

Saturday, April 1

living righteously so that he is in tune with the Spirit of the Lord.

But there is one thing that we must remember and keep clearly in mind. This doctrine was expressed by President J. Reuben Clark, Jr., many years ago in these words: The Lord has declared that "the Prophet, Seer, and Revelator for the Church . . . alone has the right to receive revelations for the Church, . . . or change in any way the existing doctrines of the Church." No other member has any such right or authority. ("When Are Church Leader's Words Entitled to Claim of Scripture?" *Church News*, 31 July 1954, p. 2.)

The person that we look to today for revelation is President Spencer W. Kimball. I testify that he does receive revelation from the Lord for the guidance of this Church. May we hearken unto his counsel and have the wisdom and good judgment to follow that counsel, for which I pray in the name of the Lord, Jesus Christ. Amen.

President N. Eldon Tanner

President Marion G. Romney, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, will now address us.

President Marion G. Romney

Second Counselor in the First Presidency

Brethren, I have a prayer in my heart that what I have to say can be said under the direction of the Spirit to our edification, and I invite you to join me in that prayer. I have in mind saying a few things about the responsibilities of priesthood bearers. My beloved brethren: I shall first speak to us fathers, concerning our responsibility to teach and train our children. I shall then speak to you Aaronic Priesthood holders.

Fathers to teach children righteousness

I recently spent Saturday night in a hotel. Sunday morning I was awakened by rowdy talking. The language was profane, filthy, and disgusting. I was shocked to learn that the speakers were mere children. Into my mind came the proverb:

"Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it." (Prov. 22:6.)

Then came the words of the revelation: "Little children . . . cannot sin, for power is not given unto Satan to tempt little children . . . that great things may

be required at the hand of their fathers." (D&C 29:46-48.)

I was saddened as I thought about the suffering which these children and their fathers will have to endure because of the neglect of the training "required at the hand of their fathers."

We fathers should never forget the Lord's decree that "inasmuch as parents have children in Zion, . . . that teach them not to understand the doctrine of repentance, faith in Christ the Son of the living God, and of baptism and the gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of the hands, when eight years old, the sin be upon the heads of the parents.

"And they shall also teach their children to pray, and to walk uprightly before the Lord." (D&C 68:25, 28.)

Referring to these instructions, the *Doctrine and Covenants Commentary* has this to say:

"Many people in the world consider that they have done their full duty to their children, when they have given them shelter, food, clothing and education . . . But Latter-day Saints have a still more important duty, as parents. They must teach their children. . . . It is

not enough to send them to Primaries, Sunday-schools, and day-schools. The parents themselves have a personal duty to perform as teachers of their children. They must see to it that the little ones are... taught to pray and walk uprightly before the Lord." (Hyrum M. Smith and Janne M. Sjodahl, *Doctrine and Covenants Commentary*, rev. ed., Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1972, p. 414.)

If we fathers would frequently read verses 40 to 50 of the ninety-third section of the Doctrine and Covenants, we would be greatly helped to keep alert to our divinely imposed responsibilities to teach and train our children.

Aaronic Priesthood responsibilities

And now let me remind you Aaronic Priesthood holders that you yourselves have a responsibility in this matter. The Lord holds you responsible for your own conduct from the time you are eight years of age.

At birth, each of you was enlightened by the Spirit of Christ. This Spirit, sometimes called conscience, gave you a sense of right and wrong even before you were eight years old. When you were baptized and confirmed, you were given the gift of the Holy Ghost to help you.

At twelve most of you received the Aaronic Priesthood. To you, God actually delegated some of his priesthood power and authority. He has so much confidence in you that he has given you authority to perform certain functions in his church—functions which the Savior himself performed. When you perform them, your actions are just as sacred and authoritative as when Jesus or his apostles performed them.

Concerning Aaronic Priesthood responsibilities, the Lord, at the time he organized the Church, said:

"The priest's duty is to preach, teach, expound, exhort, and baptize, and administer the sacrament,

"And visit the house of each member, and exhort them to pray vocally

and in secret and attend to all family duties....

"The teacher's duty," he said, "is to watch over the church always, and be with and strengthen them;...

"And see that the church meet together often, and also see that all the members do their duty." (D&C 20:46-47, 53, 55.)

The deacon's duty is to pass the sacrament, gather fast offerings, and "to warn, expound, exhort, and teach, and invite all to come unto Christ." (See D&C 20:59.)

The blessings you will receive, if you properly perform your assigned Aaronic Priesthood duties, will be glorious.

