

are not joined only until death. They are sealed for all eternity as families.

On Monday I shall be with a wonderful couple who have come all the way from Korea to enter the temple that stands a few feet to the east of us, there to be joined together for time and for eternity under the authority of the Holy Priesthood. Their faith, like the faith of that young marine in Southeast Asia, is such that no sacrifice is too great, no cost too high to bind together forever those whom they love most.

I give you my witness and my testimony that this authority is among us today. I give you my witness that God our Eternal Father lives and that Jesus is the Christ. I invoke upon you, my choice young friends, the choice blessings of heaven as you go forward with your lives, that you may choose those values that are enduring, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

#### President N. Eldon Tanner

The Tabernacle Choir, with Richard P. Condie conducting, and Alexander

Schreiner at the organ, will now sing: "All Glory, Laud and Honor," following which we shall have a brief organ interlude, and the choir and the congregation will sing, "Come, Come, Ye Saints."

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Singing by Choir: "All Glory, Laud and Honor."

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Organ interlude.  
Singing: "Come, Come, Ye Saints,"  
Choir, and Congregation.

#### President N. Eldon Tanner

For the benefit of the television and radio audience who have just joined us, we again announce that we are gathered in the historic Tabernacle on Temple Square in Salt Lake City, Utah, in the third session of the 137th Annual Conference of the Church.

Elder Thomas S. Monson of the Council of the Twelve will now address us.

### Elder Thomas S. Monson Of the Council of the Twelve

To the east and a little south from where we are now meeting, marking the entrance to the valley of the Great Salt Lake, standing as a sentinel pointing the way, is located "This Is the Place" monument. Here we see featured Brigham Young, his back turned to the privations, hardships, and struggles of the long desert way, his outstretched arm pointing to the valley of precious promise.

#### Expectations of promises to be fulfilled brought pioneers to this land

Miles that once took months are now traveled in minutes. The many hundreds of thousands of visitors who each year pause at the monument tingle with the spirit of pioneer tradition. Such tradition reaches its high point on Pioneer Day, July 24 of each year. A grateful posterity sets aside the busy cares of our fast-moving world and re-

flects for a moment on the everlasting principles that helped to guide those noble pioneers to their promised land.

That first trek of 1847, organized and led by Brigham Young, is described by historians as one of the great epics of United States history. Mormon pioneers by the hundreds suffered and died from disease, exposure, or starvation. There were some who, lacking wagons and teams, literally walked the 1,300 miles across the plains and through the mountains, pushing and pulling handcarts. In these groups, one in six perished.

For many the journey didn't begin at Nauvoo, Kirtland, Far West, or New York, but rather in distant England, Scotland, Scandinavia, and Germany. Tiny children could not fully comprehend nor understand the dynamic faith that motivated their parents to leave behind family, friends,

comfort, and security. A little one might inquiringly ask, "Mommy, why are we leaving home? Where are we going?"

"Come along, precious one; we're going to Zion, the city of our God."

Between the safety of home and the promise of Zion stood the angry and treacherous waters of the mighty Atlantic. Who can recount the fear that gripped the human heart during those perilous crossings? Prompted by the silent whisperings of the Spirit, sustained by a simple, yet abiding faith, they trusted in their God and set sail on their journey. Europe was behind, America ahead.

On board one of those overcrowded and creaking vessels of yesteryear were my great grandparents, their tiny family, and a few meager possessions. The waves were so high, the voyage so long, the quarters so cramped. Tiny Mary had always been frail, but now, with the passage of each day, her anxious mother knew the little one was becoming especially weak. She had taken seriously ill. No neighborhood drugstore. No family doctor. No modern hospital. Just the steady roll of the tired, old ship. Day after day worried parents peered for land, but there was no land. Now Mary could not stand. Lips that were too weak to speak just trembled with silent but eloquently expressed wonderment. The end drew near. Little Mary peacefully passed beyond this veil of tears.

As the family and friends gathered on the open deck, the ship's captain directed the service, and that precious, ever-so-small body, placed tenderly in a tear-stained canvas, was committed to the angry sea. Strong father, in emotion-choked tones, comforted grieving mother, repeating, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord. We'll see our Mary again!"

