

increase our influence for good, improve our example, bless our loved ones and friends, enrich our lives, and enable us to accomplish those things that yield true personal satisfaction and build peace and happiness in our hearts. We will have joy eternally, possessing a treasure to be much desired and sought after, for the Lord gives this assurance: "Inasmuch as men do good they shall in nowise lose their reward." (D&C 58:28.)

It all starts with a single step—we decide that *we can do it*.

May we forsake all evil and take that first step to shape our lives for eternity through good habits and righteous standards of good character.

I bear solemn witness to the value

of good habits and praiseworthy character in the lives of people. The counsel quoted earlier given by our beloved prophet-leader, President Spencer W. Kimball, is very wise, timely, and needful for us to follow. This I testify to in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

President Spencer W. Kimball

We have just listened to Elder Delbert L. Stapley of the Council of the Twelve. Elder ElRay L. Christiansen, Assistant to the Twelve, will now address us. He will be followed by Elder Eldred G. Smith, Patriarch to the Church.

Elder ElRay L. Christiansen

Assistant to the Council of the Twelve

I am thankful, my brothers and sisters, for the truth that has been revealed through prophets of God, both in the past dispensations and in the present. We are blessed with ample truth regarding our origin, our mortal lives, and our destiny.

Pre-mortal life

The scriptures teach us that we lived in the spirit world before we were born into mortality. That is, we lived in the presence of God who is literally the Father of our spirits.

When the great council was held in heaven, in which all of us were involved, the Father presented his plan for peopling the earth, and for the salvation of man. Lucifer wanted to amend the plan. He proposed to destroy the agency of man and to save all mankind, that not one soul would be lost. This he would accomplish through outright force and coercion, denying all persons the right of choice.

Satan's proposal of compulsion was rejected by the Father, and Lucifer "was angry, and kept not his first estate;

and, . . . many followed after him." (Abr. 3:28.)

Fall of Satan

We must have witnessed that tragic scene when Lucifer—brilliant, capable, yet lacking in intelligence to properly apply his knowledge (along with one-third of the hosts of heaven)—rose in hateful rebellion against God. And they were expelled from heaven, retaining the malignant powers to tempt and to persuade men to disobey God.

The Father's plan, accepted by Jehovah, provided man the right of choice, that through its exercise he might become strong and advance in learning, wisdom, and righteousness by conquering weaknesses and by resisting the temptations to do wrong. Then God said: "We will take of these materials, and we will make an earth whereon these may dwell:

"And we will prove them herewith, to see if they will do all things whatsoever the Lord their God shall command them." (Abr. 3:24-25.)

Now, God said also (and this is most important to you and to me):

"Wherefore, because that Satan rebelled against me, and sought to destroy the agency of man, which I, the Lord God, had given him, and also, that I should give unto him mine own power; . . . I caused that he should be cast down;

"And he became Satan, yea, even the devil, the father of all lies, to deceive and to blind men, and to lead them captive at his will, even as many as would not hearken unto my voice." (Moses 4:3-4.)

The reality of Satan's existence

Now, the truth is that Satan lives! Indeed, some have seen his satanic majesty in spirit form.

President Harold B. Lee warned us to "make no mistake about his reality as a personality, even though he does not possess a physical body. Since the beginning of time, he, with his hosts . . . have waged relentless war to destroy the free agency of man." Those who teach that there is no devil or who declare him to be a figment of the imagination used only to frighten people are either ignorant of the facts or they themselves are deceived.

How Satan operates

How does Satan operate? What are his tactics? Using his superior knowledge, his unique powers of persuasion, half-truths, and complete lies, the evil one uses the spirit children who followed him (which were many), plus mortal beings who have yielded to his evil ways, to wage war against Jehovah and his followers; and they will, if they can, influence us to become critical and to rebel against God and his work. Thus he destroys the souls of men.

The scriptures tell us: "Satan stirreth them up, that he may lead their souls to destruction." (D&C 10:22.)

