvement; never turn away from respecting life, respecting ourselves, our bodies, our minds, our spirits, our eternal opportunities—remembering that "if a thing is right, it can be done. If it is wrong, it can be done without."

I bear you my witness of the personal reality of God, our Father, of the divinity of his Son, our Savior, and the divine calling and authority and in-

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First Day

spiration and prophetic office of President McKay, and his predecessors. May the Lord bless our President and strengthen and sustain him, and each of us in our homes, in our counsels with our families, in our private and public performance; and lead us to know the truth, to live it; and help us in the struggle to become strong and improve and repent and refine ourselves so that we may face our Father and his Son our Savior, straightforwardly, when the summons comes to each of us, as we must leave this life, so that we will be comfortable where they are.

A line from Albert Camus comes to mind: "We have nothing to lose—except everything."

God help us to live so as to have a happy homecoming always—here and

hereafter, I pray, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President Hugh B. Brown

This inspiring message to which you have just listened is by Elder Richard L. Evans of the Council of the Twelve. Elder Evans is also the International President of Rotary International. We appreciate Elder Evans.

The chorus and congregation will now join in singing, "We Thank Thee, O God, for a Prophet," after which Elder Sterling W. Sill, Assistant to the Twelve, will address us.

Congregational Singing: "We Thank Thee, O God, for a Prophet."

Elder Sterling W. Sill

Assistant to the Council of the Twelve

One of the outstanding memories carried over from childhood is my recollection of the Sabbath day. Back in those early times out on the farm, Sunday was a day completely set apart from the rest of the week. From Monday through Saturday, our attention was centered in the heavy labor involved in making a living by the muscle power of men and animals.

But Sunday was different—it was the Sabbath. It was the day of rest. It was the day of the Lord. On Saturday night the horses were turned out to pasture and all work was suspended. Saturday was also a kind of special housecleaning day to get things and people ready for Sunday. The final act of the work week was concerned with that important ancient rite known as the "Saturday night bath." This was supplemented by a parental issue of properly mended, clean clothing, all laid out, ready for Sunday.

Sabbath, the crown of the week

A thorough physical and spiritual preparation also served as our acknowledgment of the Creator's intention that the Sabbath day was supposed to be the high point of the week. It has been

said that our civilization would never have survived for half a century if it had not been for this one day in seven. This is the day when we are expected to live at our best, when we put on our best clothes, read our best books, think our best thoughts, and associate with the people who mean the most in our lives. And after we have laid aside the cares that have concerned us during the other six days, we go to the house of prayer and let our minds reach up and try to comprehend the things of God.

The unit of life is the week, and each week has been fashioned after that memorable first week, which was the week of creation. As the scene opens on that first day, we feel the brooding, unbroken darkness covering the deep, and thrill at that first forward step when in the march of progress God first said, "Let there be light." (Gen. 1:3.) We follow the other creative acts to the crowning scene, which took place during the sixth day, when God created man in his own image and endowed him with his own attributes and potentialities. Then in summarizing the accomplishments of this period of creation, the holy record says, "Thus the heavens and the earth were