

and that Jesus is the Christ. As Paul bore testimony to the saints of Corinth by his letter at that Easter season many years ago, I add my witness that we shall rise from mortal death to have life everlasting, because of the atoning sacrifice and resurrection of the Savior. In my mind I picture him with arms outstretched to all who will hear: ". . . 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 the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

### President Alvin R. Dyer

Elder Howard W. Hunter of the Council of the Twelve has just spoken to us. Elder Theodore M. Burton, Assistant to the Twelve, will be our next speaker. He will be followed by Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the First Council of Seventy.

## ELDER THEODORE M. BURTON

### Assistant to the Council of the Twelve

My brothers and sisters, many people have asked me about the new GIANT system of genealogy announced by the First Presidency in the last general conference. Where did this idea come from, and what is the reason for this change?

The answer is that it developed naturally out of our present system. As problems arose in the system we were using, we began to study them out in our own minds. We consulted earlier revelations and directions from former Church leaders and then prayed earnestly for wisdom and sought counsel to know the mind of the Lord for our day. We met frequently with our present leaders and presented questions directly to the First Presidency for answers.

As we received greater light and knowledge, we had to revise some of our new ideas and concepts until, by listening to the whisperings of the Spirit, a system finally evolved that could be approved for presentation to the people. May I discuss for a few moments in general terms how we obtain knowledge, for an understanding of how this principle applies particularly to the GIANT system.

### A complex world

We live in a world so complex and involved that sometimes life becomes a frustrating experience. There are many kinds of voices in the world, and

as Paul explained to the Corinthians: "So likewise ye, except ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken? for ye shall speak into the air.

"There are, it may be, so many kinds of voices in the world, and none of them is without signification.

"Therefore if I know not the meaning of the voice, I shall be unto him that speaketh a barbarian, and he that speaketh shall be a barbarian unto me." (1 Cor. 14:9-11.)

Among the many voices we hear, which voice should we believe? With so many duties and responsibilities, which ones should have priority? With various paths stretching out before us, which path should we follow? With so much work to be done, what work should we do first?

### Making decisions

It is evident from this multiplicity of choices that we need to make decisions. But if we make a decision based solely on our limited experience without consulting experts, the likelihood of making a correct choice becomes a matter of pure chance. In order to know what to do, it might be well to reflect on how the Lord prepares us to make decisions.

In the beginning God gave Adam a choice of whether to be obedient and trust in the Lord or to seek knowledge on his own. Adam chose to make his

own decisions. He disobeyed the Lord, ate of the fruit of the tree of knowledge, and was therefore left to his own resources. This meant eviction from the Garden of Eden and from the presence of the Lord:

"And I, the Lord God, said unto mine Only Begotten: Behold, the man is become as one of us to know good and evil; and now lest he put forth his hand and partake also of the tree of life, and eat and live forever,

"Therefore I, the Lord God, will send him forth from the Garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken;

"For as I, the Lord God, liveth, even so my words cannot return void, for as they go forth out of my mouth they must be fulfilled." (Moses 4:28-30.)

### Good and evil

Undoubtedly the Lord gave Adam counsel so that he could protect himself against evil and know how to recognize and avoid it. Note that the Lord didn't say that Adam should be able to know good *from* evil, but that he should know good *and* evil. In a like manner we are to know both good and evil and learn to prefer the good above the evil. Through our experiences in life we eventually learn to choose the good simply because it is the better way, the easier way, and the simpler way in the long run.

Experience, however, can be a very dear teacher. If we live life without direction and without someone to guide us, it is as dangerous as playing with dynamite. A slight mistake made innocently through lack of knowledge and life blows up in our face. Mistakes can be so serious that sometimes we can never fully repair the damage done. Some mistakes may even result in loss of life itself. Simply stated, we need guidance and help.

### Value of obedience

Adam and Eve, after being driven from the Garden of Eden, needed guidance and did what all wise men and women should do. They asked the Lord for direction. In response, "... he gave them commandments, that they

should worship the Lord their God, and should offer the firstlings of their flocks, for an offering unto the Lord. And Adam was obedient unto the commandments of the Lord." (Moses 5:5.)

Adam had already learned his lesson well. Because he hadn't done what the Lord asked him to do, he lost the privileges he formerly had. Now that Adam was on his own, he had to fight weeds, illness, cold, hunger, and all the other problems that beset mankind. Adam had already learned the value of obedience, and he obeyed this new counsel religiously. How long this obedient sacrifice continued we don't know, but it must have been a long period as we reckon time. At least it was long enough for the Lord to make sure that Adam had learned his lesson well before he was given the reason for this commandment. But as a result of his obedience, he now obtained further knowledge. The scripture continues:

"And after many days an angel of the Lord appeared unto Adam, saying: Why dost thou offer sacrifices unto the Lord? And Adam said unto him: I know not, save the Lord commanded me.

"And then the angel spake, saying: This thing is a similitude of the sacrifice of the Only Begotten of the Father, which is full of grace and truth.

"Wherefore, thou shalt do all that thou doest in the name of the Son, and thou shalt repent and call upon God in the name of the Son forevermore." (Moses 5:6-7.)

