

and a covenant that is eternal or that may be made eternal. The bearing and rearing of children is the highest of all human duties.

"Where there is no vision, the people perish." (Prov. 29:18.) We have been given the vision. We have been instructed.

Preparation dispels fear

Speaking of the great tribulations to come in the latter days, the Lord gave this assurance: ". . . *my people* will I preserve." (Moses 7:61. Italics added.)

Later he counseled: ". . . if ye are prepared ye shall not fear." (D&C 38:30.)

And again he has promised: "But learn that he who doeth the works of righteousness shall receive his reward, even peace in this world, and eternal life in the world to come." (D&C 59:23.) I believe in that promise.

I am grateful to be a member of the Church of which the Lord by his own voice has declared: ". . . the only true

and living church upon the face of the whole earth, with which I, the Lord, am well pleased. . . ." (D&C 1:30.)

As a member of this church I have full confidence in "the prophecies and promises which . . . [the Lord has said] shall all be fulfilled." (D&C 1:37.)

I know that if we will follow the counsel from these brethren, we can be prepared, and we need not fear. We can make our way along the road of life safely.

And I know that by doing the works of righteousness, we can all have peace in this world and eternal life in the world to come. In the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President Hugh B. Brown

Elder A. Theodore Tuttle has just addressed us.

We shall now hear from Elder Thomas S. Monson of the Council of the Twelve.

ELDER THOMAS S. MONSON

Of the Council of the Twelve

The vast throng assembled in the Tabernacle this Easter morning is a beautiful sight. I recognize among you those who have traveled great distances to be at the conference—even from far-off Australia.

The flight from Brisbane, Australia, to San Francisco is a long one. There is time to read, time to sleep, and time to ponder and think. As a passenger on this flight, I was awakened by the calm, resonant sound of the pilot's voice as he announced: "Ladies and gentlemen, we're now passing over the Coral Sea, scene of the great sea battle of World War II."

Through the cabin window I could see billowy white clouds, and far below, the azure blue of the vast Pacific. My thoughts turned to the events of that fateful eighth day of May in 1942 when the mammoth aircraft carrier *Lexington* slipped to its final resting place on the ocean floor. Twenty-seven

hundred and thirty-five sailors scrambled to safety. Others were not so fortunate. One who went down with his ship was my boyhood friend, Arthur Patton.

Story of Arthur Patton

May I tell you about Arthur? He had blond, curly hair and a smile as big as all outdoors. Arthur stood taller than any boy in the class. I suppose this is how he was able to fool the recruiting officers and enlist in the Navy at the tender age of 15. To Arthur and most of the boys, the war was a great adventure. I remember how striking he appeared in his navy uniform. How we wished we were older, or at least taller, so we too could enlist.

Youth is a very special time of life. As Longfellow wrote:

"How beautiful is youth! How bright it gleams

With its illusions, aspirations,
dreams!
Book of Beginnings, Story without End,
Each maid a heroine, and each man
a friend!"

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow—
"Moritus Salutamus")

Arthur's mother was so proud of the blue star that graced her living room window. It represented to every passer-by that her son wore the uniform of his country. When I would pass the house, she often opened the door and invited me in to read the latest letter from Arthur. Her eyes would fill with tears, and I would then be asked to read aloud. Arthur meant everything to his widowed mother. I can still picture Mrs. Patton's coarse hands as she would carefully replace the letter in its envelope. These were honest hands that bore the worker's seal. Mrs. Patton was a cleaning woman—a janitress for a downtown office building. Each day of her life except Sundays, she could be seen walking up the sidewalk, pail and brush in hand, her gray hair combed in a tight bob, her shoulders weary from work and stooped with age.

Then came the Battle of the Coral Sea, the sinking of the *Lexington*, and the death of Arthur Patton. The blue star was taken from its hallowed spot in the front window. It was replaced by one of gold. A light went out in the life of Mrs. Patton. She grieved in utter darkness and deep despair.

Will Arthur live again?

With a prayer in my heart, I approached the familiar walkway to the Patton home, wondering what words of comfort could come from the lips of a mere boy.

The door opened, and Mrs. Patton embraced me as she would her own son. Home became a chapel, as a grief-stricken mother and a less-than-adequate boy knelt in prayer.

Arising from our knees, Mrs. Patton gazed into my eyes and spoke: "Tom, I belong to no church, but you do. Tell me, will Arthur live again?"

Time dims the memory of that conversation. The present whereabouts of Mrs. Patton is not known to me; but,

Mrs. Patton, wherever you are, from the backdrop of my personal experience, I should like to once more answer your question, "Will Arthur live again?"

I suppose we could say that this is a universal question, for who has not at a time of bereavement pondered the same thought?

Death leaves in its cruel wake shattered dreams, unfulfilled ambitions, crushed hopes. In our helplessness, we turn to others for assurance. Men of letters and leaders of renown can express their beliefs, but they cannot provide definitive answers.

The dim light of belief must yield to the noonday sun of revelation. We turn backward in time, that we might go forward with hope. Back, back beyond the silent generation, the best generation, the lost generation. Back, back beyond the Space Age, the Computer Age, the Industrial Age. Back, back to him who walked the dusty paths of villages we now reverently call the Holy Land, to him who caused the blind to see, the deaf to hear, the lame to walk, and the dead to live, to him who tenderly and lovingly assured us, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." (John 14:6.)

The plan of life

The plan of life and an explanation of its eternal course come to us from the Master of heaven and earth, even Jesus Christ the Lord. To understand the meaning of death, we must appreciate the purpose of life.

