

that ye may know that I am the God of Israel, and the God of the whole earth, and have been slain for the sins of the world.

"And it came to pass that the multitude went forth, and thrust their hands into his side, and did feel the prints of the nails in his hands and in his feet; and this they did do, going forth one by one until they had all gone forth, and did see with their eyes and did feel with their hands, and did know of a surety and did bear record, that it was he, of whom it was written by the prophets, that should come" (vs. 10-15).

The heavens were opened and had kissed the earth with certain knowledge. Then the Savior continued:

"And this is my doctrine, and it is the doctrine which the Father hath given unto me. . . . I bear record that the Father commandeth all men, everywhere, to repent and believe in me.

"And whoso believeth in me, and is baptized, the same shall be saved; and they are they who shall inherit the kingdom of God" (vs. 32-33).

### "Come unto Christ"

Once again we must pass by many references and several hundred years of sacred history. Now the final page of this record, which speaks with a familiar voice:

"Yea, come unto Christ, and be perfected in him, and deny yourselves of all ungodliness; and if ye shall deny yourselves of all ungodliness, and love God with all your might, mind and strength, then is his grace sufficient for you, that by his grace ye may be perfect in Christ; and if by the grace of God ye

are perfect in Christ, ye can in nowise deny the power of God. . . .

". . . If ye by the grace of God are perfect in Christ, and deny not his power, then are ye sanctified in Christ by the grace of God, through the shedding of the blood of Christ, which is in the covenant of the Father unto the remission of your sins, that ye become holy, without spot" (Moroni 10:32-33).

### Seek the elements of eternal life

By plane or car or bus or train, we traveled safely to this common destination. There is another common destination that beckons us—eternal life with our Father in Heaven. And just as during our physical journey our bodies were dependent on air, so on our spiritual journey we are dependent on spiritual nutrients.

On the journey to eternal life, we pleasantly bid you, "Welcome aboard."

Fill your spiritual lungs with the elements of eternal life by constantly inhaling the truths in the Book of Mormon, Another Testament of Jesus Christ, so that you may arrive safely once again in the presence of our Eternal Father.

The Savior lives today. This I witness to you in the very sacred name of Jesus Christ, amen.

### President Hinckley

Elder J. Thomas Fyans has just spoken to us.

We shall now hear from Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin of the Council of the Twelve Apostles.

## Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin

### Rewards of patience are great

One of the greatest sentences to fall upon human ears comes from the

Book of Mormon: "Adam fell that men might be; and men are, that they might have joy" (2 Nephi 2:25). That sentence captures the major possibilities of

life. Let me add, we will have genuine joy and happiness only as we learn patience.

Dictionaries define patience in such terms as bearing pain or sorrow calmly or without complaint; not being hasty or impetuous; being steadfast despite opposition, difficulty, or adversity.

In a passage from the Book of Mormon, Alma helps us understand patience. After telling about planting a seed that can grow to become a tree, he adds these insightful words: "And behold, as the tree beginneth to grow, . . . if ye nourish it with much care it will get root, and grow up, and bring forth fruit. . . .

"And because of your diligence and your faith and your patience . . . ye shall pluck the fruit thereof, which is most precious, which is sweet above all that is sweet, . . . and ye shall feast upon this fruit even until ye are filled, that ye hunger not, neither shall ye thirst.

". . . Ye shall reap the rewards of your faith, and your diligence, and patience" (Alma 32:37, 42-43).

### **Patience needed to endure trials**

I don't know whether we Church members fully appreciate the Book of Mormon, one of our sacred scriptures, as we really should. One of the clearest explanations of why we need patience to endure the trials of life is set forth by Nephi in these striking words: "For it must needs be, that there is an opposition in all things. If not so, . . . righteousness could not be brought to pass, neither wickedness, neither holiness nor misery, neither good nor bad. Wherefore, all things must needs be a compound in one. . . .

"And if ye shall say there is no law, ye shall also say there is no sin. If ye shall say there is no sin, ye shall also say there is no righteousness. And if there be no righteousness there be no happiness. And if there be no righteousness nor happiness there be no punishment nor misery. And if these

things are not there is no God. And if there is no God we are not, neither the earth; for there could have been no creation of things, neither to act nor to be acted upon; wherefore, all things must have vanished away" (2 Nephi 2:11, 13).

The Apostle Paul gave the purpose of patience in his epistle to the Saints in Rome: "We glory in tribulations, . . . knowing that tribulation worketh patience;

"And patience, experience; and experience, hope" (Romans 5:3-4).

### **"Slipping from our old moorings"**

Just forty years ago, President J. Reuben Clark, Jr., a member of the First Presidency, gave an address titled "Slipping from Our Old Moorings." He described how we have slipped away from living the Ten Commandments (see *Church News*, 8 Mar. 1947, pp. 1, 8-9).