I hope you will have such a desire and a determination to so magnify your present callings that when you receive the Melchizedek Priesthood you will continue on until you are numbered among the "elect of God," which the Lord promises in the great revelation on priesthood as follows:

"Whoso is faithful unto the obtaining these two priesthoods... and the magnifying their calling, are sanctified by the Spirit unto the renewing of their bodies.

"They become the sons of Moses and of Aaron and the seed of Abraham, and the church and kingdom, and the elect of God." (D&C 84:33-34.)

As a general rule, great and noble men have been noble boys who built their foundations for greatness while in their Aaronic Priesthood years.

Virtue of Joseph

As I now refer to some of these great men, I suggest you note their virtues and resolve to emulate them.

Consider, for example, the great moral virtue of chastity demonstrated by Joseph. At seventeen years of age he was taken into Egypt as a slave and sold to "Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh's." (Gen. 37:36.)

His upright, efficient conduct so impressed Potiphar that he made him

master of all his possessions, including his home and household. Joseph was so attractive that Potiphar's wife repeatedly sought to seduce him. He, however, rejected her advances, saying, "How . . . can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" (Gen. 39:9.)

She lied about him, and he was imprisoned.

Because of his integrity, however, the Lord so blessed him that he was released from prison and became Pharaoh's chief administrator. Eventually he became an instrument in preserving the whole house of Israel. Most of us here tonight proudly claim to be numbered among his posterity.

Every priesthood bearer, Aaronic and Melchizedek, should observe Joseph's standards of chastity.

Courage of Daniel

Daniel was an example of courage.

As a youth he was taken into Babylon to be trained by King Nebuchadnezzar. At their peril, he and his three Hebrew companions refused to break their word of wisdom. They refused to eat the rich foods and other foods that were not good for them. (See Dan. 1:5-16.)

Later, Daniel further demonstrated his courage by advising two kings of interpretations the Lord had revealed to him, Daniel, of manifestations which the kings had received, manifestations which portended evil for them. Daniel told the first king that he would lose his mind, and become like a beast of the field, eating grass as an ox. He told the second king that he would be cut down from the pinnacle of power. (See Dan. 2:36-45; 4:24-27; 5:26-29.)

So advising these absolute monarchs evidenced great courage in this young man Daniel.

He evidenced superb courage of another kind when, in defiance of the king's edict, he chose to be thrown into the lions' den rather than neglect to pray to his Father in Heaven. (See Dan. 6:7-23.)

Faith of Nephi

The great virtue of faith was demonstrated by Nephi when as a youth he said:

"I will go and do the things which the Lord hath commanded, for I know that the Lord giveth no commandments unto the children of men, save he shall prepare a way for them that they may accomplish the thing which he commandeth them." (1 Ne. 3:7.)

This was his response to the commandment the Lord gave through his father, Lehi, that he and his brethren return to Jerusalem to obtain the records from Laban.

When his brother Laman failed to persuade Laban to part with the records and he and Lemuel were about to return to their father in the wilderness without them, Nephi said:

"As the Lord liveth, and as we live, we will not go down unto our father in the wilderness until we have accomplished the thing which the Lord hath commanded us." (1 Ne. 3:15.)

He then persuaded them to get the gold and silver and other riches they had left in the land of their inheritance and offer them to Laban in exchange for the records. This they did, to no avail.

Nephi then said to his complaining brothers, as they urged that they return to their father in the wilderness without the records:

"Let us go up again unto Jerusalem, and let us be faithful in keeping the commandments of the Lord; for behold he is mightier than all the earth, then why not mightier than Laban and his fifty, yea, or even than his tens of thousands?" (1 Ne. 4:1.)

Nephi then, led by the Spirit of the Lord, went in alone and came out with the records.

Great was the faith of Nephi.

In case some of you Aaronic Priesthood bearers feel that you are too young to assume the responsibility of your calling, consider these quotations from the writings of Mormon:

"About the time that Ammaron hid up the records unto the Lord, he came unto me, (I being about ten years of age, . . .) and . . . said unto me: . . .

"When ye are about twenty and four years old I would that ye should remember the things that ye have observed concerning this people; and . . . go to the . . . hill which shall be called Shim; and there have I deposited . . . the sacred engravings concerning this people. . . .

"Take the plates of Nephi . . . and . . . engrave on [them] all the things that ye have observed concerning this people." (Morm. 1:2-4.)

These instructions Mormon received when he was but ten years old.

