

President Romney

We shall now be pleased to hear from Elder L. Tom Perry, a member of the Council of the Twelve

Apostles. He will be followed by Elder Dean L. Larsen, a member of the Presidency of the First Quorum of the Seventy.

Elder L. Tom Perry

Early Saints leave Missouri

My attention has been directed toward the great history of this Church during this, its sesquicentennial year. There is a period of Mormon history which has always been a great source of inspiration to me. Emerging out of what I would believe the darkest period of trial and hardship, there broke forth a light of beauty and accomplishment seldom witnessed in the events of mankind.

The efforts of the Church to settle in Missouri were met with severe opposition by the residents of that state. Lands were purchased, homes constructed, fields planted, and personal property acquired, only to have most of it stolen from them. In the dead of winter they were forced to leave the state under threat of their lives. All of the members of the First Presidency of the Church were imprisoned at Liberty awaiting trial. The only leadership they could give the suffering Saints was some encouragement through the mail, when it was allowed to be sent.

The Prophet Joseph Smith was forced to remain the long winter months from November to April awaiting trial at the Liberty Jail. When evidence could not be found against the prisoners, they were allowed to escape. They made their way to the Saints, who had been treated kindly by the residents of Quincy, Illinois. How the Prophet's heart must have plunged to the bottom of his soul as he came upon the suffering Saints encamped on both sides of the Mississippi River, some

living in tents or dugouts and some shelterless under the open sky, without homes, comforts, or sufficient food. Disease had taken a heavy toll, and sickness reached out into every family.

Nauvoo

Even though the Prophet was haggard, pale, and penniless after his long confinement, it did not take him long to make his leadership felt. He found a swamp where the Mississippi makes a horseshoe bend. It was practically deserted; there were only a half-dozen houses. It was a place in which nobody seemed to have a great interest. The owners of this mosquito-infested swamp were happy to sell the land to the penniless Saints for promissory notes, payable over a term of years.

"Characteristic of the Prophet, he renamed the place to meet his desires. Not what it was, but what, with the faith and work of man, the region might become—'Nauvoo, the City Beautiful'" (William E. Berrett, *The Restored Church*, Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1965, p. 149).

The faith of the Prophet rallied the people, and a special zeal seldom witnessed in all of man's history swept over this people. "That deep and abiding strength was to change a swamp into a great city; miserable shelters into splendid houses; penniless people to the most prosperous citizens of Illinois. That missionary zeal was to carry the gospel into

many lands and double the membership of the Church. And all of this in the short time of five years!

"What a program. And what an accomplishment! A people stripped of all earthly possessions, money, homes, factories, lands, rebuilt in five short years, a city-state which was the envy of long-settled communities" (Berrett, *The Restored Church*, p. 150). A miracle had occurred!

Colonel Thomas L. Kane, in a speech before the Historical Society of Philadelphia, gave this graphic picture of Nauvoo:

"A few years ago, ascending the upper Mississippi in the autumn, when its waters were low, I was compelled to travel by land past the region of the rapids. My road lay through the Half Breed tract, a fine section of Iowa, which the unsettled state of its land titles had appropriated as a sanctuary for coiners, horse thieves and other outlaws. I had left my steamer at Keokuk at the foot of the lower falls, to hire a carriage and to contend for some fragments of a dirty meal with the swarming flies, the only scavengers of the locality.

"From this place to where the deep water of the river returns my eye wearied to see everywhere sordid vagabonds and idle settlers, and a country marred without being improved by their careless hands. I was descending the last hillside upon my journey, when a landscape in delightful contrast broke upon my view. Half encircled by a bend of the river, a beautiful city lay glittering in the fresh morning sun. Its bright new dwellings [were] set in cool green gardens ranging up around a stately dome-shaped hill, which was crowned by a noble marble edifice, whose high tapering spire was radiant with white and gold. The city appeared to cover several miles, and beyond it, in the background, there rolled off a fair country chequered by

the careful lines of fruitful husbandry. The unmistakable marks of industry, enterprise and educated wealth everywhere, made the scene one of singular and most striking beauty" (*Memoirs of John R. Young, Utah Pioneer, 1847*, Salt Lake City: The Deseret News, 1920, p. 31).

Accomplishments of early Saints

Each time I visit Nauvoo today, my heart swells with pride at the accomplishments of the early Saints. I marvel at its beauty, as a portion of this miracle city has been restored under the careful direction of Dr. LeRoy Kimball.

I reflect on what made this city so different from others I have studied in history. It is then that I remember these were special people; they were dedicated to live the principles of the Lord, our Savior. They followed His admonition when He said,

"Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?

". . . For your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.

"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matt. 6:31-33).

Deep and abiding faith

Emerging out of the struggles to build Nauvoo are two fundamental principles which, when I think about them, are as necessary for our success today in 1980 as they were in 1840. First, there was a deep and abiding faith in the gospel of Jesus Christ. I marvel how tents and dugouts changed to beautiful brick and frame homes. The difference was the voice of a prophet rallying the Saints to put their trust in the Lord.

