

with our means and inclined to be serviceable to others? Do we acknowledge our faults and shortcomings and seek forgiveness from those whom we have wronged or offended?

Let me repeat again that those who do the Lord's work demonstrate it by the fruits of their labors. Analyzing and criticizing others, either from a historical perspective or from what we may view of a contemporary life, will be of little consequence unless it balances with the Lord's assessment. The Apostle Paul said:

"But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. . . .

"So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.

"Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way" (Romans 14:10, 12-13).

### Testimony

I bear testimony that Joseph Smith was a prophet of God through whose instrumentality the Lord has reestablished his true church and the only plan of life that can bring eternal happi-

ness and exaltation. I further testify that those who have succeeded him in his prophetic role down to the present day have been men who are chosen and endowed with power and authority to accomplish the Lord's work.

I humbly acknowledge the responsibility I share with you to make manifest in my life the fruits of the gospel of Jesus Christ. And to those who may question the validity of this work, I leave the Savior's challenge: "Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by his fruit" (Matthew 12:33).

In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

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The Choir sang "Ye Simple Souls Who Stray" without announcement.

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### President Hinckley

Elder Dean L. Larsen, a member of the Presidency of the First Quorum of the Seventy, has addressed us, followed by the choir singing "Ye Simple Souls Who Stray."

Elder Marvin J. Ashton of the Council of the Twelve Apostles will be our concluding speaker.

## Elder Marvin J. Ashton

### Peace that surpasseth all understanding

Many years ago I heard a story that impressed me. I share it with you today as I endeavor for a few minutes to direct your thinking toward the important word *peace*. A beautiful little blind girl was sitting on the lap of her father in a crowded compartment in a train. A friend seated nearby said to the father, "Let me give you a little rest," and he reached over and took the little girl on his lap.

A few moments later the father said to her, "Do you know who is holding you?"

"No," she replied, "but you do."

Some might be inclined to say, "What a perfect trust this child had in her father." Others may say, "What a wonderful example of love." And still others might say, "What an example of faith." To me it indicates a beautiful blending of all of these principles, which brought a priceless inner peace to the child. She knew she was safe because she knew her father *knew* who was holding her. Affection, respect,

and care over the years had placed in this little girl's heart a peace that surpasseth all understanding. She was at peace because she knew and trusted her father.

### **Trust and relationship with our Heavenly Father**

We plead for peace in our prayers and thoughts. Where is peace? Can we ever enjoy this great gift while wars, rumors of wars, discord, evil, and contention swirl all around us? The answer is yes. Just as the little blind girl sat on the stranger's lap with perfect contentment because her father knew him, so we can learn to know our Father and find inner peace as we live his principles.

It is very significant that when Jesus came forth from the tomb and appeared to his disciples, his first greeting was, "Peace be unto you" (Luke 24:36). Peace—not passion, not personal possessions, not personal accomplishments nor happiness—is one of the greatest blessings a man can receive. Our trust and our relationship with our Heavenly Father should be one similar to that of the little blind girl and her earthly father. When sorrow, tragedy, and heartbreaks occur in our lives, wouldn't it be comforting if when the whisperings of God say, "Do you know why this has happened to you?" we could have the peace of mind to answer "No, but you do."

### **Worshipping in peace**

Certainly peace is the opposite of fear. Peace is a blessing that comes to those who trust in God. It is established through individual righteousness. True personal peace comes about through eternal vigilance and constant righteous efforts. No man can be at peace who is untrue to his better self. No man can have lasting peace who is living a lie. Peace can never come to the transgressor of the law. Commitment to God's laws is the basis for peace. Peace is something we earn. It is not a gift.

Rather, it is a possession earned by those who love God and work to achieve the blessings of peace. It is not a written document. It is something that must come from within.

The Salt Lake Valley was settled by those who trekked over the plains under extremely difficult conditions so they could worship God in peace. Left behind was Nauvoo, a deserted city desecrated by the uninformed, misinformed, embittered enemies of the Church. Peace had flown from the City Beautiful. What a price some of those who have gone before us have paid for the privilege of worshipping in peace.