Five years later he wrote:

"And I, being fifteen years of age . . . , there began to be a war again between the Nephites and the Lamanites. And notwithstanding I being young, was large in stature; therefore the people of Nephi appointed me . . . the leader of their armies.

"Therefore it came to pass that in my sixteenth year I did go forth at the head of an army of the Nephites, against the Lamanites." (Morm. 1:15; 2:1-2.)

It would seem that an Aaronic Priesthood bearer inclined to hesitate to perform the duties of his office because of his youth could take courage from the exploits of Mormon.

Joseph Smith

In his youth Joseph Smith, the prophet, exhibited all the noble virtues other boys who became great men have evidenced during their Aaronic Priesthood-age years. He possessed the morality demonstrated by Joseph in Egypt, the courage of Daniel, the faith of Nephi, and the reliability of Mormon.

At fourteen years of age, he had the faith to act upon the promise of James: "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." (James 1:5.)

So acting, he received his first vision.

Courage and reliability he demonstrated in his reaction to the abuse which followed his telling about that vision.

"I soon found," he wrote, ". . . that my telling the story had excited a great deal of prejudice against me among professors of religion, and was the cause of great persecution, which continued to increase; and though I was an obscure boy, only between fourteen and fifteen years of age, and my circumstances in life such as to make a boy of no consequence in the world, yet men of high standing would take notice sufficient to excite the public mind against me, and create a bitter persecution; and this was common among all the sects—all united to persecute me. . . .

"It was nevertheless a fact that I had beheld a vision. I have thought since, that I felt much like Paul, when he made his defense before King Agrippa, and related the account of the vision he had when he saw a light, and heard a voice; but still there were but few who believed him; some said he was dishonest, others said he was mad; and he was ridiculed and reviled. But all this did not destroy the reality of his vision. He had seen a vision, he knew he had, and all the persecution under heaven could not make it otherwise; and though they should persecute him unto death, yet he knew, and would know to his latest breath, that he had both seen a light and heard a voice speaking unto him, and all the world could not make him think or believe otherwise.

"So it was with me. I had actually seen a light, and in the midst of that light I saw two Personages, and they did in reality speak to me; . . . and I could not deny it." (Joseph Smith 2:22, 24-25.)

Follow great virtues

These great virtues, you young Aaronic Priesthood brothers, are worth

following if we would be successful as the great men who have preceded us. I bear my testimony to you that if we will do what these boys did, we will be great men. And I bear that testimony to you in the name of Jesus Christ, our Redeemer. Amen.

President N. Eldon Tanner

President Marion G. Romney of the First Presidency has just spoken to us.

We would like the congregations, wherever you are, to rise and join with the Choir in singing, "How Firm A Foundation."

President N. Eldon Tanner

First Counselor in the First Presidency

It is now my privilege and responsibility to address you for just a few minutes. I certainly have enjoyed—and I hope all the young men and priesthood holders, wherever you are, have enjoyed and appreciated—the talks that have been given and this fine music which we have heard.

Important to prepare for callings

As I look out upon those gathered here tonight and think of the thousands listening in, I realize that I am talking to priesthood leaders, priesthood holders, and those who will assume positions of leadership in the future. Those who are leaders now should already have become men of integrity, men with character, men whose ideals and standards are of the highest quality, worthy of emulation by those whom they lead. So tonight I, along with the others who have addressed you, want to direct my remarks to the young men who will come up through the ranks of the Aaronic Priesthood and eventually take over the jobs we older fellows now hold. Yes, no doubt one of you will some day be standing here at this pulpit as one of the General Authorities of the Church. One of you may even become the President, and certainly as you remain true and faithful and keep the command-

ments, you will all advance in the kingdom of God.

What an awesome thought! How necessary and important it is that we all continually strive to improve ourselves and prepare for the day when a call might come to serve in a new or more responsible position! The whole purpose of our existence in mortality is to build the kingdom of God and to prove ourselves worthy to go back into his presence. You are here tonight because you sense this responsibility and want to be numbered among those whom the Lord will call his own.

What must you do that you are not already doing? As I think about this and the requirements that we must meet in order to be capable and profitable servants, it seems to boil down to a matter of being worthy of a proper recommendation by someone in authority.

The First Presidency and some other General Authorities are currently preparing for a series of area conferences in far-flung locations where we have members of the Church. As we make these preparations it is necessary that we have passports or visas or tourist cards in order to satisfy the requirements of the governments of the countries which we will visit. These credentials must be properly endorsed by the respective authorities involved,