If we had slipped away then, where are we forty years later? In 1947, television and computers were in their infancies. We had no satellite broadcasts or videotapes and no computer fraud. Certainly our moral standards of decency and propriety have slipped from where they were in 1947. The obscenity, nudity, and other forms of pornography that would have made us blush and turn away in shame in 1947 are now thrust at us openly in printed and audiovisual material. They are even paraded through our homes unless we are careful to keep them out. As a people, we are slipping further from our old moorings today because we are not following our prophets.

### **Impatience is a major cause of unhappiness**

A certain amount of impatience may be useful to stimulate and motivate us to action. However, I believe that a lack of patience is a major cause of the difficulties and unhappiness in the world today. Too often, we are impatient with ourselves, with our family

members and friends, and even with the Lord. We seem to demand what we want right now, regardless of whether we have earned it, whether it would be good for us, or whether it is right. Some seek immediate gratification or numbing of every impulse by turning to alcohol and drugs, while others seek instant material wealth by questionable investments or by dishonesty, with little or no regard for the consequences. Perhaps the practice of patience is more difficult, yet more necessary, now than at any previous time.

### A divine attribute

To the Latter-day Saints, the Lord gave patience as one of the divine attributes that qualifies a person for the ministry (see D&C 4:6), he counseled them to be patient in their afflictions (see D&C 24:8, 31:9, 54:10, 98:23–24), and he admonished them to make their decisions in patience (see D&C 107:30). The Savior taught us to be perfect (see Matthew 5:48, 3 Nephi 12:48) and said, “Ye are not able to abide the presence of God now, neither the ministering of angels; wherefore, continue in patience until ye are perfected” (D&C 67:13).

### The patience of Christ, Paul, and Joseph Smith

The Lord, Jesus Christ, is our perfect example of patience. Though absolutely unyielding in adherence to the truth, he exemplified patience repeatedly during his mortal ministry. He was patient with his disciples, including the Twelve, despite their lack of faith and their slowness to recognize and understand his divine mission. He was patient with the multitudes as they pressed about him, with the woman taken in sin, with those who sought his healing power, and with little children. Finally, he remained patient through the sufferings of his mock trials and his crucifixion.

During the Apostle Paul’s ministry of about thirty years, between his

conversion and his martyrdom in Rome, he was flogged five times, beaten severely at least three times, imprisoned several times, shipwrecked three times, and stoned and left for dead on one occasion (see 2 Corinthians 11:23–27). Through all of this affliction, he continued his powerful ministry. He wrote to the Romans that God “will render to every man according to his deeds:

“To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life:

“But unto them that are contentious [impatient], and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath,

“Tribulation and anguish” (Romans 2:6–9).

The Prophet Joseph Smith’s afflictions and sufferings paralleled those of Paul in many respects. Beyond imprisonments, mobbings, and beatings, he suffered the anguish of betrayal by disloyal, unfaithful associates. But he offered the hand of friendship and fellowship to them even after they had opposed and betrayed him.

### Far-reaching consequences

Some years ago, President Roy A. Welker of the German-Austrian Mission, one of the outstanding mission presidents of the Church, needed to assign a missionary to labor in Salzburg, Austria, to solve a problem in the branch there. Eight new missionaries were soon to arrive in the mission. He prayed that one of them would have the proper visa and currency to labor in Austria. He continued to pray and waited two weeks for an answer. The night before the eight arrived, the Spirit of the Lord whispered to the president the name of the missionary who should be assigned to Salzburg. The one whose name he received was the one who had the proper credentials to go to Austria. I was that elder.

The president’s patience not only helped solve a problem in the branch, but it also blessed me and our family in

a way that I never could have foreseen. Shortly after I arrived in Salzburg, that part of the German-Austrian Mission was changed into the Swiss-Austrian Mission. Later, I was transferred to Zurich, Switzerland, where I met Brother Julius Billeter, a warm and friendly member who was a genealogist. He was acquainted with the genealogical records of my progenitors. He researched the names of 6,000 of my ancestors for whom temple work later was completed.

### **Recognize strengths and weaknesses**

We should learn to be patient with ourselves. Recognizing our strengths and our weaknesses, we should strive to use good judgment in all of our choices and decisions, make good use of every opportunity, and do our best in every task we undertake. We should not be unduly discouraged nor in despair at any time when we are doing the best we can. Rather, we should be satisfied with our progress even though it may come slowly at times.

We should be patient in developing and strengthening our testimonies. Rather than expecting immediate or spectacular manifestations, though they will come when needed, we should pray for a testimony, study the scriptures, follow the counsel of our prophet and other Church leaders, and live the principles of the gospel. Our testimonies then will grow and mature naturally, perhaps imperceptibly at times, until they become driving forces in our lives.