Such scenes were not uncommon. Tombstones of sage and rock marked tiny graves the entire route from Nauvoo to Salt Lake City. Such was the price some pioneers paid. Their bodies are buried in peace, but their names live on evermore.

Tired oxen lumbered, wagon wheels creaked, brave men toiled, war drums

sounded, and coyotes howled. Our faith-inspired and storm-driven ancestors pressed on. They, too, had their cloud by day and pillar of fire by night.

Often they sang:

"Come, come ye Saints, no toil nor labor fear;

But with joy wend your way.

Though hard to you this journey may appear,

Grace shall be as your day. . . .

"All is well. All is well."

(*Hymns*, 13.)

These pioneers remembered the words of the Lord: "My people must be tried in all things, that they may be prepared to receive the glory that I have for them, even the glory of Zion. . . ." (D&C 136:31.)

As the long, painful struggle approached its welcomed end, a jubilant spirit filled each heart. Tired feet and weary bodies somehow found new strength.

### Fulfillment did not come at first

Time-marked pages of a dusty pioneer journal speak movingly to us: "We bowed ourselves down in humble prayer to Almighty God with hearts full of thanksgiving to Him, and dedicated this land unto Him for the dwelling place of His people."

All struggle had not ceased; privation and hardship had not disappeared. Mrs. Rebecca Riter describes Christmas Day in 1847 in the valley of the Great Salt Lake: "The winter was cold. Christmas came and the children were hungry. I had brought a peck of wheat across the plains and hid it under a pile of wood. I thought I would cook a handful of wheat for the baby. Then I thought how we would need wheat for seed in the spring, so I left it alone."

The crude homes were described by a small boy in these terms: "There was no window of any kind whatever in our house. Neither was there a door. My mother hung up an old quilt, which served as a door for the first winter. This was our bedroom, our parlor, our sitting room, our kitchen, our sleeping room, everything in this room of about

12 x 16 feet. How in the world we all got along in it I do not know. I recollect that my dear old mother stated that no queen who ever entered her palace was ever more happy or proud of shelter and the blessings of the Lord than was she when she entered that completed dugout."

Such were the trials, the hardships, struggles, and heartaches of a former day. They were met with resolute courage and an abiding faith in a living God. The words of their Prophet leader provided their pledge: "And this shall be our covenant—that we will walk in all the ordinances of the Lord." (D&C 136:4.)

### But can come today

The passage of time dims our memories and diminishes our appreciation for those who walked the path of pain, leaving behind a tear-marked trail of nameless graves. But what of today's challenge? Are there no rocky roads to travel, no rugged mountains to climb, chasms to cross, trails to blaze, or rivers to ford? Or is there a very present need for that pioneer spirit to guide us away from the dangers that threaten to engulf us and lead us rather to a Zion of safety?

In the two decades since the end of World War II standards of morality have lowered and lowered. Today we have more people in jail, in reformatories, on probation, and in trouble than ever before. From the padded expense account to grand larceny, from petty crimes to crimes of passion, the figures are higher than ever and going higher. Crime spirals upward! Decency careens downward! Many are on a giant roller coaster of disaster, seeking the thrills of the moment while sacrificing the joys of eternity. We conquer space but cannot control self. Thus we forfeit peace.

Can we somehow muster the courage, that steadfastness of purpose, that characterized the pioneers of a former generation? Can you and I, in actual fact, be pioneers today? The dictionary defines a pioneer as "one who goes before, showing others the way to follow." Oh, how the world needs such pioneers today!

We forget how the Greeks and

Romans prevailed magnificently in a barbaric world and how that triumph ended, how a slackness and softness finally came over them to their ruin. In the end, more than they wanted freedom, they wanted security, a comfortable life; and they lost all—security and comfort and freedom. From the confusion of our modern world, sincere persons searchingly ask themselves: "To whom shall we listen? Whom shall we follow? Whom shall we serve?"