In this dispensation, the Lord declared: "And now, verily I say unto you, I was in the beginning with the Father and am the Firstborn." (D&C 93:21.) "Man was also in the beginning with God." (D&C 93:29.) Jeremiah the prophet recorded, ". . . the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Before I formed thee . . . I knew thee; and before thou camest forth . . . I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations." (Jer. 1:4-5.)

From that majestic world of spirits we enter the grand stage of life even to prove ourselves obedient to all things commanded of God. During mortality we grow from helpless infancy to inquiring childhood and then to reflec-

tive maturity. We experience joy and sorrow, fulfillment and disappointment, success and failure; taste the sweet, yet sample the bitter. This is mortality.

The experience known as death

Then to each life comes the experience known as death. None is exempt. All must pass its portals. Death claims the aged, the weary and worn. It visits the youth in the bloom of hope and glory of expectation. Nor are the little children kept beyond its grasp. In the words of the apostle Paul: ". . . it is appointed unto men once to die. . . ." (Heb. 9:27.)

To most, there is something sinister and mysterious about this unwelcome visitor called death. Perhaps it is a fear of the unknown that causes many to dread his coming.

Arthur Patton died quickly. Others linger. Not long ago I held the thin hand of a youth as he approached the brink of eternity. "I know I am dying," he said touchingly. "What follows death?"

I turned to the scriptures and read to him:

"Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was; and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it." (Eccles. 12:7.)

". . . there is a time appointed unto men that they shall rise from the dead; and there is a space between the time of death and the resurrection. . . .

". . . concerning the state of the soul between death and the resurrection—Behold . . . the spirits of all men, as soon as they are departed from this mortal body . . . are taken home to that God who gave them life." (Al. 40:9, 11.)

To me, the lad said, "Thank you." To my Heavenly Father I said silently, "Thank thee, oh God, for truth."

God's purposes to be fulfilled

Mrs. Patton, do not grieve as you think of your boy in the depths of the Pacific or question how God's purposes can be fulfilled. Remember the words of the psalmist: "If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in

the uttermost parts of the sea;

"Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me." (Ps. 139:9-10.)

God has not forsaken you, Mrs. Patton. He sent his Only Begotten Son into the world to teach us by example the life we should live. His Son died upon the cross to redeem all mankind. His words to the grieving Martha and to his disciples today bring comfort to you: ". . . I am the resurrection, and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: "And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. . . ." (John 11:25-26.)

"In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

". . . I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." (John 14:2-3.)

Mrs. Patton, the testimonies of John the revelator and Paul the apostle are also significant to you. John recorded: ". . . I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; . . .

"And the sea gave up the dead which were in it." (Rev. 20:12-13.)

Paul declared: ". . . as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." (1 Cor. 15:22.)

We walk by faith

Until the glorious resurrection morning, we walk by faith. "For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face. . . ." (1 Cor. 13:12.)

Jesus invites you, Mrs. Patton, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

"Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls." (Matt. 11:28-29.)

Such knowledge will sustain you in your heartache. You will never be in the tragic situation of the disbeliever who, having lost a son, was heard to say, as she watched the casket lowered into mother earth, "Good-bye, my boy. Good-bye forever." Rather, with head erect, courage undaunted, and faith unwavering, you can lift your eyes as

you look beyond the gently breaking waves of the blue Pacific and whisper, "Good-bye, Arthur, my precious son. Good-bye—until we meet again."

And the words of Tennyson may come to you as though spoken by your boy:

"Sunset and evening star,
And one clear call for me!
And may there be no moaning of the bar,
When I put out to sea. . . ."

"Twilight and evening bell,
And after that the dark!
And may there be no sadness of farewell,
When I embark;

"For tho' from out our bourne of Time
and Place
The flood may bear me far,
I hope to see my Pilot face to face
When I have crossed the bar."
—"Crossing the Bar"

Mrs. Patton, Arthur lives!

To the words of the poet I add the

testimony of a witness. Mrs. Patton, God our Father is mindful of you. Through sincere prayer you can communicate with him. He, too, had a son who died, even Jesus Christ the Lord. He is our advocate with the Father, the Prince of Peace, our Savior and Divine Redeemer. One day we shall see him face to face.

In his blessed name I declare to you the solemn and sacred truth: Oh, Mrs. Patton, Arthur lives! In the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President Hugh B. Brown

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

The Tabernacle Choir will now sing "The Lord's Prayer." After the singing Elder Harold B. Lee of the Council of the Twelve will be our concluding speaker.

The Tabernacle Choir sang the number, "The Lord's Prayer."

ELDER HAROLD B. LEE

Of the Council of the Twelve

In the spirit of that beautiful hymn which has been something of a dedication to this glorious session, I seek for the spirit which has actuated this conference thus far.

Today, I would take as something of a text the words of our Savior and Redeemer just prior to his betrayal, as recorded in the Gospel of John.

"These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said . . . glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee:

"As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.

"And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." (John 17:1-3.)

Questions recall scriptures

Some questions being asked today have recalled these and other scriptures.

One man asked: How can one find God?

To him I gave a hurried answer. One finds God in the same way he finds anything—by searching. The Master had answered to a similar question: "If any man will do his will, he shall know. . . ." (John 7:17.)

Another man wrote: "If a member cannot believe the concept that God himself was once as we are now, and sits enthroned in yonder heavens," is this justification for excommunication from the Church? This, he has quoted, was from a statement made by the Prophet Joseph Smith in a funeral