### **Be patient with family members**

Patience with family members and others who are close to us is vital for us to have happy homes. However, we often seem more willing to be courteous and polite with strangers than with those in our own family circles. For some reason, criticism, sharp language, and quarreling too often seem to

be acceptable at home but not away from home.

Husbands, be patient with your wives; and wives, be patient with your husbands. Don't expect perfection. Find agreeable ways to work out the differences that arise. Remember President David O. McKay's wise counsel regarding marriage: keep your eyes wide open before marriage and half closed afterward (see Conference Report, Apr. 1956, p. 9). Perhaps, on occasion, our wives could get into the car and honk the horn while we, as husbands, get the children ready.

Parents, be patient with your children. Read to your little children and help them with their schoolwork, even if you need to tell or show them the same thing many times. Elder Richard L. Evans said, "If they find that they can trust us with their trivial questions, they may later trust us with more weighty ones" (*Ensign*, May 1971, p. 12). Capitalize on their natural curiosity and help them develop a love for learning. Teach them the principles of the gospel in simple terms. Be patient with them if they disturb family home evening or family prayers. Convey to them the reverence you feel for the gospel, Church leaders, and the Savior.

Be patient with your youth, especially as they make the transition from adolescence to adulthood. Many of them have the appearance of adults and think they are adults, but they have had little experience with which to make adult judgments. Help them to get the experience they need and to avoid the pitfalls that can harm them.

On the other hand, I urge you children to be patient with your parents. If they seem to be out of touch on such vital issues as dating, clothing styles, modern music, and use of family cars, listen to them anyway. They have the experience that you lack. Very few, if any, of the challenges and temptations you face are new to them. If you think they know nothing about the vital issues I just mentioned, take a good look at their high school and college

yearbooks. Most important, they love you and will do anything they can to help you be truly happy.

### **Be patient in financial matters**

I advise you to be patient in financial matters. Avoid rash or hurried financial decisions; such decisions require patience and study. Get-rich-quick schemes seldom work. Beware of debt. Be especially careful of easily obtained credit even if the interest is tax deductible. You young couples should not expect to begin your married lives with homes, automobiles, appliances, and conveniences comparable to those your parents have spent years accumulating.

### **Do not assert a timetable**

Finally, a word about patience with our Heavenly Father and his plan of eternal progression. How incredibly foolish to be impatient with him, the Father of our spirits, who knows everything and whose work and glory, through his Son, Jesus Christ, is "to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man" (Moses 1:39). As Elder Neal A. Maxwell said, "Patience is tied very closely to faith in our Heavenly Father. Actually, when we are unduly impatient, we are suggesting that we know what is best—better than does God. Or, at least, we are asserting that our timetable is better than his. Either way we are questioning the reality of God's omniscience" ("Patience," *Ensign*, Oct. 1980, p. 28).

### **The personification of patience**

Elder Richard L. Evans said: "There seems to be little evidence that the Creator of the universe was ever in a hurry. Everywhere, on this bounteous and beautiful earth, and to the farthest reaches of the firmament, there is evidence of patient purpose and planning and working and waiting" (in Conference Report, Oct. 1952, p. 95).

Quoting from Elder Marvin J. Ashton: "We do not have to worry about the patience of God, because he is the personification of patience, no matter where we have been, what we have done, or what we, to this moment, have allowed ourselves to think of ourselves. . . .

"... God will not forsake [us]" ("Patience Is a Great Power," in *Speeches of the Year: BYU Devotional Addresses, 1972-73* [Provo: Brigham Young University Press, 1973], p. 104).

I am truly grateful for the Lord's patience with his children. I am infinitely grateful for his patience with me and for the privilege I have to serve as a special witness of the divinity of Jesus Christ.

I am gratified, as I travel among the members of the Church, to see how many truly live the gospel principles. To them, I quote a promise given by the Lord: "Those that live shall inherit the earth, and those that die shall rest from all their labors; . . . and they shall receive a crown in the mansions of my Father, which I have prepared for them.

"Yea, blessed are they . . . who have obeyed my gospel; for they shall receive for their reward the good things of the earth. . . .

"And they shall also be crowned with blessings from above" (D&C 59:2-4).

I pray that we might be patient, especially in adversity, as we meet our challenges of uncertainty, trials, pressure, and tribulation in today's world.

I close with my testimony to you that patience is a divine attribute. I testify that our Heavenly Father lives and loves each of us and that Jesus is the Christ, our Lord and Savior. Joseph Smith is the prophet through whom the Lord restored the gospel in these latter days. President Ezra Taft Benson is the Lord's prophet who directs this work today. I bear this testimony in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.