

tates, I whittle or sand it down by learning more about the position and educating myself in the work. Then the yoke becomes comfortable and easy, as the Lord said it would. Of course, the cushion or pad that spans the neck is the knowledge we have of the divinity of this great latter-day work, our testimony of the gospel. That is what really cushions the shocks and jolts as we carry our burdens down the rocky road of life.

My present yoke chafes a bit right now, but I'll keep sanding away until I can communicate better in that beautiful Spanish language. I rejoice in this

yoke. I delight in carrying this burden for as long as my duty requires.

I know that God lives and responds to our petition. I know that Jesus Christ is my Master, our Savior and Redeemer. I pledge to my Heavenly Father and to my Brethren my full devotion to this present yoke of service, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

### **President Benson**

We will now be pleased to hear from Elder Philip T. Sonntag, who also was sustained as a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy at the April conference.

## Elder Philip T. Sonntag

### **Testimony**

This morning at an early hour, the telephone rang, and after answering the phone, I heard a little voice say, "I love you, Grandpa. Give a good talk." I must confess, brothers and sisters, that I have been restless over this assignment because perhaps my choice of words or my inability to express myself or to emphasize the proper things would not convey the feelings of my heart. I would like to bear my testimony to you that I know that God lives. I know that God lives; I know that Jesus Christ is the Savior and Redeemer of the world, the Son of God, the Prince of Peace; that Joseph Smith saw what he said he saw, heard what he said he heard; and that because of the vision of the Father and the Son, the kingdom of God has been established upon the face of the earth. This is that kingdom, even The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the only church upon the face of the earth that bears his authority. I know that the Book of Mormon is true and contains a fulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

I bear my witness to you that we have a living prophet standing at the

head of this great church. I sustain him with all my heart and soul. I sustain President Romney and President Hinckley and the Twelve and the other Brethren. I am honored to sit in council with them, to be counted among them, and to add my voice as a special witness of the divinity of this great work.

### **Appreciation for contributions and missionaries**

We have had the privilege of being involved in the South Pacific for the past few months. It has been a glorious privilege to labor with President [Robert L.] Simpson and President [Devere] Harris in the presidency of that area, to feel of the faith and the excitement that are taking place in that area of the world.

Let me share an experience with you of the faith and the appreciation of the Saints in the islands of the sea for the contributions you have made in strengthening and building their lives; for your prayers; for your sons and your daughters, and for the great missionary couples who have been sent to their lands to teach the message of the restoration. Tears of thanks and of faith and

of love have been shed, expressions of gratitude given for your sending these missionaries to teach them of Jesus Christ and his ways.

### First chapel for aborigines

As a result of your great contributions, a new chapel is being built far away from any civilization, the first one for the aborigine people. It is an exciting time for them, and for the area in the north territories of Australia. It is so exciting that even the Lord Mayor of Darwin is coming to attend the dedication, spending a whole day. Missionary couples have been busy preparing the people. One man who owns a sheep ranch in Australia equal to the size of Utah and who was firmly convinced that the average native could learn nothing, came recently to a special meeting and there he sat as the aborigines' young children sang "I Am a Child of God" (*Sing with Me*, B-76), tears streamed down his face, and he said as he walked out of the meeting, "If I hadn't seen it, I never would have believed it." Faith, strength, kindness from a people who made this possible. A great appreciation from a people who could not do what they did without you.

### Outpouring of the Spirit

We see on the islands of Tonga some three hundred missionaries, most of them native young men and women, the young men wearing their white shirts and ties and their ta'ovalas, the young sister missionaries dressed in long dresses, hair in place, their name badges worn proudly, as they go from home to home in the most humble of circumstances to teach the message of the gospel of Jesus Christ. The glow in those brown faces as they bear witness of the divinity of this work stirs the very souls of men.

