

Brothers and sisters, I testify that we will live again, that life after death is real, and that we can only claim an inheritance among the mansions of our Father in heaven when we can prove our claim to it through living righteously and maintaining our names in righteous fellowship upon the records of God's kingdom on the earth as well as in heaven. Of the truth and impor-

tance of these principles I testify, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President N. Eldon Tanner

Elder Theodore M. Burton, Assistant to the Twelve, has just spoken to us.

Elder Thomas S. Monson of the Council of the Twelve will be our concluding speaker.

Elder Thomas S. Monson

Of the Council of the Twelve Apostles

Today is actually tomorrow in the Tongan Islands, which lie some 2,700 miles southwest of Hawaii. The Tongan capital, Nuku'alofa, is situated 20 minutes east of the International Date Line, thereby giving Tonga the title "the place where time begins." Tongans take delight in the thought that of all the people whom God has created and placed over the expanse of this marvelous world, they are the first to greet the new day, the first to be upon their knees in morning prayer to thank a loving Heavenly Father for his abundant blessings.

The Friendly Islands

Captain James Cook, one of the early explorers of the Pacific, was greatly impressed with the friendliness of these native people. On his charts he designated Tonga as the Friendly Islands. His designation could not have been more descriptive. Tongans are good-humored, polite, outgoing, and, above all, friendly.

Perhaps the Friendly Islands didn't quite live up to their name in the estimation of those first Mormon missionaries who arrived on the island of Tongatabu July 15, 1891. A full year was to transpire before a frame meetinghouse could be erected, a humble and modest school opened, and the first new member baptized. Frustration followed frustration until progress halted. After a 20-year lull, the work was recommenced with the establishment of the Tongan Mission.

Early missionaries

Once again, men of faith, called of

God, left behind home and family and sailed for Tonga. Success came more readily, but not without exacting a price. Typhoid fever took its toll. Today, six well-kept graves mark the resting place of those who were willing to give all in the cause of truth. The words of the Lord provide a fitting epitaph to their lives and to the service of these early missionaries: "Wherefore, be not weary in well-doing, for ye are laying the foundation of a great work. And out of small things proceedeth that which is great." (D&C 64:33.)

From that small frame school has proceeded the Liahona College and a Church-administered school system, which blesses the lives of the choice youth of the Friendly Islands. Teachers, both Tongan and American, with a common bond of faith, provide not only training for the mind, but also preparation for life.

Well could they say:

"We are building in sorrow or joy
A temple the world may not see;
Which time cannot mar nor destroy—
We build for eternity."

(N. B. Sargent,
"Building for Eternity.")

Classroom lesson

On a recent visit to Tonga, I witnessed such a building project. Entering a typical classroom, I noticed the rapt attention that the children gave their native instructor. His textbook and theirs lay closed upon the desks. In his hand he held a strange-appearing lure fashioned from a round stone and

large seashells. This I learned was a *maka-feke* or octopus trap.

Tongan fishermen glide over the reef, paddling their outrigger canoes with one hand and dangling the *maka-feke* over the side. Octopuses dash out from their rocky lairs and seize the lure, mistaking it for an ocean crab. So tenacious is their grasp and so firm is their instinct not to relinquish the precious prize that fishermen can flip them right into the canoe.

It was an easy transition for the teacher to point out to eager and wide-eyed youth that the Evil One, even Satan, often fashions a *maka-feke* to ensnare unsuspecting persons and to take possession of their destiny.

Before some he dangles the *maka-feke* of tobacco with the cunning call, "This is the way to social ease." He who grasps, like the octopus, finds it difficult to relinquish the bait.

Before others he presents the *maka-feke* of alcohol with the chant: "Here is the way to unwind and forget your cares." The unsuspecting victim finds himself not carefree, but held captive.

The new morality is a cleverly designed *maka-feke*. In a headlong dash for what they envision will be social acceptance, the weak-willed, deceived by a counterfeit bait, discover not social acceptance, but experience social rejection.

Love, a source of strength

What prompted this inspired teacher to close the traditional textbook and for a brief moment teach an unforgettable lesson? Love is the answer—a love for his students and a genuine concern for their welfare.

