

Monday, April 6

Third Day

men of prominence extend the hand of fellowship and cooperation.

May God bless richly these teeming millions in the Asian countries—these choice “people from afar and ye that are upon the islands of the sea” as they “listen together” to the message of salvation from the humble servants of God—local members and missionaries, all. Our message is a world message. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is a world organization.

For the Lord has declared through the Prophet Joseph Smith, “And the voice of warning shall be unto all people, by the mouths of my disciples, whom I have chosen in these last days.

“And they shall go forth and none shall stay them, for I the Lord have commanded them.” (D&C 1:4-5.)

To this I bear humble witness, in deep gratitude for the Lord’s blessing on our work in Asia and throughout the world, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen. ○

### President Harold B. Lee

We shall now hear from Elder Marion D. Hanks, Assistant to the Twelve. He will be followed by Elder Milton R. Hunter of the First Council of Seventy.

## Elder Marion D. Hanks

### *Assistant to the Council of the Twelve*

● It is a very pleasant and humbling and uplifting experience to look at your faces in this congregation and to remember with gratitude and affection the gracious kindness with which you accept our humble efforts in your stakes and missions as we go on assignment there. I know that many of the problems you deal with, many of the most difficult ones, involve homes and families, and it is of this that I would like to speak this afternoon. Few other subjects seem to me so urgently important in our time or to have such eternal relevance.

### The home and family

I speak to those who have children at home, and to those who have influence in homes where there are children, as well as to the great generation, represented by this marvelous [Logan Institute of Religion] chorus, who are making decisions now that will effectively influence their future homes and families.

In offering my witness about the home and family, I renew my expression of deep respect for children who wisely choose the better way, often in improvement upon their parents, and my deep compassion for good parents

who strive earnestly to bring up their children in the way they should go, only to have those children use their individuality and agency to follow other ways. The Lord has forcefully taught us that in his eyes “the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son.” (Ezek. 18:20.) Each accountable person must ultimately answer for his own decisions.

It is our individual responsibility, parent or child or parent-to-be, to make decisions that will improve upon the quality of our homes and our relationships within them, and each of us should be anxious and honest in his efforts to do that—each of us.

It has been written: “As are families, so is society. If well ordered, well instructed, and well governed, they are the springs from which go forth the streams of national greatness and prosperity—of civil order and public happiness.” (Thayer.)

### “Set in order your houses”

In the early days of the restoration, the leaders of the Church were instructed to “set in order your houses.” The Lord gave clear and explicit instructions to the brethren and certainly

to all the members of the Church that they be "more diligent and concerned at home, and pray always. . ." (D&C 93:50.)

The wise men of the world have added their witness to the importance of doing this. Let me quote one, Martin Buber:

"If we had power over the ends of the earth it would not give us that fulfillment of existence which a quiet, devoted relationship to nearby life can give us. If we knew the secrets of the upper worlds, they would not allow us so much actual participation in true existence as we can achieve by performing with holy intent a task belonging to our daily duties. Our treasure is hidden beneath the hearth of our own home."

It is on this strong affirmation, which I believe with all my heart, that I offer five specific suggestions as to how we may find and multiply the treasures hidden beneath the hearth of our own home.

### Family associations

First let me mention *family associations*.

What other families does your family know well? What other fathers and mothers do they see in action? Do your children ever sit at the table or in family home evening, or kneel in prayer with another family?

Parents should be deeply concerned to build friendships with other families who have wholesome ideals, whose family life is constructive and strong. Children can greatly profit through exposure to other homes, parents, and families where there is good disposition, pleasant attitude, good fun, good humor, good literature, respect and discipline, and cleanliness and prayer; where there is devotion to serving the Lord; where the gospel is lived.

With children, as all of us know, life is often a matter of following the leader, and wise parents will want their children to enjoy the influence of other families whose convictions and example will offer them strong incentives to build happy relationships in their own homes.

### Wonderful neighborhoods

As parents we have been very grateful for the wonderful neighborhoods in which we have been privileged to live, and for the strong families in whose homes our children have visited as friends or baby tenders. Many religions and viewpoints are represented among our neighbors, and our children have profited greatly and have been greatly strengthened in their gratitude for their own home and faith from seeing the quality of the homes and families of the good people among whom we are privileged to live.

Across the street, for instance, is a wonderful Latter-day Saint family into whose home I have always been grateful to have my youngsters go. The mother is a warm, gracious friend and homemaker whose surroundings reflect her own character. Her husband is a special kind of man who has inspired our children and others in the neighborhood with his creative efforts to encourage patriotism and learning and appreciation of our historical heritage. There have been contests and essays and quizzes, serious celebrations along with the parties and fun on special holidays.