We left Ha'apai to go by boat to a small island where few General Authorities have ever visited. We were greeted at the dock by the Saints. They embraced us and tears flowed freely

down their cheeks. We walked from the docks to a chapel. As we neared the building, which is used both for a school and a church, we heard the voices of children singing in their native tongue, "We thank thee, O God, for a prophet, to guide us in these latter days" (*Hymns*, no. 196). We walked into the chapel humbled. There, filling the chapel to capacity, were members of the Church and friends alike gathered from around the island to hear the messages that were to be given.

There was a rich outpouring of the Spirit, and at the conclusion of the meeting we were invited to the rear of the building where a special ceremony of welcome was given to us. It was a beautiful service. A representative of the government was there, and he spoke and thanked the Church and General Authorities for the tremendous contributions they had made in educating, strengthening, and building the lives of the people. He was not a member of the Church, but he was touched by the Spirit of the Lord. In their greatest tribute, they gave us a huge roasted pig. They said they would like to lavish us with gifts, but this was the best they had.

They took us to a feast, a table spread with the finest that the island could produce. After the feast they picked up the pig, carried it to the ship, and insisted that we take it with us on our journey. We started walking back to the ship. I was walking with the island official and I said, "You would make a wonderful member of the Church." He said, "I am ready. I felt the Spirit, but just must get rid of a habit." I reminded him that it was just as easy to get rid of the habit today as it would be tomorrow or next week. And he said, "I'll try; I'll try."

### Blessings of our contributions

I wonder sometimes if we appreciate what the few dollars we give to the Church for building the kingdom does for others. When I think of the great tithing contributions and other contri-

butions that go to bless that land, when I look at the homes that have been built because of the welfare program after their island was devastated because of a hurricane, my heart is filled with joy for a people who love the Lord, who are willing to give of their own means for the furthering of the kingdom of God.

God bless you, my dear brothers and sisters, as you go forth in this great work, that you will remember who you are and give freely and cheerfully of that which our Heavenly Father has given to you, that your testimony by your faith will bear witness to all the world that this work is true, in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

### President Benson

Elder Philip T. Sonntag, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy, has just addressed us.

The choir and congregation will now join in singing "Shall the Youth of Zion Falter?," following which Elder John H. Groberg, a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy will address us.

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The choir and congregation sang "Shall the Youth of Zion Falter?"

Elder John H. Groberg spoke without further announcement.

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## Elder John H. Groberg

How I pray for the Spirit of the Lord to continue to be with all of us, as it has been thus far.

The injunction from God to "remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy" (Exodus 20:8) has been in force throughout human history. There is power in keeping the Sabbath day holy. I testify that God lives, that we are his children, that he loves us, and that he gives us commandments so he can bless us as we keep them and thereby have joy. As we keep the Sabbath day holy he will bless us, and we will achieve a quiet power for good as individuals, as families, and as nations, that we cannot obtain in any other way.

Let me give two examples:

### Tonga—first to greet Sabbath

The small island kingdom of Tonga lies immediately next to the international date line, so it is the first country in the world to greet the Sabbath day. It is a small country and, in the counting of the world, a poor country. But years ago a wise Tongan king decreed that the Sabbath would be kept holy in Tonga forever.

Modern civilization has come in many ways to Tonga. If one goes to the capital of Nuku'alofa on a weekday, he finds the usual heavy traffic of trucks and cars and the bustle of thousands of shoppers making their regular purchases from well-stocked stores and markets. One sees people line up to view the latest movies and to rent videos. One can watch modern buses whisk tourists off to catch their jet planes, or observe the speed and clarity of a satellite call to the United States. The streets are crowded and business is good. You might wonder, "What is so different about this town from hundreds of others like it throughout the world?"

But when Sunday dawns on the kingdom of Tonga, a transformation takes place. If one goes downtown, he sees deserted streets—no taxis or buses or crowds of people. All the stores, all the markets, all the movie theaters, all the offices are closed. No planes fly, no ships come in or out, no commerce takes place. No games are played. The people go to church. Tonga is remembering to keep the Sabbath day holy.

It is significant that the first country in the world to greet the holy Sabbath keeps the Sabbath holy.