Today, chronic strife even permeates the personal province of the Prince of Peace. Contention thrives where taught he who declared, ". . . contention is not of me, but is of the devil. . . ." (3 Ne. 11:29.) However, when we have ears that truly hear, we will be mindful of the echo from Capernaum's past. Here multitudes crowded around Jesus, bringing the sick to be healed; a palsied man picked up his bed and walked, and a Roman centurion's faith restored his servant's health. Many turn away from our Elder Brother, who said, "I am the way, the truth and the life," and rather follow blindly after that Pied Piper of sin who would lead us down the slippery slopes to our own destruction. He cunningly calls to troubled youth in truly tempting tones: "Just this once won't matter." "Everyone is doing it." "Don't be old-fashioned."

Thank God for the spirit expressed by one youth who saw through Satan's deceit and boldly declared: "I am old-fashioned enough to believe in God, to believe in the dignity and potential of his creature, man; and I am realistic, not idealistic, enough to know that I am not alone in these feelings." (Look, January 12, 1965.)

President David O. McKay paid faithful youth the highest compliment when he recently said: "There has never been a time when we had greater reason to be proud of our young people than at present."

The unsatisfied yearnings of the soul will not be met by a never-ending quest for joy midst the thrills of sensation and vice. Vice never leads to virtue. Hate never points to love. Cowardice never reflects courage. Doubt never inspires faith.

It is not difficult to withstand the mockings and unsavory remarks of foolish ones who would ridicule chastity, honesty, and obedience to God's commands. The world has ever belittled adherence to principle. Times change. Practices persist. When Noah was instructed to build an ark, the foolish populace looked at the cloudless sky, then scoffed and jeered—until the rain came.

In the Western Hemisphere, those long centuries ago, people doubted, disputed, and disobeyed until the fire consumed Zarahemla, the earth covered Moronihah, and water engulfed the land of Moroni. Jeering, mocking, ribaldry, and sin were no more. They had been replaced by sullen silence, dense darkness. The patience of God had expired, his timetable fulfilled.

Must we learn such costly lessons over and over again? When we fail to profit from the experiences of the past, we are doomed to repeat them with all their heartache, suffering, and anguish. Haven't we the wisdom to obey him who designed the plan of salvation—rather than that serpent who despised its beauty?

In the words of the poet, "Wouldst thou be gathered to Christ's chosen flock, shun the broad way too easily explored, And let thy path be hewn out of the rock, The living rock of God's eternal word." (William Wordsworth.)

Can we not follow the Prince of Peace, that pioneer who literally showed the way for others to follow? His divine plan can save us from the Babylons of sin, complacency, and error. His example points the way. When faced with temptation, he

shunned it. When offered the world, he declined it. When asked for his life, he gave it!

"Come, follow me," the Savior said, Then let us in his footsteps tread, For thus alone can we be one With God's own loved, begotten Son. "For thrones, dominions, kingdoms, powers, And glory great and bliss are ours If we, throughout eternity, Obey his words, 'Come, follow me.'" (Hymns, 14.)

Now is the time. This is the place. May we follow him, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President N. Eldon Tanner

He to whom you have just listened is Elder Thomas S. Monson of the Council of the Twelve Apostles.

The Tabernacle Choir will now sing: "On Great Lone Hills," and then the men of the Choir will sing, "The Lord Bless You and Keep You," following which there will be a brief organ interlude, and Elder Ezra Taft Benson of the Council of the Twelve will be our concluding speaker.

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Singing by Choir: "On Lonely Hills."

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Singing by men of the Choir: "The Lord Bless You and Keep You."

President N. Eldon Tanner

Elder Ezra Taft Benson of the Council of the Twelve will be our concluding speaker.

### Elder Ezra Taft Benson

Of the Council of the Twelve

My beloved brothers and sisters—all children of the same Father, in the spirit: Humbly and gratefully I address you, with a prayer that what I say will be pleasing to the Lord.

**Two thousand years ago:  
a perfect man**

Nearly two thousand years ago a

perfect man walked the earth: Jesus the Christ. He was the son of a heavenly father and an earthly mother. He is the God of this world, under the Father. He taught men truth, that they might be free. His example and precepts provide the great standard, the only sure way, for all mankind. He became the first and only one who had