### Pattern for gaining knowledge

This then becomes the pattern by which we gain knowledge in this life. If we seek the Lord and ask for counsel, it is given. The Lord is a very wise teacher. He knows that one can't teach a student until that student is ready to listen. I think failure to understand this principle is the cause of many of our present-day ills. We too often give when the recipient doesn't want to receive. We preach when people refuse to listen. Young people complain they can't communicate with their elders when really that obligation rests upon

youth. Youth doesn't ask for counsel, but seeks to give advice of what should be done, based on limited experience. Youth doesn't seek for information, and we unwisely give youth advice that youth doesn't want in the first place. If the youth want to communicate with the older generation, let them first take the initiative themselves and ask for and seek further light and knowledge.

Likewise parents claim they can't communicate with the younger generation when really that obligation rests upon the parents. Parents too often go their own way, doing things as they've always done them. They don't ask for information to determine youth's needs in our modern world, but seek to give counsel without that guidance. Parents don't understand the pressures on modern youth and unwisely give youth advice that youth isn't ready to accept. If parents want to communicate with the younger generation, let them first take the initiative and ask youth what youth wants to know, thus learning to understand youth's problems.

### Concept of asking

This concept of asking for information and help is a fundamental method of obtaining knowledge. Although the Lord warns us of impending dangers, he doesn't give information to us until we ask for it.

"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." (Rev. 3:20.)

It is expressed even more clearly in Matthew:

"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you;

"For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened." (Matt. 7:7-8.)

This whole dispensation of the fullness of times began when a youth asked a question of the Lord as a result of reading this scripture:

"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

"But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed." (Jas. 1:5-6.)

The book of Doctrine and Covenants may be regarded as a prime example of this principle. Revelations were given as a result of questions asked. When the Lord saw the willingness of the Prophet Joseph and his associates to receive instruction, he gave them additional principles and revelations much beyond the original questions asked.

### Gaining further knowledge

Just as Adam was not given further knowledge until he had learned and practiced the law of sacrifice, so the Israelites were not qualified to have the Melchizedek Priesthood until they first learned how to use and practice the laws of the Aaronic Priesthood. The gospel of love was not given until Israel learned and practiced the preliminary law of carnal commandments, which, Paul explained to the Galatians (3:24), was a schoolmaster to bring them to Christ. In our day we must learn and practice the law of tithing before we can receive the law of consecration. We must learn and practice the laws which pertain to baptism and confirmation before we are permitted to make higher moral and ethical covenants in the temple. As Alma expressed this thought he said:

"For behold, the Lord doth grant unto all nations, of their own nation and tongue, to teach his word, yea, in wisdom, all that he seeth fit that they should have; therefore we see that the Lord doth counsel in wisdom, according to that which is just and true." (Al. 29:8.)

### Salvation for the dead

In this dispensation God has given us great responsibilities in regard to one of his higher laws, that of salvation for the dead. At first the law was only introduced to us. Temples had to be built and a people had to be gathered. The people thus gathered had to be lifted up to be worthy to enter the temples. Vital information concerning

the dead had to be gathered as best it could.

We thus learned by doing, and from this experience sought better and more efficient ways to do this work.

Now in our day we find ourselves closer to the end than ever before. God has provided for our use a greater knowledge of how to gather records of the dead. He has provided rapid methods of copying information by using microfilm. We have jet planes to speed the gathering of these records, and modern tools, such as coding, card punch, and sorting machines, optical scanners, electronic computers, and other types of modern business machines, that can be used to compile and index these records into usable form. Temples are being erected in ever-increasing numbers, and Church membership is growing to provide worthy people who can serve in those temples.

### GIANT system

It is no wonder that the present slow and cumbersome methods of preparing names for temple ordinance work are giving way to the faster, more accurate GIANT system.

Yet with all these changes, the basic principles of salvation for the dead haven't changed. We are still responsible for gathering and submitting names for our kindred dead. We still have to do the temple ordinance work for those we identify as our progenitors. We still have to maintain our own family book of remembrance with pedigree charts and family group sheets of our direct ancestors to make sure that the temple ordinance work has been done for all our loved ones.

I regard this new method as a higher system, simpler, more rapid, and more accurate than any we have had hereto-

fore. As I see it, this progress is a natural growth of that truth which God gives us as we seek for answers in further prayer:

"And I give unto you a commandment, that ye shall forsake all evil and cleave unto all good, that ye shall live by every word which proceedeth forth out of the mouth of God.

"For he will give unto the faithful line upon line, precept upon precept; and I will try you and prove you herewith." (D&C 98:11-12.)

### Further light and knowledge

Thus we have sought for further light and knowledge, having been obedient to the preliminary concepts. God has given us additional truth and new precepts to apply in our work of salvation for the dead. This is a clear voice telling us what to do. It is a well-defined path for future work. An improved way has been prepared to aid us in completing the work leading to the organization of the family of God.

May God grant that we will respond to this new concept and devote a part of our time to this important work. This new procedure has been approved by the Prophet of the Lord and has the blessing of the First Presidency. I have a personal testimony that it is approved of God, for as I pray for knowledge of this truth I have a good, warm feeling in my heart. I give you this testimony in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

### President Alvin R. Dyer

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

Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the First Council of Seventy will now address us.

### ELDER BRUCE R. McCONKIE

Of the First Council of the Seventy

We have received from the Lord a divine commission to carry his message of salvation to the nations and peoples of the earth.

We announce that God has restored to us in this day the fullness of his everlasting gospel.

We have received anew the same