

Saturday, April 8

Second Day

controversies now going on, it seems to me, are tinctured with selfish ambitions. May I remind you there is no place for selfishness in God's kingdom or in the restored gospel of Jesus Christ.

Someone has said that Moses was the first man in history who fought for human rights. He freed the Israelites from the Egyptian bondage. He freed them from their own limitations and taught them the fundamentals of good government. He laid the foundation for law and order. Moses brought to the world the Ten Commandments. They are very fundamental. They are basic to every system of law made to govern humanity. To violate them means disaster and destruction. The road to wickedness begins when one of these mandates from God is broken. "And there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face." (Deut. 34:10.)

#### Modern prophets bring divine guidance

Like the prophets of old, Joseph Smith, the modern Prophet, saw visions, received revelations, predicted the future, and interpreted the scriptures. The Church would not have come into existence without a prophet. There could have been no restoration without these holy men who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. Their powers and understanding went

beyond the limits of our finite comprehension of things. They looked beyond the veil that separates the seen from the unseen world. Had Joseph Smith lacked the insight, the power, and the enlightenment that came to him through his prophetic calling, the Book of Mormon could not have come forth.

Without the visions of Moses and Elijah, there would have been no gathering of Israel, and the temple building program characteristic of the Church would have had no beginning. The existence of these temples in the United States, in Canada, in Europe, and on the islands of the sea is a solemn testimony of the sincerity, the conviction, and the positive faith of the Latter-day Saints.

I believe in the prophets, modern and ancient. We have listened to their words during this conference. May we remember them and may we abide in the holy commandments that came from God to them, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

#### President Hugh B. Brown

Elder Alma Sonne has just spoken to us. We shall now hear from Elder Franklin D. Richards, Assistant to the Twelve. He will be followed by Elder Eldred G. Smith, Patriarch to the Church.

#### Elder Franklin D. Richards

Assistant to the Council of the Twelve

My dear brothers and sisters, I am grateful for the blessings of this day. I am thankful for my knowledge and testimony that God lives and that through the atoning sacrifice of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ we may enjoy eternal life as we are obedient to the laws and ordinances of the gospel. We are blessed to be living in this dispensation when the gospel, the Church, and the power to act in the name of God have been restored through the instrumentality of the Prophet Joseph Smith, one of the greatest prophets of all time. Likewise we are blessed to be led and guided

today by another great Prophet, our beloved President David O. McKay. May the Lord bless and sustain him.

#### "Sacrifice brings forth the blessings of heaven"

William W. Phelps, an early convert to the Church and gifted hymn writer, wrote the inspiring hymn "Praise to the Man," a magnificent tribute to the Prophet Joseph Smith. This beautiful hymn not only incorporates the elements of rejoicing and prophecy but also contains choice bits of basic doctrine as well, as is evidenced by the statement: "Sacrifice

brings forth the blessings of heaven."

About this time the Saints were experiencing many blessings resulting from their manifold sacrifices. The Prophet, in delivering a lecture on faith, impressed this truth when he said:

"... that a religion that does not require the sacrifice of all things never has power sufficient to produce the faith necessary unto life and salvation; ... It was through this sacrifice, and this only, that God has ordained that man should enjoy eternal life. . . ." ("Lectures on Faith" 6:7.)

### A fundamental principle; with illustrations

Yes, the law of sacrifice is a fundamental doctrine of the gospel of Jesus Christ and contributes to the building of faith, love, and many other virtues.

In this connection it is interesting to note that Webster's dictionary defines sacrifice as "a surrender of some desirable thing for a higher object."

This is undoubtedly true, but it might be observed that the higher object is not always discernible at the time of the surrender or sacrifice.

However, to fully realize the importance of the law of sacrifice, it is necessary to consider the purpose of life. This earth life has been provided that each of us might be proved to see if we will do all things that the Lord commands us to do.

While the Lord has given us a clear plan to follow, we must recognize that evil influences exist and provide temptations and obstacles for us to overcome.

For, as Lehi said to his son Jacob: "For it must needs be, that there is an opposition in all things. If not so, . . . righteousness could not be brought to pass. . . ." (2 Ne. 2:11.)

Inasmuch, then, as this earth life is a proving ground, it provides choices for us, and frequently the decisions we have to make are not easy. Many of our decisions require sacrifices, and sacrifices involve giving up something—something that appears important and desirable.

In considering our free agency and the opposition that exists in all things, we must never forget that God always

functions within eternal laws.

The Lord has said, "I, the Lord, am bound when ye do what I say; but when ye do not what I say, ye have no promise." (D&C 82:10.) "And when we obtain any blessing from God, it is by obedience to that law upon which it is predicated." (D&C 130:21.)

Hence it becomes evident that many great blessings are predicated upon obedience to the eternal law of sacrifice.

The Savior said, "Let no man be afraid to lay down his life for my sake; for whoso layeth down his life for my sake shall find it again." (D&C 103:27.)

Thus the supreme sacrifice of one's life is rewarded by that person finding his life again, "even life eternal." (D&C 98:13.)

You and I may never be asked to lay down our lives for the gospel's sake, but obedience to the law of sacrifice in a lesser way is also rewarding. The history of the Church of Jesus Christ in each era is replete with experiences of every kind and description that men are prone to call sacrifices. The Saints more frequently have described these experiences as opportunities and blessings rather than sacrifices.

On one occasion a rich young ruler came to the Savior and asked what he should do to be saved. Jesus enumerated several things, including honoring his parents, chastity, and honesty. He replied that he had done all of these things from his youth. Then Jesus told him to go and sell all that he had, give it to the poor, and follow him. But the young man thought more of his riches than the kingdom and refused to make this sacrifice, which could have turned out to be a great blessing—even eternal life.