I hear the cries today of breakdowns in our system. There is a shortage here and a problem there, and every time I analyze the difficulty, I find it to be man-made. The Lord's supply system continues to work as it always has. The resources are still available in abundance. We worry about energy today, and some wonder if a miscalculation has been made in the heavens and the supply will not last until the Millennium. There is only one energy shortage existing today, and that is what exists between our own two ears.

How was this great faith developed in the hearts of our pioneer forefathers? They understood a basic tenet of the gospel. The Lord has required some principles to be accepted by faith by His children here on earth. Those principles which require acceptance by faith, however, are supported by that for which we have sure knowledge. There has grown through the generations a revealed truth that has been tested, analyzed, studied, and practiced. The early Saints understood that a knowledge of the law of the Lord, as contained in the scriptures, was the best foundation on which they could build their faith. They understood that the more the gap was closed between the principles which must be accepted by faith and those which could be obtained by knowledge, the stronger would be their faith.

In all of the history of mankind there has never been a time when we have had a greater opportunity to increase our knowledge of the law of the Lord. Each new season brings new lesson manuals, training aids, written words of inspiration, topical guides, cross-referencing systems, recorded tapes, etc., to increase our effectiveness in our study of the scriptures. The Church has even moved to a consolidation of the Sunday meeting schedules to allow additional hours at home on the Lord's

day to study together as families. Surely there can be no excuse for us not to become the best informed generation of all time in our knowledge of the scriptures. Never before have we had opportunity such as we have today to become real gospel scholars.

Industry

The second principle taught to us by our pioneer forefathers was that of industry. They understood that something can never be generated from nothing. It was the united efforts of all that produced the greatest results. I wonder where Nauvoo would have been after five years if they had been worrying about paid vacations, coffee breaks, working too hard for what they received, unemployment benefits, etc. They only understood the principle that combined labor produces wealth. To survive, you must produce more than you consume. The wealth of this Church will always be measured by the ability of its members to work together, not by assets listed on a balance sheet.

The skill of one will be added to the skill of another as we work side by side. I often marvel at the number of special educations I have received through Church service. Calls to the welfare farm have taught me the art of gardening; work assignments on chapels have developed manual skills of carpentry, plumbing, painting, and cleaning. Church calls have given me an understanding of organization and administration. Missionary service taught the fine points of how to sell. Church service has given me a much more liberal, well-rounded education than a college degree could possibly bestow. The benefits to me have been multiplied a thousandfold over that which I would have received if I'd been paid for that service.

Then there is so much fun in Church service. I remember one hot

summer evening when we were engaged in a ward building-fund project. We had contracted to supply the food service at a state fair. I was assigned to the dishwashing detail along with Bay Hutchings, another member of our ward. We were working across the counter from the customers who were enjoying our delicious food. There was a call from the cashier's cage: "Dr. Hutchings, the hospital is calling you." Suddenly all the forks were suspended in midair. The customers turned one to another and exclaimed, "A doctor washing dishes?" We had to immediately explain that this was a Church building-fund project. No one was being paid for his services. The waiters, cooks, dishwashers, and busboys were doctors, lawyers, merchants, chiefs—all having one great time working together for our project. We must never forget that the wealth, the strength, the security of the Church is our ability to labor together. Let us be a righteous example of this fundamental principle in our homes, our places of employment, our neighborhoods, our communities, our states, and our nations.

Formula for success

The history of the Lord's dealings with His children, as revealed through His prophets, has clearly outlined a formula for success for our mortal experience. First, it is to have

a foundation in our mortal experience, a deep and abiding faith in the gospel of Jesus Christ. Our value system must conform to His, must be consistent with His teachings.

Second is the process of laboring together to use the power of a child of God to build a better world. In this jubilee year let the trump sound again from the tops of the mountains. Let us rejoice and appreciate the accomplishments of the past. But more importantly, let this be a year of determined effort to teach correct principles with all of the energy we can muster. Let us learn to work together to make our homes places of love and beauty, our communities clean and wholesome, our nation fit for the blessings of the Lord, and the world a place where peace and understanding can dwell in the hearts of all mankind.

I want to add my testimony to this historic conference. God lives. Jesus is the Christ. The greatest joy we can find on this earth is conforming our lives to His principles. This I humbly pray, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

President Marion G. Romney

Elder L. Tom Perry, a member of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, has just spoken to us.

We shall now be pleased to hear from Elder Dean L. Larsen, a member of the Presidency of the First Quorum of the Seventy.

Elder Dean L. Larsen

My comments today will bear upon President Kimball's challenge to us to rise above the plateaus we have been on. They will relate also to the added flexibility and freedom we are being encouraged to assume in the new pattern of Sunday worship and weekday activity. I'll speak to the

principle which undergirds these new developments. Latter-day Saints understand that mortal life was purposefully designed to place us in circumstances where we can be individually tested and where, by the exercise of the agency God has given us, we can determine what our future