### **In times of adversity**

Never will peace and hatred be able to abide in the same soul. Permanent peace will elude those individuals or groups whose objective is to condemn, discredit, rail at, or tear down those whose beliefs are different from their own. These people live by hatred and would destroy others insofar as it is in their power to do so. True Christians have no time for contention. Lasting peace cannot be built while we are reviling or hating others. Those who preach hate, ridicule, and untruths cannot be classified as peacemakers. Until they repent they will reap the harvest to which those engaged in the business of hatred are entitled. Feelings of enmity and malice can never be compatible with feelings of peace.

"The wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt.

"There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked" (Isaiah 57:20–21).

However, only those at peace can properly cope with accusations and slander. Inner peace is the prized possession of God's valiant. A testimony of the truthfulness of the teachings of our Savior gives personal peace in times of adversity.

### **“A triumph of principles”**

There are those who dangle false enticements of peace before us. These are they who are greedy and power hungry. “Be not deceived; God is not mocked: . . . He that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption” (Galatians 6:7-8). Inner peace flees from those who sacrifice virtue for sexual promiscuity. There are some who advocate and promote new sexual exploits under the guise of “relief from stress.” These people are only sowing unto the flesh and peddling devilish deeds. Wickedness, no matter how it is labeled or camouflaged, will eventually bring grief and heartache and wipe out inner peace.

Peace will never be the possession of those who participate in vulgar conversations and behavior. Let us not be planters of poisonous seeds. Rather let us nourish roots of peace in the soil of righteous principles.

It was Ralph Waldo Emerson who declared the mighty truth, “Nothing can bring you peace but yourself. Nothing can bring you peace but a triumph of principles” (“Self-Reliance,” in *Ralph Waldo Emerson: Essays and Lectures* [New York: The Library of America, 1983], p. 282).

### **Eternal personal quest**

Peace is not a purchase away. Peace is not when the final installment is paid. Peace is not when marriage comes nor when all the children are enrolled in school. Peace is not when the last child returns from the mission field. Peace is not when an inheritance is received. Peace is not when the scars of death start to heal.

True peace must not be dependent upon conditions or happenings. Peace must stem from an inward contentment built upon trust, faith, and goodwill toward God, fellowmen, and self. It must be constantly nurtured by the individual who is soundly anchored to the gospel of Jesus Christ. Only then can a person realize that the trials and tribula-

tions of daily life are less important than God’s total goodness.

Lasting peace is an eternal personal quest. Peace does come from obedience to the law. Peace comes to those who develop character and trust.

### **Foundation of eternal principles**

We have a young grandson who loves gymnastics. He is progressing well and delights in showing us what he can do. While he develops these performance skills his body is maturing in limberness and strength. The last time he invited me to feel the muscles in his arms, I congratulated him. I was proud. As he jumped away from me (gymnasts, it seems, are always jumping and springing), I was impressed with the thought that his parents, grandparents, teachers, and others have an obligation to teach him one of life’s great truths. Flabbiness of character should always be more of a concern than flabbiness of muscles. Body building and body conditioning are worthwhile goals, but there is more needed to gain true inner peace. We must blend balance in our lives and increase in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man (see Luke 2:52) to reach our full potential.

No peace will be lasting unless it is built upon the solid foundation of eternal principles such as love of God, love of neighbor, and love of self. Those who love their neighbors can bring peace and happiness to many. Love can build bridges to understanding and tear down walls of suspicion and hate. Christlike love can bring peace into any neighborhood. With that kind of love each of us can help resolve petty differences, be they in the home or community.

### **Peace within ourselves**

While living in another nation just before World War II was to begin, a leading government official had been working hard to maintain peace for his country. He had in his hands a signed document guaranteeing peace. After

negotiating in good faith, he seemingly had achieved that for which millions of his countrymen had been hoping and praying. He publicly assured all of us that it was peace for our times.

Soon, however, he realized that he had been deceived. The men with whom he had negotiated were selfish, greedy, and power hungry. They were only bargaining for time to solidify their position. War came.

We learned that peace can never be achieved when we deal with those who deceive and ignore the basic principles taught by our Savior.

At such times external events make it even more imperative that we seek peace within ourselves. It is futile to seek it from outward sources.

### **“The bond of perfectness and peace”**

It was George C. Marshall who wisely said, “We must take the nations of the world as they are, the human passions and prejudices of people as they exist, and find some way to secure . . . a peaceful world.”