This same spirit of abiding love and genuine concern has characterized the growth of the Church in Tonga from that humble beginning in 1891, even to the present time.

Today one in seven Tongans is a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Beautiful chapels dot the landscape. The full program of the Church is pursued in a vigorous and successful manner. Just last month, together with Elder Howard W. Hunter, I had the privilege to be a part of the creation of a stake of Zion at

Nuku'alofa. We found a prepared people. We discovered that from "small things" there had proceeded "that which is great."

In their journey to greatness, the Tongans have not neglected nor forgotten a great source of their strength—this abiding love and genuine concern one for another.

Faith of Tongans

Earlier this year a baby boy was born to the Tongan Mission president and his wife, President and Mrs. John H. Groberg. Little John Enoch was their first son, the beloved brother of five sisters and the delight of the Tongan members. At first the little one did well, but then came illness. Doctors worked their skill, parents exercised their faith, but the baby did not improve.

Late one evening there came a knock at the door. From the Tongan visitor, President Groberg learned that on every island, in every home, and in every heart, fervent prayer and faithful fasting became a united appeal to Almighty God that John Enoch Groberg would live. Visiting Tonga at the time, I witnessed this faith. I testify to the result. The cause of the illness was discovered; the deterioration was arrested. Today the baby is robust in strength. He is a living testimony of the power of prayer and the miracle of love.

Visit to royal palace

During that same visit to Tonga, I accompanied President Groberg to the royal palace, where we were granted an interview with His Royal Majesty King Tupou IV. Our welcome was cordial and most pleasant. At the conclusion of the interview, the prompting of the Holy Spirit guided President Groberg as he bore fervent testimony to the king concerning the truth of the everlasting gospel and the blessings that it provides the faithful. No more eloquent nor moving words have resounded in those royal chambers. No greater courage have I seen displayed.

To my mind came the apostle Paul's inspired defense before another king, even Agrippa. Here in Tonga was one

called of God who was "not disobedient unto the heavenly vision." Here was uttered a testimony that "Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should shew light unto the people, and to the Gentiles." (Acts 26:19, 23.) I could envision King Tupou saying with King Agrippa, "Almost thou persuadest me."

We exchanged greetings, departed the palace; but I did not, nor will I, forget that experience. What prompted such courage, such faith, such conviction in a young mission president? The answer: the miracle of love. John H. Groberg loves the Tongan people—all of them.

Experience of young elder

As a lad just 20, called to the Tongan Mission, he was assigned to an outer island with a native missionary as his companion. After eight seasick days and sleepless nights on a storm-tossed sea, they reached their destination. Not one soul on the island spoke English. Here he acquired his gift of the language. Then came a devastating hurricane that struck the isolated island with tropical intensity, destroying the food crop and contaminating the water supply. There was no means of communication with the outside world. The supply boat was not due for almost two months. After four weeks the precious store of food, mainly taro, a native vegetable, was severely rationed. Four additional weeks passed. All food was gone. No help arrived. Bodies became emaciated, hope dwindled, confidence waned, some died. In desperation, John Groberg waded into the swampland where insects covered his face, and with a sweep of his hand, many entered his mouth—his only nourishment.

The end drew near. The island's inhabitants sat in an idle stupor. One morning, nine weeks from the time of the hurricane, John Groberg felt a gentle hand upon his shoulder. He turned his head and gazed into the eyes of an elderly Tongan man. Slowly and with meticulous care, the old man unwrapped a precious prize, even his most treasured possession—a small can

of berry jam. He spoke: "I am old; I think I may die. You are young; you may live. Accept my gift."

What were the words penned by Charles Dickens? "It is a far, far better thing that I do than I have ever done; it is a far, far better rest that I go to than I have ever known." (*A Tale of Two Cities*.) Add to them the declaration of the Savior: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." (Matt. 25:40.)

Then came that speck on the horizon and a shout of joy as the supply ship came into view. John H. Groberg was no longer a boy. His faith had been tried; his life had been spared; his love for the Tongan people was forever assured.