"Yea, he saith unto them: Deceive

and lie in wait to catch, that ye may destroy; behold, this is no harm. . . .

"And thus he flattereth them, and leadeth them along until he draggeth their souls down to hell; and thus he causeth them to catch themselves in their own snare.

"And thus he goeth up and down, to and fro in the earth, seeking to destroy the souls of men." (D&C 10:25-27.)

Now, the adversary knows that a little sin will not stay little, and he welcomes any and all into his kingdom by first trying to get us to lie a little, then helping us to try to justify ourselves in so doing or to cheat or to steal. Some folks are indeed induced to desecrate the Sabbath day until it becomes habitual with them. Some people begin with the use of liquor just to "relax a bit." Also, drug abuse, evil speaking, disobedience to parents, or deceiving one's own companions—these are means he has of getting us to digress from the proper course. He knows full well that, if continued, such diversions soon result in regrets, sorrows, and losses, because they lead us into greater sinfulness.

The snare of unchastity

No doubt one of the most infamous snares set out by the adversary is that of unchastity. The power to bring children into the world is God-given, and if that power is guarded and held sacred, it will result in happiness and blessings beyond measure. But if it is desecrated and polluted through illicit use, it will bring sorrow, misery, and self-condemnation.

The First Presidency of the Church a few years ago issued a warning to the Latter-day Saints and to all people generally against the dreaded sins of unchastity. Among other things, they said: "The doctrine of this Church is that sexual sin—the illicit relations of men and women—stands, in its enormity, next to murder. . . . you cannot . . . escape the punishments and

judgments which the Lord has declared against this sin. The day of reckoning will come as surely as night follows day." (*Church News*, 13 Feb. 1952, p. 16.)

How to resist Satan

How, then, may we resist the evil one? In all his evil doings, the adversary can go no further than the transgressor permits him to go, and we can gain complete power to resist the evils caused by Satan through adherence to the principles of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Members of the Church may have the blessing of the Holy Ghost, the prompter, as a companion as well, and when the Holy Ghost is really within us, Satan must remain without. Study of the scriptures, prayer, faithful living of the commandments of the Lord, the discharge of church obligations and duties, being a considerate neighbor, and using the heaven-sent program of family home evenings can provide a basis for having the Holy Ghost as a constant companion and protector, which will result in peace and happiness.

I tremble when I realize how the children of God are being tempted today, especially the youth; yet we have confidence in them. They are choice spirits. But they must realize that Jesus, not Satan, is their best friend; that happiness can come only through obedience to the commandments of God. We must help them prepare for

and achieve their divine destiny. Nevertheless, if they fall into the snares of Satan, parents, priesthood leaders, and teachers must lead them out of the pitfalls and on to higher ground through the process of repentance.

Recently our beloved president, Spencer W. Kimball, speaking to a multitude of youth, assured them that an awareness of the existence, the power, and the plans of Satan—together with a compelling and vibrant testimony of God and of the gospel and of the plans of our Father given through Jesus Christ, his Son, and the living prophets—can help them achieve unprecedented accomplishments, which may affect their lives eternally.

Yes, brothers and sisters, Satan lives. He is real. He is cunning. But you may be assured that God, our Heavenly Father, reigns over all and is merciful and forgiving to those who truly seek him.

And every man receiveth wages of him whom he listeth to obey. (See D&C 29:45.) To this I testify in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President Spencer W. Kimball

Elder ElRay L. Christiansen, Assistant to the Council of Twelve, has just spoken to us.

We shall now hear from Elder Eldred G. Smith, Patriarch to the Church.

Elder Eldred G. Smith

Patriarch to the Church

A young man just under 18 years of age was visited by a heavenly messenger who stated that he was sent from the presence of God. This messenger, Moroni, was the last prophet in the Book of Mormon. The young man was Joseph Smith.

Moroni quoted many passages of scripture, most of which declared that the time had come to prepare the way for the coming of Jesus Christ in his glory. He quoted Malachi: "Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the