### Family traditions

That leads me to the second suggestion. Families thrive on *traditions* and the *special rituals* of family life. Celebrating special days and seasons in special ways, working together, enjoying family home evenings and family councils and conversations, deciding upon and preparing for and enjoying holidays together, family meals and prayers—there are so many significant ways to build family traditions that will be remembered.

With all else that is sacred about Christmas, for instance, it can mean a beloved white star on the chimney that symbolizes the season. It may also mean that special time together on Christmas Eve, carols sung at each home in the neighborhood, up and down the block, fun and music, and the involvement of others from outside the home. Everyone participates, but especially the guests who share the

experience, who take part, who read and contribute some special thought of Christmas. The Bible teaches us that we must not be forgetful to entertain strangers, for in so doing many have entertained angels unaware. The custom of having honored guests with us in our home has given us that experience every year for many years at Christmas and other times.

Let me be personal enough to mention that the choicest memories of recent years, as we talk of ritual or celebration at our home, are the times we prepared as a family to bid a precious child farewell on her way to school. We celebrated the sad/happy event and joined our hearts together as the head of the home gave her a father's blessing and invoked the Spirit of the Lord upon her. Twice we have had that glorious privilege, and pray God that we may enjoy it with each child.

It is of such simple but significant things that family traditions are built, and unified families with them.

All of us turn reflectively to the sweet memories of our childhood at home, and each of us, now blessed with families or looking forward to that privilege, should be thinking about the memories we will provide for their future.

### Family values

Third, let me mention *family values*. What gets major attention in our homes? What do we really care about, take time for? What is worthy of our consideration, our attention, our money, our efforts? What of books and reading them? What of thoughtful acts of kindness, of sharing, involving the whole family within and without the home? What of prayer, conversation, genuine concern with each other?

In 1926 *The Improvement Era* carried a memorable statement by a college senior concerning thoughts of home and relationships there. Let me read what he wrote about his good home:

"1. I wish I could remember one Fourth of July, or one circus day, or one canyon trip, in which my father had joined us boys, instead of giving us the money and equipment to go,

while he and mother stayed home, and made us feel guilty by working while we played.

"2. I wish I could remember one evening when he had joined us in singing, or reading, or tussling, instead of always sitting so quietly with his newspaper by the reading lamp.

"3. I wish I could remember one month, or week, or day even, when he had made purposeful work out of drudgery by planning the farm work with us, instead of merely announcing each morning what that day's work would be.

"4. I wish I could remember one Sunday when he had bundled us all into the buggy and taken all to church together, instead of staying home while we went in the morning, and leaving us home while he and mother went in the afternoon.

"5. I wish that I could remember just one talk in which we had discussed together the problems and facts that trouble every growing boy, on which his clear and vigorous viewpoint might have shed such light and comfort, instead of leaving me to pick up the facts haphazardly as I might, and to solve the problems as best I could.

"And yet, my conscience would cry shame were I to blame him, for no man could ever be more devoted to his family, more anxious for their welfare, more proud of their successes. His example has been a beacon to us. He just didn't know—and there is the pity of it to me—he just didn't know that we needed *him*. He didn't know that we would rather have his companionship than the land he could leave us—that some day, maybe, we might make money for ourselves, but that never can we make for ourselves the memories that might have enriched and mellowed and molded our lives. I can't see a Fathers and Sons' outing without a lump in my throat." (*Era*, December 1926, p. 145.)

### Discipline in the home

Fourth, I speak of *discipline*—discipline in the home; and of course I am not talking about harsh punishments but of fair rules, understood and enforced, with sanctions consistently

imposed when they are broken. I am thinking of realities, of facts to be faced, of a future of attitudes toward law and rules and personal responsibility being learned. Samuel Johnson, the great British literary genius, said that he would never permit his children to "deny him"—that is, to deny to callers that he was at home when he was, busy as he was. He said, "If I teach my children to lie for me, I may be sure that they will soon conceive the notion of lying to me."

Discipline involves adult solutions to the problems that arise in living together. Wise parents do not subject each other or their children to emotional poisoning. Disagreements are handled maturely and constructively and not destructively.

Discipline begins with concern and commitment and example, like that other word that comes from the same root: disciple.

Children need standards, need guidelines of behavior, and limits. They need models who care, who are firm and fair and sensitive and consistent. Wholesome discipline can be gentle and sensitive, but often it isn't.

### Interest of wonderful mother

A daughter and I were recently discussing her return home at an hour that seemed questionable to me. I shared with her an experience with my wonderful mother. I had spent some years away at schools and missions and wars, and the two of us were now alone at home. I returned from an appointment one evening at midnight to find the light still on in Mother's little bedroom. As I had always done, I reported in to Mom, sat on her bed, and kidded with her a little. I asked her why she was still awake. "I am waiting for you," she said.