"Here am I"

The Holy Scripture records that in the hushed quiet of the still night, the boy Samuel heard the Lord call and answered, "Here am I." (1 Sam. 3:4.) On the bleak hill of Moriah, Abraham demonstrated his willingness to sacrifice all—even his only son. He heard the angel of the Lord call and answered, "Here am I." (Gen. 22:11.) On the morning of a beautiful spring day in a sacred grove at Palmyra, the boy Joseph Smith beheld a heavenly vision and the appearance of the Father and the Son. He received his call, and his life demonstrated his answer, "Here am I."

On a distant Pacific isle a faithful missionary, John H. Groberg, had answered, "Here am I."

So often the call to serve is not accompanied by the sound of a marching band, the cheering crowd, or the applause of those whose favor is deemed so great. Such distractions were not to be found on Damascus' way, in Palmyra's grove, on Moriah's mount, in Gethsemane's garden, nor atop Golgotha's hill.

With a never-waning confidence in the people of Tonga, John H. Groberg has taught them not to pray for tasks equal to their powers, but rather to pray for powers equal to their tasks. Then the doing of their work shall be no miracle, but they shall be the miracle.

A fond farewell

I found it difficult last month to bid good-bye to Tonga and its precious people. Here were men of faith, women of patience, even children of promise.

We boarded the plane. Slowly it taxied to the grass runway, and with a roar gained speed and lifted gently into the blue sky. I looked at the crowd who had bid us farewell. In the distance I saw the great school complex. In my memory I thought of the six graves of those early missionaries. Quietly I repeated a verse from Kipling's "Recessional":

"The tumult and the shouting dies,
The captains and the kings depart;
Still stands thine ancient sacrifice,
An humble and a contrite heart;
Lord God of hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget, lest we forget."

The miracle of love

From the cabin window I took a last quick glance at Nuku'alofa, which interpreted means "the abode of love." I realized that love is not only the miracle of the Friendly Islands; love is the guide to mortal happiness and a requisite for eternal life.

God so loved the world that he gave his Son. The Redeemer so loved mankind that he gave his life. To you and to me he declared, "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you. . . ."

"By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples." (John 13:34-35.)

With all my heart I pray that we will be obedient to such a heavenly vision, for I testify it came from the Son of God who is our Redeemer, our mediator with the Father, even Jesus Christ, the Lord. Of this I bear witness, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President N. Eldon Tanner

Elder Thomas S. Monson of the Council of the Twelve has been our concluding speaker.

The General Priesthood Meeting of the Church will be held in the Salt Lake Tabernacle this evening at seven o'clock. Priesthood members only are

invited to be present. The priesthood session will not be broadcast publicly.

In addition to the overflow meeting in the Assembly Hall, the proceedings of the priesthood meeting this evening will be relayed by closed-circuit, originating in the Tabernacle, to members of the Aaronic and Melchizedek Priesthood assembled in approximately 700 separate locations in all parts of the United States and Canada, and by way of closed-circuit television in six buildings in Salt Lake City, and to thousands assembled in the Brigham Young University in Provo.

The Sunday morning session will be broadcast by many radio and television stations in western United States; and short-waved in English over Station WNYW to Europe, South and Central America, Africa, and parts of Asia.

Again, 25 radio stations will broadcast the translated conference sessions of Sunday morning in major cities of Mexico and Central America, together with Spanish programming stations in this country, to a potential Latin American audience of about twenty million people.

Morning sessions of Friday and Sunday will be carried from the Tabernacle over direct oceanic cables to a large number of saints assembled in many chapels throughout Great Britain, Germany, Austria, Holland and Sweden on Sunday. Direct circuits will also carry these sessions to saints assembled in chapels throughout eastern Canada.

The CBS Radio network Tabernacle Choir broadcast tomorrow morning will be from 9:35 to 10:00 a.m. Those desiring to attend this broadcast must be in their seats no later than 9:15 a.m.

The singing for this session has been furnished by the Brigham Young University Combined Choruses, with John Halliday conducting, and Robert Cundick at the organ.

I am sure this great gathering in the Tabernacle, and our radio and television audience would wish us to express our heartfelt appreciation for the excellent singing of this group of outstanding young students. We thank