

Palestine, we may not have been greatly impressed. But if we could have been at his side as he stood among the noble and great in the antemortal councils of God, or if we could be with him now as he serves in God's heavenly kingdom, the experience would likely be a much more memorable one. And what wonderful people we might discover each Sabbath day if we could see our brothers and sisters in the light of their real identity as children of God. The Prophet Joseph Smith said that "if we could look into heaven for five minutes we would learn more than by reading all of the books that have ever been written on that subject." But all of our brothers and sisters were themselves in heaven just a few years ago, and we may shortly see them there again.

It is helpful for us to remember that God, angels, spirits, and men are all of the same species in different stages of development and in various degrees of righteousness. And the apostle Paul says that we should not be "forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares." (Heb. 13:2.)

What is man

But who are these with whom we worship? King David asks a helpful question where he exclaims, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?"

"For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour.

"Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet." (Ps. 8:4-6.)

One Bible translation says, "Thou hast made him *for a little while* lower than the angels." (Italics added.) In some ways even Jesus was made lower than the angels temporarily. And what a thrill it ought to be for us each week to properly honor God and our fellow human beings as he has directed. And we are sure that someday when we come to stand before God, we will find that those who have effectively kept his commandments will be different kind of people than those who have ignored or disobeyed him. And so in imagination we might go again to stand before the fires of Mount Sinai and hear the thrilling command wherein God said, "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy." And may he help us so to do, I humbly pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen. ○

President Hugh B. Brown

Elder Sterling W. Sill, we appreciate your fine contribution.

Elder Spencer W. Kimball of the Council of the Twelve will be our concluding speaker.

ELDER SPENCER W. KIMBALL

Of the Council of the Twelve

● President McKay, brethren, brothers and sisters, and friends:

You have heard the impressive message of the Prophet of the Lord. May I express the hope that you will give heed to his admonitions and follow him on the safe and sure way to eternal life.

A stirring challenge

When I was a youngster, a stirring challenge came to me that moved me not a little. I cannot remember who issued the challenge nor under what

circumstances it came. I remember only that it struck me like a "bolt out of the blue heavens." The unknown voice postulated:

"The 'Mormon Church' has stood its ground for the first two generations—but wait till the third and fourth and succeeding generations come along! The first generation fired with a new religion developed a great enthusiasm for it. Surrounded with bitterness, calumny of a hostile world, persecuted 'from pillar to post,' they were forced

to huddle together for survival. There was good reason to expect they would live and die faithful to their espoused cause.

"The second generation came along born to enthusiasts, zealots, devotees. They were born to men and women who had developed great faith, were inured to hardships and sacrifices for their faith. They inherited from their parents and soaked up from religious homes the stuff of which the faithful are made. They had full reservoirs of strength and faith upon which to draw.

"But wait till the third and fourth generations come along," said the cynical voice. "The fire will have gone out—the devotion will have been diluted—the sacrifice will have been nullified—the world will have hovered over them and surrounded them and eroded them—the faith will have been expended and the religious fervor leaked out."

Training makes the difference

That day I realized that I was a member of the third generation. That day I clenched my growing fists. I gritted my teeth and made a firm commitment to myself that here was one "third generation" who would not fulfill that dire prediction.

And now, we are in the sixth and seventh generations from the original Church convert, and we still find stalwarts in most branches of the family, hundreds in the mission fields, numerous others in Church positions of responsibility. And I have come to realize that it is not the generation number which makes the difference but the care and exactness with which parents teach and train and fortify their offspring.

Importance of water

I grew up in a dry country. It seemed to me that hardly ever was there enough rain spread over the crop-growing period to carry us through the season—not enough water in the river to distribute between the many hungry canals and the tens of thousands of thirsty acres, not enough to irrigate all the crops.

We learned to pray for rain—we always prayed for rain.

When I was still very small, I knew that plants could not survive in a dry country more than about two or three weeks without water. I knew how to harness up the old mare to a lizard—a forked log on which a barrel was placed—and I drove the animal to the "big ditch," the Union Canal, which was a block below our home. With a bucket, I scooped up water from the small stream or the puddles and filled the barrel, and the horse dragged it back so I could pour bucketsful of the precious liquid on the roses, the violets, and other flowers and the small shrubs and hedges and new trees. Water was like liquid gold, so reservoirs became the warp and woof of the fabric of my life. Around the table, we talked of water, irrigation, crops, floods, hot, dry weeks, and cloudless skies.