I said, "Did you wait for me while I was on a mission, Mom, or at sea, or in battle?"

Her answer was calm and sweet. She gave me that little pat on the knee that reflects the mature compassion of the wise for the ignorant, and said: "No, that would have been foolish. I just knelt down here by my bed and talked

to the Lord about my boy. I told him what kind of man I believed you to be and wanted you to be, and prayed for his watchful care of you, and then left you in his hands and went to sleep. But now you are home," she said, "and you can count on it that I will be interested in you as long as I live."

She is gone now, and it is remarkable how often I get the feeling that she is interested still, and forever will be.

### Family love

Finally I mention *family love*, expressed in so many wonderful ways. Someone once said—it's been often quoted—that the best thing a father can do for his children is to love their mother. I believe this, and that the strongest and surest base for loving others is to love the Lord and to bring the binding and blessing balm of that love into all relationships of the home.

Children have the right to learn that love is the foundation of a good family, and that love cannot exist apart from such qualities as respect, consideration, responsibility, and loyalty. Love is not self-centered and is not self-serving, but is concerned with the well-being and happiness of others. It is providing for our loved ones an atmosphere of warmth and kindness that accepts and preserves the uniqueness of each as an individual person while building the unity of the home.

Love means friendship and companionship and partnership and unity. It expresses itself in modesty, in generosity, in sensitivity, in courtesy, in counsel, in appropriate compromise. It inspires affection and confidence and trust and self-control. Love, mature love, provides a climate of wholesome, repentant, forgiving consideration. It listens. It hears and senses the needs of another. It can never be separated from character, from unselfishness, from good humor, and from every tender virtue.

### Make the effort

It must be strongly said of each of these avenues to family felicity that it does not just *happen*—it must be brought about by people who think and care and make the effort.

God help us to be more concerned with a high standard of life than with a high standard of living. God help us, while there is time, to take time to do everything we can to bring about now, or in the family we will one day have, by making wise choices now, the unity and strength and sweetness that a home is meant to have. I believe we can do that, or materially move toward bringing it about, through thoughtful family associations, memorable traditions, correct values, wise discipline, and great love.

What will we give our children to remember?

It is likely that what they will remember best is the treasure we unearth from beneath the hearth of our own home.

I know the gospel is true, and that it has been restored, and that it centers in the home. God bless us to strengthen the home, in Jesus' name. Amen. ○

### President Harold B. Lee

Elder Marion D. Hanks, Assistant to the Twelve, has just spoken to us.

We shall now hear from Elder Milton R. Hunter of the First Council of Seventy.

## Elder Milton R. Hunter

### *Of the First Council of the Seventy*

● Shortly before the Prophet Joseph Smith had completed translating the Book of Mormon, Jesus Christ and the Angel Moroni bore witness that the translation was correct and the book was true. Never in the history of the world had such astounding events occurred in relation to a book.

A few years ago an apostle said to me: "It would be a discovery of great significance if one were to find an Indian book which sustained the Book of Mormon."

### History of ancient Americans

Such a book exists; in fact, I shall present quotations from four such Indian books produced during the American colonial period that contain materials similar to those found in the Book of Mormon. The Indian writers add their witness to the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon. *Ixtlilxochitl*, an Indian prince who lived in the valley of Mexico, wrote a book containing the history of his ancestors from the time of their arrival in America until the coming of the Spaniards.

He wrote his book from documents inherited from his ancestors. Thus, the *Works of Ixtlilxochitl* constitutes a Lamanite version of the history of the ancient Americans, while the Book of Mormon represents the Nephite version.

### Similar accounts

The two books have numerous things in common; each verifies the other. For example, the Book of Mormon claims that ancient America was settled first by a group of colonizers called Jaredites, who came from the Tower of Babel.

*Ixtlilxochitl* also claims that the first settlers to come to America following the flood came from "a very high tower" or the Tower of Babel. Observe how similar the accounts are as I quote from them.

"... Jared came forth with his brother and their families, with some others and their families, from the great tower, at the time the Lord confounded the language of the people, and swore in his wrath that they should be scattered upon all the face of the earth; and according to the word of the Lord the people were scattered." (Eth. 1:33.)

*Ixtlilxochitl*, the Indian writer, puts it this way:

"And . . . men, multiplying made a . . . very high tower, in order to shelter themselves in it when the second world should be destroyed.

"When things were at their best, their language was changed and, not understanding each other, they went to different parts of the world." (*Works*