Peace must be a triumph of principles. Selfishness and lack of patience seem to block the way. We cry out today with urgency, “Have mercy, O Lord, upon all the nations of the earth; have mercy upon the rulers of our land; may those principles, which were so honorably and nobly defended, namely, the Constitution of our land, by our fathers, be established forever” (D&C 109:54). The respected Winston Churchill once said, “The day will come when . . . victorious nations will plan and build in justice and freedom a house of many mansions, where there will be room for all.”

We would pray earnestly today that all leaders of nations, large and small, free or oppressed, would know: “And above all things, clothe yourselves with the bond of charity, as with a mantle, which is the bond of perfectness and peace” (D&C 88:125).

### **Develop loyalty and love**

Despite the challenges of curbing federal budget deficits and riots and terrorism, of controlling the arms race and inflation, and of winning an ambitious battle for tax reform, thank God America is at peace. Thank God for those other nations who teach and live in peace. Thank God for worthy men who work to keep it that way. Our responsibility as a nation and its people is to continue to take the lead in furthering peace on earth and goodwill toward all men. (See Luke 2:14.) To all mankind worldwide who would anxiously engage themselves in lasting peace, we share: “But learn that he who doeth the works of righteousness shall receive his reward, even peace in this world, and eternal life in the world to come” (D&C 59:23).

The individual, the home, the Church, the school, the government are the fundamental institutions upon which lasting peace depends. The main purpose of schools must always be to develop character, to develop loyalty to the government, loyalty to the home, and loyalty to the individual. This is what real peace is all about—internal and external. No peace, even though temporarily achieved, will be lasting unless it is built upon the solid foundation of such eternal principles as love of God, love of neighbor, love of self. Most men yearn for peace, cry for peace, pray for peace, and work for peace, but there will not be lasting peace until all mankind follow the path pointed out and walked by the living Christ. There can be no peace in sin and disobedience. If I do not have peace within me, others around me will suffer.

### **Stability in anxious times**

God has a special love for those of his children who promote and advocate peace. Our responsibility as Church members is to instill in an ever-growing number of people the fact that our personal attitudes and behavior can bring

a measure of peace to our troubled world and a sense of stability to anxious times. With peace in our hearts we can know that the trends of the world and the criticisms of men cannot alter the truths of God.

When we properly blend into our lives true principles of love, honesty, respect, character, faith, and patience, peace will become our priceless possession. Peace is a triumph of correct principles.

Just as the little girl could sit peacefully on the stranger's lap because her father knew him, so we can find peace if we know our Father and learn to live by his principles.

None of us will avoid the storms of life. The winds and the waves will periodically interfere with our chosen course. The laws of the gospel can bring us back on course and guide us to peaceful waters.

To this I bear my special witness in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

### President Hinckley

Elder Marvin J. Ashton has just spoken to us.

We appreciate the courtesies shown by the owners and operators of the many radio and television stations and cable systems, who have offered their facilities as a public service to make the proceedings of this conference available to a large audience in many areas of the world.

The Tabernacle Choir will sing in closing "Hear Thou Our Hymn, O Lord," and the benediction will then be pronounced by Elder Angel Abrea of the First Quorum of the Seventy. This conference will then be adjourned until two o'clock this afternoon.

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The choir sang "Hear Thou Our Hymn, O Lord."

Elder Angel Abrea offered the benediction.

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## SECOND DAY AFTERNOON MEETING

### FIFTH SESSION

The fifth and final general session of the 155th Semiannual General Conference commenced at 2:00 P.M. on Sunday, October 6, 1985.

President Ezra Taft Benson, President of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, conducted this session.

Music was provided by a women's choir from the Tabernacle Choir and the Mormon Youth Chorus directed by Robert C. Bowden with John Longhurst at the organ.

President Benson made the following remarks at the outset of the meeting:

### President Ezra Taft Benson

The First Presidency has asked that I conduct this concluding session of the conference.

President Spencer W. Kimball is seated on the stand. We are pleased to have him with us this afternoon. We extend our love and blessings to President Marion G. Romney, who is watching at home.

We extend a sincere welcome to all assembled this afternoon in the Tabernacle on Temple Square in Salt Lake City, Utah in the fifth and concluding session of the 155th Semiannual General Conference of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. We also welcome those seated in the Assembly