We used to look for clouds somewhat as did Elijah and his people after the three-year drought.

After the dramatic experience with the prophets of Baal, Elijah had gone to the top of Mt. Carmel and had said to King Ahab, ". . . there is a sound of abundance of rain." Elijah's servant had gone to a high spot and looked for promising clouds. The first six times he looked, returned, and reported, "There is nothing," but the seventh time he reported that there was arising out of the sea a little cloud like a man's hand. Soon, the heavens were black with heavy pregnant clouds and "there was a great rain." (See 1 Kings 18.)

Dams and reservoirs

Through the warm dry summers, we always seemed to be looking for dark, heavy clouds. And every year, the clouds did amass, and the thunderstorms did come, and the dry washes did run for a few hours, and the river roared down its channel.

But the canals were still empty, and the brush and rock dams were washed down the river by the first raging torrent. Then came the call for the able-bodied men to rush to the heads of the canals to build new dams, to get the

canals full before the river water had all run down to the sea. And when working in the flood, hauling brush and trees, rocks and dirt, horses floundered and were sometimes drowned and men had narrow escapes.

Years later we built aprons of concrete that were protected by rock and wire sausages.

Later I learned that even dependable diversion dams were not enough. A reservoir was needed—a high dam that would impound the fall, winter, and spring rains and keep them stored for the later need.

Many kinds of reservoirs

And as I pondered, I came to realize that there were reservoirs of many kinds—reservoirs to store water, some to store food, as we do in our family welfare program, some like the barns and bins set up by Joseph in the land of Egypt in which to store the seven years of plenty to carry them over the seven years of drought and famine.

I realized that there should be reservoirs of knowledge to meet the future needs; reservoirs of courage to overcome the floods of fear that put uncertainty in lives; storage of physical strength to help us meet the frequent contaminations and contagions; reservoirs of goodness; reservoirs of stamina; reservoirs of faith. Yes, reservoirs of faith so that when the world presses in upon us, we stand firm and strong; when the temptations of a decaying world about us draw on our energies, sap our spiritual vitality, and seek to pull us down to the level of the worldly world, we need a storage of faith that can carry youth through the tantalizing teens and through the problems of later years. Faith to carry us over the dull, the difficult, the terrifying moments, disappointments, disillusionments, and years of adversity, want, confusion, and frustration.

The work of parents

And who are to build these reservoirs? Is this not the reason that God gave to every child two parents?

Who else but the forebears would clear the forests, plow the land, carve out the futures? Who else would set

up the businesses, dig the canals, survey the territory? Who else would plant the orchards, start the vineyards, erect the homes?

In his omniscience, our God gave to every child a father and mother to pioneer the way. And so it is those parents who sired them and bore them who are expected to lay foundations and to hold the hands through the tender years to build the barns and tanks and bins and reservoirs.

Did not the Lord, speaking of parents, say, "And they shall also teach their children to pray, and to walk uprightly before the Lord"? (D&C 68:28.)

Is it not the work of the parents to build so their children can inhabit houses they did not build; eat the fruit from trees they did not plant and grapes from vines they did not start? Parents should be soberly about their life's work of building reservoirs and helping to fill them for the children who are yet too small to hoe, or dig, or plow.

Gratitude for parents

I am grateful to my parents, for they made reservoirs for my brothers, my sisters, and myself. They filled them with prayer habits, study, activities, positive services, and truth and righteousness. Every morning and every night, we knelt at our chairs with backs to the table and prayed, taking turns. When I was married, the habit persisted, and our new family continued the practice.

Some parents are casual or careless or fail to do their duty. These constitute leaks in the dams. The story of Peter with his thumb in the dike may be a myth, but the moral is not a myth.

Lehi and Sariah

Lehi and Sariah built and filled reservoirs for their children. One said:

"I, Nephi, having been born of goodly parents, therefore I was taught somewhat in all the learning of my father; . . . having had a great knowledge of the goodness and the mysteries of God, therefore I make a record of my proceedings. . . ." (1 Ne. 1:1.)