On another occasion one of Jesus' disciples said that he wanted to follow him but asked, "Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father."

"But Jesus said unto him, Follow me; and let the dead bury their dead." (Matt. 8:21-22.)

As the Savior was calling the fisherman Simon, also called Peter, and other disciples, he said, "Fear not; for henceforth thou shalt catch men."

"And when they had brought their

ships to land, they forsook all, and followed him." (Luke 5:10-11.)

Peter and the other disciples were willing to accept and comply with the law of sacrifice. The rich young ruler was not.

According to Webster's dictionary definition, Peter and the other disciples were willing to surrender a desirable condition for a higher object; the rich young ruler was not. Peter and the other disciples received the blessings.

Jesus' life was the perfect example of dedication and sacrifice. He had no silver or gold to give, but he gave faith to his disciples, health to the sick, and hope to the discouraged. His life was in every respect a sacrifice for all.

Joseph Smith's life was another great example of dedication and sacrifice. While in Liberty Jail the word of the Lord came to him: "... if thou shouldst be cast into the pit, or into the hands of murderers, and the sentence of death passed upon thee; . . . know thou, my son, that all these things shall give thee experience, and shall be for thy good." (D&C 122:7.)

Here the Prophet was specifically told that these tribulations and sacrifices would be for his good and blessing, and undoubtedly the Liberty Jail experience was preparing him for coming events. In the end he and his brother Hyrum were called upon to be martyrs for the kingdom of God—another great story of sacrifice and blessing.

The words of the Master are certainly applicable in the case of Joseph and Hyrum: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." (John 15:13.)

The building of the Church, from the time of the Prophet Joseph Smith to the present, has required constant sacrifices on the part of the Saints.

As we study the history of the Church we find peculiar situations and obstacles in each era. I am certain that those that lived in these various periods each felt that the problems of his time were most acute and required great sacrifices.

Undoubtedly the problems of establishing the Church and the persecutions incident thereto were severe. Likewise the difficulties of the migration to and

settlement of the West required great faith and sacrifices. The period preceding and following the Manifesto was most difficult. And so each period had its own peculiar tests; and as they were successfully met, a broad and solid foundation was laid for us to build upon.

The Savior instructed us to seek first the kingdom of God; and to do this, we must put the Church first in our lives, even though it requires self-denial and sacrifice.

We are living in a new era, a period of constant changes, a time of unprecedented growth and development—the age of the jet airplane, the computer, and the communications satellite.

Our problems are those incident to great and rapid growth and change. Far-reaching challenges are requiring the sacrifice of the Saints' time, talents, and means, possibly as great as ever before.

Today, some are sacrificing friends, family, and positions when they join the Church, as some did in the early history of the Church.

Today many are sacrificing for missionary work, either in supporting missionaries or by going on missions themselves, as many have throughout the history of the Church.

Today we have a full Church program; and whether we are called upon to be a Sunday School teacher, a bishop, an usher, to pass the sacrament, to be a missionary, to work on a welfare project, to do genealogical work, to consult on data processing problems, or any other Church assignment, or whether we are called upon to make contributions of our means, we should recognize that "whatever [we] do according to the will of the Lord is the Lord's business." (D&C 64:29.)

### Sacrifices are opportunities

Sacrifices today are in reality opportunities, the same as they have always been. With reference to sacrifices incurred in building the kingdom of God, the Savior promised, ". . . There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake,

"Who shall not receive manifold

more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting." (Luke 18:29-30.)

How true this is!

Each of us has his duties to perform, and to perform them faithfully should be our constant aim, even though self-denial is required.

Let us all appreciate that today as of

old: "Sacrifice brings forth the blessings of heaven."

May we each put the Church first in our lives and more fully understand and appreciate the eternal law of sacrifice. May sacrifice become a part of our daily lives, that we and our families may enjoy the blessings derived therefrom, I pray, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

### Elder Eldred G. Smith

Patriarch to the Church

We all remember well the Savior's explanation of the final judgment. He explained that to the righteous on his right hand he would say: "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

"For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in:

"Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.

"Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink?

"When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee?

"Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?

"And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." (Matt. 25:34-40.)

#### How to serve God

To serve God, then, is to serve our fellowmen.

How can we serve? Our ability to serve might well be increased through preparation.

In seeking education, one should seek to develop those talents that he has that would make him most serviceable to his fellowmen. Therefore, learn to do that which you enjoy doing, the thing you are happiest at doing. People like doing that which they do well.

Give only secondary thought to the monetary advantage of your chosen vocation. As you serve others, your joy in serving increases.

Einstein said: "It's high time that the ideal of success should be replaced by the ideal of service."

Lord Halifax said, "Service is the rent we pay for our own room on earth."

I like this slogan the Brigham Young University uses: "Enter to Learn—Go Forth to Serve."

Your vocation should be to help you serve more fully. If one's education omits the spiritual side of life, it is very unbalanced.

To know where we came from, why we are here, and where we are going is most vital of all our learning.

In the Church we learn by doing. Knowledge alone is of little value. For this reason the Lord has given opportunities to serve in his kingdom. Each member of the Church may have the opportunity to serve in one capacity or another.

Being a missionary is a wonderful way of serving. He who fulfills a mission with the idea uppermost in his mind to take the glorious message of the gospel to others, giving little thought to his own benefits, will have the greatest joy and happiness and success in his work.

President McKay has said, "Every member a missionary," which should give everyone an opportunity of serving in the kingdom of our Lord.

All the activities of the Church are acts of service. Priesthood is given to us that we might be of service to others. There is no such thing as priesthood