Though two of the brothers ignored those teachings, using their own free agency, yet Nephi and others of his brothers were strongly fortified and all their lives could draw heavily on the reservoir built and filled by worthy parents.

Abraham built reservoir

Abraham built such a reservoir for his son Isaac, and it seemed never to have leaked dry, for we find his son Isaac of the patriarchs and always linked with the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And he seems to fit the words of Jeremiah:

"For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit." (Jer. 17:8.)

Enos's testimony

Jacob, another of the sons of Lehi, drew heavily from the storage inherited from his father, and he passed the same to his son Enos, who bore testimony of it:

"... I, Enos, knowing my father that he was a just man—for he taught me ... in the nurture and admonition of the Lord—and blessed be the name of my God for it.

"... I had often heard my father speak concerning eternal life, and the joy of the saints, sunk deep into my heart." (Enos 1, 3.)

Enos asked how such a miracle as forgiveness could possibly come, and the answer came from the Lord: "Because of thy faith in Christ, whom thou hast never before heard, nor seen ... thy faith hath made thee whole." (Enos 8.) Enos was able to draw heavily on the reservoir of faith his parents had set up for their children.

Example of two families

One day I met a delightful couple—faithful Latter-day Saints with a splendid family and a successful life. They told me of their family history. The husband was one of seven children of a family of active people, where the

Lord was center in their lives. All but one of the seven had remained faithful, filled honorable missions, married in the temple, and had successful, happy families, as had their parents before them. The one had strayed and had marital and other serious problems.

On the other hand, the wife was one of seven children in a contemporary family where the Church meant little in their lives, and they had bypassed tithing, prayers, and all church activities, and had ignored the spiritual part of their lives. All seven of the children had been reared in the same household, subject to the same conditions, and all seven of them but this one ignored their spiritual obligations, as their parents had done before them.

The first parents had built and filled a high, strong reservoir of habits and qualities of faith for their children. Both families had the same community backgrounds.

The second family built no reservoir of spiritual strength but depended on the runoff. The uncertain little dams, like our brush and rock ones, had washed away when the torrents flooded. There were cracks in the dam and leaks in the reservoir. In the one family, six of the seven remained righteous; in the other, six of the seven followed the careless ways of the parents in unrighteousness and only one of the seven remained faithful.

The Lord had commanded that "he that observeth not his prayers before the Lord in the season thereof, let him be had in remembrance before the judge of my people." (D&C 68:33.) And the Lord had also expressed concern and disapproval of his people in Zion who were idlers, "and their children are also growing up in wickedness; they also seek not earnestly the riches of eternity, but their eyes are full of greediness." (D&C 68:31.)

Reservoirs of two brothers

Again, as I remembered the so-called doomed third and fourth generations, there were two brothers of the second generation. Both had large families now in the sixth and seventh generations, running into many hundreds each. The one brother became disgruntled and the

other remained faithful. The children of the one in their third generation began to fall away, as did their father. Activity reduced, there were only occasional temple marriages, and few went on missions. Then in the fourth generation, there were no temple marriages, no missions, few baptisms, and very little activity in spiritual things. The fifth generation deteriorated to rank apostasy. In the sixth generation, with just an occasional exception, the whole tribe was estranged from the Church.

The ancestor had failed to keep his reservoir intact and full for his posterity to draw upon.

On the other hand, the second brother remained faithful all his life and finally "died in the harness." His third and fourth and fifth generations have also remained true and faithful with a few exceptions. The majority of the posterity of the one was out of the faith like the parents, and the majority of the other followed the parents into activity and faith. Spiritual reservoirs!

Building good homes

An editorial from the Church Section of the *Deseret News* reads:

"Good homes must rate high in companionship between children and parents, in having a well ordered household, with love between parents and between children and parents.

"They must build righteous loyalties, good character, a willingness to work, a spirit of humility, and an absence of unjust pride, and they must teach a deep and abiding faith in God."

To this end, the Lord has inspired his church to place a great new and increased emphasis on that building process.

Every family is urged to engage in regular night and morning family prayers and to devote at least one evening a week at home in the sweet family togetherness undisturbed by the world or any of its allurements. They will plan to turn off the TV and radio, leave the telephone unanswered, cancel all calls or appointments, and spend a warm, homey evening together.

While one objective is reached by merely being together, yet the addi-

tional and greater value can come from the lessons of life. The father will teach the children. Here they can learn integrity, honor, dependableness, sacrifice, and faith in God. Life's experiences and the scriptures are the basis of the teaching and this, wrapped up in filial and parental love, makes an impact nothing else can make. Thus, reservoirs of righteousness are filled to carry children through the dark days of temptation and desire, of drought and skepticism. As they grow up, the children cooperate in building this storage for themselves and the family. And so we have the home evening and the family prayers and the simple things that have been taught to us all our days.

Damaged reservoir mended

One day, long ago, we crossed a boundary into a distant city where walls and curtains separated people; and behind the walls, strange ideologies were taught and "pernicious doctrines" promulgated every day in the schools and otherwise.

Every day the children listened to schoolteachers with foreign and strange doctrines, philosophies, and ideals.

Someone said that "constant dripping will wear away the hardest stone." This I knew, so I asked about the children: "Do they retain their faith? Are they not overcome by the constant pressure of their teachers? How can you be sure they will not leave you and the simple faith in God?"

The answer was unmistakable. "We mend the damaged reservoir every night," they said. "We teach our children positive righteousness so that the false philosophies do not take hold, and should any have taken lodgment in the day, we dislodge them at night. Our children are growing up in faith and righteousness in spite of the overwhelming pressures from outside."

Generally, cracked dams can be mended and saved, and sand bags can hold back the flood; and reiterated truth, renewed prayer, gospel teachings, a flood of love, and parental interest can save the child and keep him on the right path.

A spiritual umbrella

I like to compare the home evening, family prayer, and other associated activities of the Church for the saving of the family, when they are conscientiously carried out, with an umbrella. If the umbrella is not opened up, it is little more than a cane and can give little protection from the storms of nature. Likewise, God-given plans are of little value unless they are used.

The umbrella spread out makes the silken material taut. When the rain falls, it runs off; when the snow falls, it slides off; when the hail comes, it bounces off; when the wind blows, it is diverted around the umbrella. And in like manner, this spiritual umbrella wards off the foes of ignorance, superstition, skepticism, apostasy, immorality, and other forms of godlessness.

It is my prayer that we shall all spread our spiritual umbrellas for protection of our families and keep our reservoirs full of faith and integrity; and we can promise that the third and fourth generations and indeed the tenth and the fiftieth will still be faithful, worthy, and God-fearing.

May this be our happy blessing, I pray, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen. ○

President Hugh B. Brown

Elder Spencer W. Kimball has given us an inspired closing address.

We have word from Korea. The president of the Korean Mission, the missionaries and all the members of the Church wish to be remembered, and among other things they say, "Though far away and not able to be in touch by radio or television, please consider that in spirit Korea will be a part of your General Conference." We thank them for that message.

The Brigham Young University Combined Choruses will now favor us with "Onward Ye Peoples."

Following the singing, the benediction will be offered by Elder James M. Hobbs, president of the Garden Grove Stake, after which the conference will adjourn until 2 o'clock this afternoon.

The Brigham Young University Combined Choruses sang the closing song, "Onward Ye Peoples."

The benediction was offered by President James M. Hobbs of the Garden Grove Stake.

The conference was adjourned until 2 o'clock p.m.

FIRST DAY

AFTERNOON MEETING

SECOND SESSION

The second session of the conference convened at 2 p.m., Friday, October 3, 1969.

President Alvin R. Dyer, counselor in the First Presidency, conducted the services.

The Relief Society Singing Mothers from the Cottonwood, Mill Creek, Murray and Wilford Regions, with Ellen N. Barnes conducting, furnished the choral music. Alexander Schreiner was at the organ console.

President Dyer made the following introductory remarks:

President Alvin R. Dyer

Members of the Church are convened in the Tabernacle on Temple Square in Salt Lake City, in the second general session of the One Hundred Thirty-ninth Semi-Annual Conference of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

President McKay is watching the proceedings of this session by television and has asked that I conduct at this time. He is with us in spirit, and this morning when we met with him he said: "Tell them all of my feelings."